

# ORACLE

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## Younger generations must not neglect their responsibilities in election season

Compiled by Victoria Yang, OPINION EDITOR, article by Scarlett Clark, STAFF WRITER, photo courtesy of Madison Democratic Committee

By Scarlett Clark  
STAFF WRITER



A lack of voting representation means a government which fails to reflect the needs of the people—**younger generations must not neglect voting responsibility this election season.**

The upcoming 2024 election is on the minds of most Americans right now. So, what is at stake? The obvious answer is the heated battle for the presidency between larger-than-life figure Donald Trump and his opponent, current Vice President Kamala Harris. This race for the White House is a big deal. But let's not forget about the countless other races taking place this election season. On the ballot on voting day, votes will be cast toward officials running for local, state and national offices. This election is nearly guaranteed to drastically affect local and national policies. These policies impact the lives of all Americans, including young people. That's why it's so important to educate yourself, get involved and vote if you can.

The upcoming election will directly affect the local community. A significant portion of policies influence the lives of students. For instance, California Gov. Gavin Newsom recently signed legislation giving schools a two-year deadline to implement phone regulations on campus with the Phone-Free School Act. Decisions like this one, made by those the people elect, are what shape our day-to-day lives. Especially at the immediate level, elected officials create systems and regulations that have real-time consequences and benefits. Measure L, on this upcoming ballot, will decide whether classrooms in the Fullerton School District will be repaired and upgraded by way of financing from local bonds. This is a real-time issue that will have a tangible impact on students here at Troy. The ability to choose who makes those decisions for students themselves is what fuels a fair community. While the

presidential race is certainly tremendously important, students are typically most directly influenced by the policies issued on a local scale; these are what drive and shape what a school day looks like for a student in a particular district. Attention must be paid to these local elections considering that their results will take root in the lives of students.

To follow through with the task of upholding a democracy in which the needs of the people are reflected in the government, every voice must be represented. If this is not achieved, our so-called democracy becomes nothing but a mirror of small, often privileged groups of people who are far from representative of the larger population. This is a danger not to be taken lightly. We have a public duty as citizens to vote, to express the voices of ourselves and others. Impartiality is, in fact, a stance. By declining the opportunity to be a part of the election process, one rejects the responsibility of maintaining the strength and existence of a democracy. National youth turnout for the midterms in 2022 was 23%, according to Tisch College. This needs to change; voting is a privilege and a necessity. To make your voice heard is to pick up the baton of civic virtue and fight for yourself and those who are not able.

Many Californians believe their votes to be inconsequential considering the clear fate of California's presidential preference this November, but citizens have a very defined role in expressing their voices—electing people who represent their perspectives. Young people are particularly affected by what the government does, given that they will live with the long-term impacts of our democratic system. This election is a chance to make young voices heard and reflected in their future. On a small scale



like local government, every single vote is important. When each vote is so consequential, it is imperative that young people are a part of the conversation. Taking action could mean expressing your opinions through social media by making posts encouraging people to vote, or even discussing the election with parents and urging them to pay mind to what's happening with the local government. If young people do not vote and become involved in this election, their concerns and opinions will not be reflected in the leaders who are meant to represent them. It is thoroughly important to get out to the ballots this November.

Within the Troy community, this may mean voting, if one is able. It is not too late to register to vote. Indescribable power is present in the rights of young people when more of the younger generation cast a ballot and put forth their voices. But there is much mobilization that can be claimed even for those who are not yet able to vote. Opinions can be expressed by encouraging others to vote, even through social media. Information is also a powerful tool in moments like this one—educating others on pressing issues is one way to get involved with this election. And, most importantly, making those around you aware of politics. It can be done by expressing what's at stake, emphasizing the power of representation, and pushing forward reliable information. This is a big moment in the political landscape, and it takes all hands on deck to allow for a fair occasion of democracy.

- Pre-register to vote
- Volunteer with campaigns
- Get involved on social media
- Pay attention to local politics
- Get to know candidates
- Help others register
- Volunteer at polling stations

GRAPHIC BY VICTORIA YANG

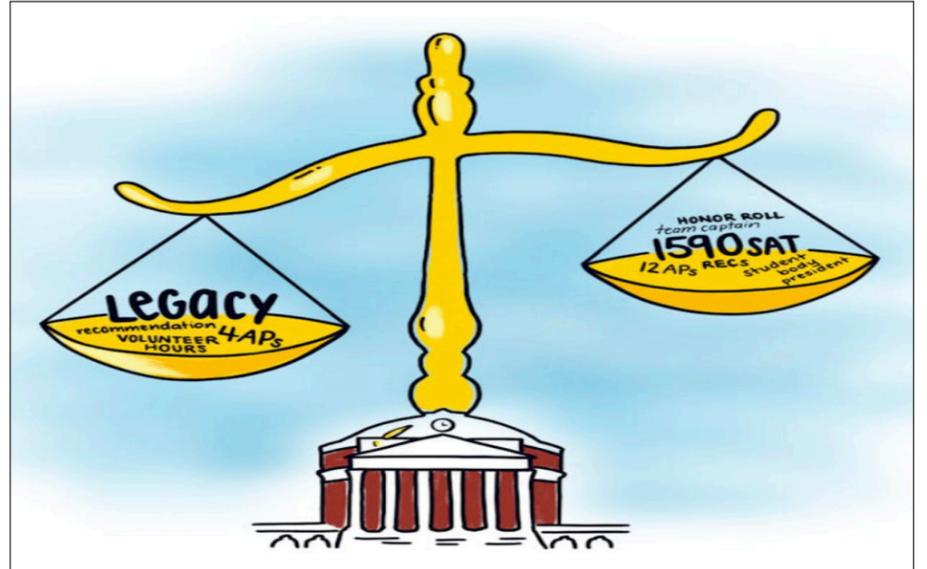
# The California legislature should not have the power to control legacy admissions

By Chelsea Engelhardt  
STAFF WRITER



The government has no business in private universities. Governor Gavin Newsom signed a law in effect to ban legacy admissions in the state of California on Sept. 30. Legacy is the advantage given to students with familial or donor ties to selective universities, such as an alumni relative. While many people including Gov. Newsom find this unfair to other students and unlawful, the many benefits of the tradition highlight its necessity. Although legacy admissions go beyond resumes and how a student looks on paper, the use of the practice helps the university as a business and contributes to the overall diversity of the college community. First of all, the government should not be involved in regulating how universities choose to accept students. This bill regulating admissions was passed with the intention of banning legacy and donor admissions for private California colleges, similar to public universities. However, since private universities like Stanford

and Pepperdine do not receive federal or state funding, the state should not have a say on how they admit students. Therefore, private universities have to rely on tuition and endowments in the absence of federal funding. Thus, it follows that the more privileged populations are more likely to get into these schools. Although this seems unfair to those who want to get into private universities but do not have the advantage of donating money, the reality is that these colleges rely on money to succeed just as much any other business does. Unless the government starts funding all colleges to make the admissions process more “fair,” it is unjustified for them to try to restrict how the admissions office conducts business. It is important to point out that private universities are businesses that need money in order to succeed. Legacy and donor admissions originally started to allow colleges to thrive and for students to get the education they want. Legacy admissions allow the creation of loyal alumni who can continue supporting the university post-graduation. According to CalMatters, the implementation of this bill will result in the loss of equity for the private college business community.



CARTOON COURTESY OF THE CAVALIER DAILY

Even if the idea of a donation to get into a good college sounds like a bribe, it is a process that is mutually beneficial to both parties. The reality remains that providing quality higher education requires substantial funds. Not only that, but the college legacies do benefit the on-campus community. It is a myth that the admission of legacy students limits diversity in college, but rather it enhances it by bringing different social classes together. Also, many arguments claim that legacy admissions take away from first-generation students and are therefore unethical, but that is not true. According to the Washington Post, legacies only take spots from other privileged students who can go to other selective colleges. With legacy admissions, the now loyal alumni are more inclined to help the rest of the university class so many students are able

to make valuable connections intergenerationally. The allowance for the admittance of legacies helps the college campus. Legacy admissions seem unfair but in reality can intensely benefit a university and its community. Whether it be through connections or diversity, colleges have the means to create a better student life through the use of the money provided by alumni either as a donation or as tuition paid in full. Colleges are businesses too, giving them the right to conduct business how they choose. Newsom’s idea to ban this type of admission is naive and unfair to the colleges that receive no financial support from him or the government. Overall, legacy admissions are essential for maintaining the standard of learning at elite private universities and should be free from governmental interference.



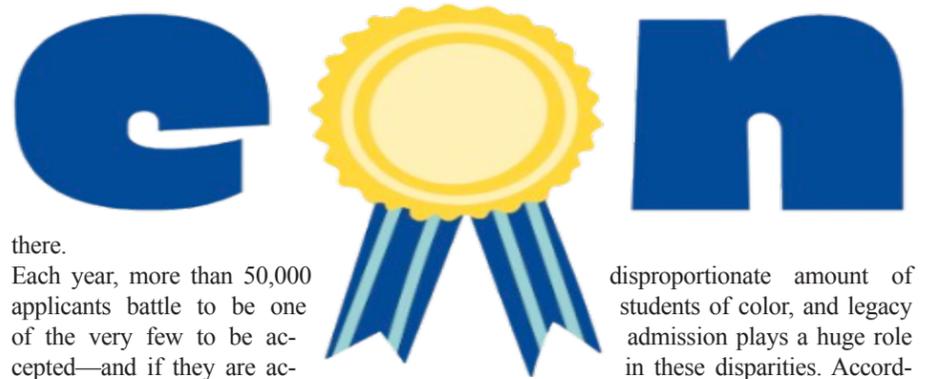
# How Gavin Newsom’s new law will change the face of higher education

By Jayden Beaumont  
STAFF WRITER



On Sept. 30, the California governor, Gavin Newsom, signed a bill banning legacy and donation-based admission in private California universities, including the University of Southern California as well as Stanford University. The bill does not state any substantial way in which it will be enforced, only that colleges must submit reports on whether or not they are complying, but the governor seems optimistic that it will positively affect our state’s education. With the passing of this bill, California is the fifth

state to implement measures that ensure admittance into colleges will be based solely on the merit of the applicant rather than their personal connections. This law marks a crucial step for California academics, ensuring only the most worthy students are to be accepted into prestigious universities and promotes equality and diversity in higher education. College admittance should only be contingent on the successes and excellence of each applicant, which is why the new law is so critical. According to Stanford Law School, in 2022, 14% of Stanford’s incoming freshmen had legacy or donor connections. Considering that Stanford is a highly competitive university, kids make it their life’s goal to go



there. Each year, more than 50,000 applicants battle to be one of the very few to be accepted—and if they are accepted, they should deserve it. This idea is true of all colleges. However, a 2020 study found that a white applicant to Stanford with a 10% chance of acceptance on their own merit would be five times more likely to be admitted were they a legacy student and seven times more likely had they also made a donation. It is completely unfair to all other candidates who are not fortunate enough to have alumni relatives or vast sums of money to spare; one person should not have a five times greater chance of getting into college than someone of equal merit. A college education must not be reserved for the same familial line generation after generation. As stated by Newsom: “Everyone should be able to get ahead through merit, skill, and hard work.” The new California bill ensures that only the most qualified applicants get into private colleges—the way acceptance cycle should have been all along. The end of legacy admissions encourages diversity in esteemed universities, as legacy undeniably favors white, rich applicants. Historically, elite colleges have a

disproportionate amount of students of color, and legacy admission plays a huge role in these disparities. According to NBC, 70% of Harvard University’s legacy applicants are white. Another study conducted by The National Bureau of Economic Research reported that if Harvard were to end the consideration of legacy when admitting students, the number of white students would fall while the number of other races would rise. Giving white and often affluent students an advantage in college admissions leaves all other applicants at a disadvantage, perpetuating institutional racism and the cycle of poverty. Higher education should be equally accessible to people of all backgrounds. By putting an end to legacy-based admission, the state is one step closer to attaining this ideal. Legacy admissions are a relic of a prejudiced past that valued money over equality. Since America’s founding, institutions such as private colleges have shown bias toward the upper class, but Newsom’s newest bill works to eliminate these prejudices. The law has no basis yet for enforcement, but one can hope, for the sake of thousands of students, that California universities will heed it.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NPR

# Hurricane Helene's rampage has affected millions—meanwhile, politicians quarrel



By Ethan Ferrer  
STAFF WRITER

When it comes to helping those in need, politics cannot interfere.

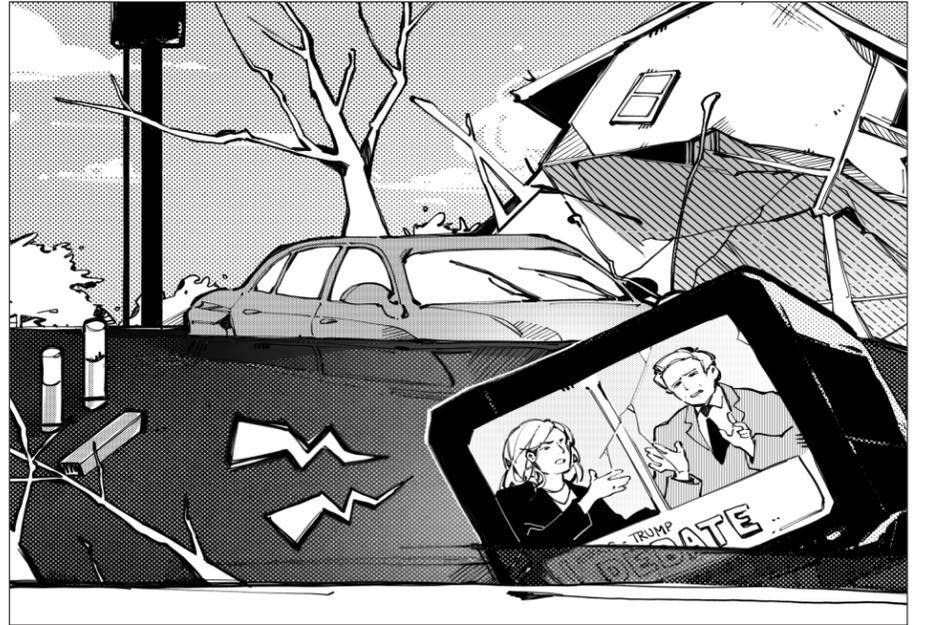
On Sept. 26, Category 4 Hurricane Helene made landfall near the town of Perry, Florida. It caused mass devastation, flooding and left millions of Americans without power. In light of this, the Biden administration announced that it would use Starlink, a SpaceX-based satellite service, to provide internet to affected areas. However, as 500 Starlink kits were deployed, politics came into the fray. Presidential candidate Donald Trump stated that he had spoken with the CEO of SpaceX, Elon Musk, to provide Starlink resources to affected areas, while the Biden administration also took credit, citing already existing Starlink deliveries. Rather than focusing on providing aid, both political sides have leveraged the disaster for the sake of publicity. With the recent devastation caused by Hurricane Helene, and the more recent Hurricane Milton, politicians should not prioritize their careers over the welfare of others—they must unite in moments of crisis.

Compared to the adverse hardship endured by those survivors affected by natural disasters, politics are trivial. Hurricane Helene, in particular, has threatened and taken countless lives, and the Red Cross has outlined the testimonies of survivors. Kirk

Herschell, a Florida resident, had her house “flooded [and] ruined” from the storm; 76-year-old Dorothy Brooks faced “a life-or-death struggle,” having to be rescued by the Coast Guard; Laury McKenna, another Florida homeowner, stated that she “hadn’t eaten for three days” before finally getting help. And they are not alone—across various states such as the Carolinas, Tennessee and Virginia, people need aid. Regardless of the significance of government figures and politics, it is clear that people are suffering and need help. In situations like these, politics should never take priority.

Furthermore, natural disasters cost billions of dollars in damages each year—costs that should not be worsened by avoidable political squabbles. It should be noted that Hurricane Helene isn’t the only severe disaster to strike the U.S. this year. According to the Associated Press, over 1 million acres in California have been burned by wildfires this year, in addition to the 300 thousand acres burned last year. Through arguments and disagreements, politicians may delay the vital assistance needed by survivors of disasters, thereby increasing damages and expenses. And as an inevitable occurrence in our daily lives, the costs of natural disasters cannot be discounted. If political opposition were to escalate the severity of these costs, where would we be then?

It is true that politics shouldn’t hamper efforts at supplying relief. But despite this, politics itself should not be seen as petty



CARTOON BY HANH DINH

or unimportant. The stances and plans of political candidates matter, especially when they involve natural disaster support. However, politicians’ policies are not as important as the actions they take to carry out those policies. When providing aid, all officials must focus on helping those in need, and not rush to take credit for their achievements. In times of crisis, people suffer—officials cannot use their suffering as a means to rally support under any circumstance.

Politicians’ priorities should always focus on helping those in need. However,

this is not always the case. The provision of SpaceX resources to areas ravaged by Hurricane Helene has morphed into a controversy between rival political leaders, getting in the way of giving crucial aid. When considering the struggles faced by those affected by crises and the costs that these crises inevitably create, should politicians really consider their careers, or the future of the people they serve? With Hurricane Milton adding to Helene’s rampage, the answer to this question is abundantly clear: politics cannot come in the way of relieving citizens’ suffering.

## mark my words

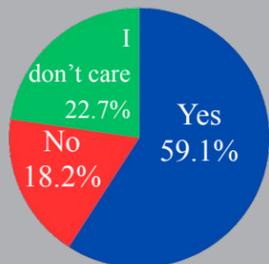
Warriors speak out on campus issues

Read what the Warrior population has to say about group assignments and tests.

“They are graded fairly but sometimes people get a higher or lower grade than what they deserved or contributed.”

-Adam Nejat-Bina, Senior

Do you think groups should be chosen by students?



“Groups usually aren’t motivated to do an equal amount of work if they see that you have the capacity to do it all.”

- Greyson Tran, Sophomore

“I can go at my own pace and input all of my ideas and creativity into my own project. When I work with a group, I have to dial back and put in less effort in order not to outshine my partners, since the whole group should contribute equally.”

- Anonymous, Sophomore

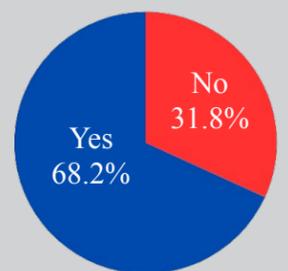
“I personally think that group assignments allow everyone to check everyone else and overall are better for learning than individual assignments.”

- Soham Dev, Senior

“Yes, because it is often difficult to get others to significantly contribute to the assignment.”

- Dylan Ardaya, Sophomore

Do you think you have gained lessons in teamwork, communications, etc. from group assignments/tests?



“Group assignments can be a valuable tool if wielded correctly.”

- Kaileo Truong, Sophomore

“I would prefer to collaborate because it makes the work for me flow smoothly and if I need help my partner(s) can clutch me up.”

- Jayden Ratanatharathorn, Sophomore

“Definitely problem solving. I also, secondarily, learned the values of communication and being able to communicate your concerns”

- Elise Kim, Senior

See the full list of responses here!



# Troy alumnus Yanni Kouloumbis co-founds tutoring website MathGPT

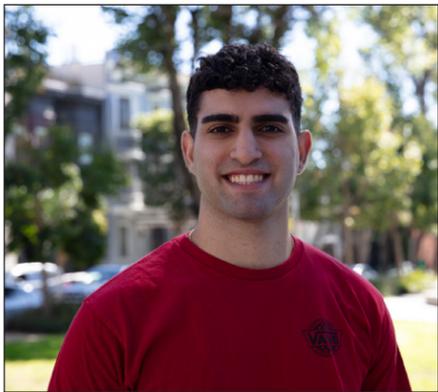
Kouloumbis expressed hope that the website will continue to help more people with math in the future.

By Salman Waheed  
STAFF WRITER

Warrior alumnus Yanni Kouloumbis co-founded the website MathGPT in August 2023.

Yanni is a rising junior majoring in computer science at Cornell University, currently taking an extended absence. As a member of Troy's graduating class of 2022, Kouloumbis's interest in coding started at the end of his sophomore year at Troy. He began coding with Python, and his first programming project was a coding script that automatically logged into the Aeries portal to check his grades.

During Kouloumbis's junior



PHOTOS COURTESY OF YANNI KOULOUMBIS

year at Troy, he spent six months working on app construction with his classmates for the International Baccalaureate computer science class. Kouloumbis began building online websites during his senior year of high school and received a \$10,000 grant from a startup company to partake in a programming opportunity.

According to Kouloumbis, the classes at Troy aided him in pursuing his current career trajectory. The Troy Tech program in particular introduced many new coding endeavors during high school, Kouloumbis said.

"The math classes I took at Troy helped me in my current path and my IB computer science class got me into programming," Kouloumbis said. "In my computer science class, I was able to build a mobile app and submit it to the Congressional App Challenge, which was a great experience that ended up leading me to an internship opportunity later."

Kouloumbis met his fellow MathGPT co-founder Nour Gajjal in an introductory engineering class at Cornell. The co-founders have since participated in nine hackathons together, traveling to competitions in New York and the University of Pennsylvania, where they won

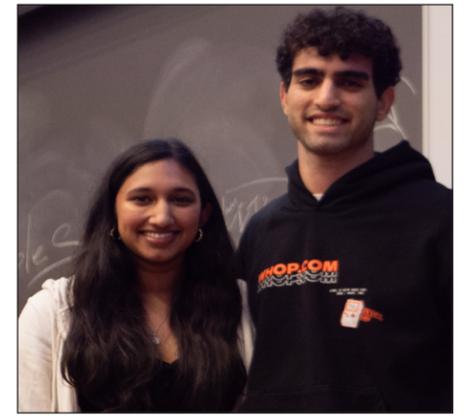
the PennApps Hackathon in 2023.

Kouloumbis and Gajjal constructed the concept of MathGPT in April 2023 with the goal to provide students with personalized help for math-related inquiries. MathGPT contains a video feature that generates AI video explanations for user-submitted math problems through diagrams and animations. The website team updates the website daily and is currently making an app for MathGPT while expanding its management team. Since its launch, over 1.2 million internet users have used the website.

The co-founders wanted to create an affordable way for students to receive tutoring. As a self-funded start-up, MathGPT allows users to submit up to seven free questions per day before a \$10 subscription fee is required for unlimited access to the platform.

Several times a year, Kouloumbis travels to locations across the U.S. to attend conferences and converse with other start-up founders. According to Kouloumbis, developing MathGPT has provided him with both new opportunities and responsibilities.

"It is hard to believe that this thing that I built was able to create jobs," Kouloumbis said. "I have



never hired somebody before this project, so I think that it is pretty incredible to think that MathGPT is helping multiple people sustain a livelihood for themselves."

According to Kouloumbis, it is crucial that students who want to follow various career paths make sure they are investing all their time into their projects or ideas. Students should feel free to explore their interests and try to learn from each experience, Kouloumbis said.

"I had already completed two start-ups before I set out to develop MathGPT, and both of them failed," Kouloumbis said. "I think it was necessary to learn the things that I learned from those two projects, even though they did not succeed, and take those previous tries as experiments or guiding lessons for my future plans."

# ASB hosts Homecoming dance with the theme "An Evening in Paris"

ASB debuts the Parisian theme for Homecoming, along with new planning changes and event decorations.

By Kylie Tien  
STAFF WRITER

Implementing changes and debuting a Parisian theme, ASB will hold the annual Homecoming dance in the quad and breezeway Oct. 19.

ASB selected "An Evening in Paris" to be this year's Warrior Homecoming theme. Warrior ASB attended the Orange County Leadership camp at UC Santa Barbara over the summer, where they participated in leadership classes and activities. According to ASB president Riley Chiu, the Warrior Homecoming theme was inspired by ideas formed over summer break at the OCL camp.

"We had all the ASB members [from Troy] split up into groups, and then we had them, as a group, decide which themes that they would want," Chiu said. "From

those themes, we put it on a giant list, and then went one by one, advocating or going against each one until [we found one] we liked."

ASB handles most of the operations at Homecoming, including the setups, activities, music and food catering. Centered around the theme "An Evening in Paris," the set-up includes French

themed decorations and a crepe vendor. ASB has solely managed all previous Homecoming dances. This year, ASB hired PegLeg, an event organizer that caters to high school dances and special occasions.

ASB prepared for Homecoming by creating posters and making event arrangements afterschool. According to ASB advisor Abigail Contreras, ASB has put more than a month of work and effort into catering to details and communicating with the coordinator.

"This year, we are working with the event contractor [PegLeg] who is going to do the decorations," Contreras said. "There is also a DJ company.

We are going to have a cafe set up and [an] Eiffel Tower [decoration]."

This year's dance includes new props, such as carbon

dioxide

cannons. ASB is partnering with PegLeg Entertainment to improve this year's Homecoming compared to previous years, Chiu said.

"We are working with the event company and our coordinator has been contacting them back and forth," Chiu said. "Our ASB treasurer had the idea to reach out to one of the nearby companies that do the crepe [catering services]."

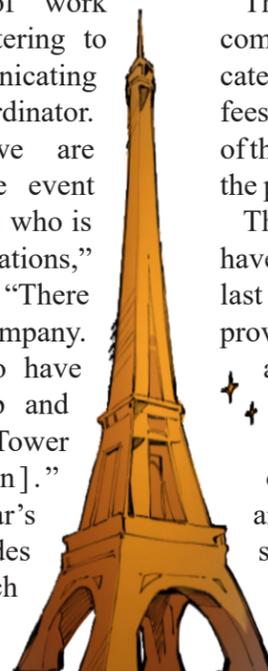
The contracting of the event company and the purchase of crepe catering services resulted in higher fees this year. According to ASB, one of the difficulties that came up during the planning process was budgeting.

The ticket prices for Homecoming have had a \$20 increase from last year. The higher ticket prices provide a wider range of activities and refreshments to enjoy at the dance, Contreras said.

"We are trying to revamp our dances, and that is why we are charging more," Contreras said. "[ASB] is looking to open [Homecoming] up and make it more of an enjoyable experience for everybody."



CARTOONS BY HANH DINH



# Warrior Theater Arts presents play “The Man Who Came to Dinner”

Troy Theater performs their first show of the school year, “The Man Who Came to Dinner,” to entertain audiences of all ages.

By Anastasia Efremova  
STAFF WRITER

Providing comedic relief to audiences through a meaningful story, Troy Theater performs “The Man Who Came to Dinner” in the Thomas Moore Auditorium Oct. 17-18 and Oct. 24-25.

Originally written by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart in 1939, the



**PASSIONATE PERFORMERS:**  
Cast members Ren Modesto and Courtney Black on set for the play.

production follows a Hollywood radio figure bedridden after an injury during dinner at a suburban home. Throughout the play, the cool-headed Sheridan Whiteside, alongside his witty secretary Maggie Cutler, navigates through the ensuing conflicts within the family.

With this show, Troy Theater aims to entertain the audience with different styles of comedy on stage while providing a story that is worth waiting and sitting down for, Troy theater Director Joe Hufferd said.

“My hope is that [the show] will bring an understanding of the different layers of comedy; physical, linguistic or verbal, wit and sarcasm,” Hufferd said. “It will be a story you have to sit down and enjoy for a couple hours. I think you will love it, but you have got to give it its time.”

While Hufferd chooses and supervises the show, Troy Theater is a largely student-led organization, containing student-driven subcategories such as costume design, makeup and stage management, actress Courtney Black, who plays Cutler, said.

“Mr. Hufferd does most of the supervising, but he listens to the actors and students in terms of feedback about [his] decisions,” Black said. “The effort is definitely 50-50.”

Theater students began rehearsing for the show six weeks in advance. Actors practiced by following a schedule and focusing on practicing a particular scene each day. According to cast member Ren Modesto, who plays Whiteside, actors prepared for their performances by always going on stage with some kind of motive for their character.

“I try to have an idea of what my character wants or needs at a specific moment,” Modesto said. “I ask myself what my emotions are with each of the characters on stage.”

The show takes place inside a home, so the stage crew designed the set to be larger than usual, which the actors found difficulty with when trying to get the production going. By communicating and working together, the crew ensured the set was polished and effective.

The script calls for a large cast, and Hufferd faced scheduling challenges while trying to get a cast of



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOE HUFFERD

**CHARISMATIC CAST:** Actors Archer Hufferd, Joey Kelly and Courtney Black during rehearsal.

27 actors to do rehearsals at the same time, as well as building the chemistry needed for the actors playing a family. After several rehearsals, the actors were able to work together and develop familiarity and convey the message of the show, Hufferd said.

“The main message that the audience should take away from [the play] is to find a way to appreciate the people that are closest to you,” Hufferd said. “Give them the freedom to be who they want to be and who they need to be.”

# Cambridge classrooms to observe program integration executives visit Troy

On Oct. 8, a team of Cambridge officials came to Troy to observe the curriculum’s success.

By Paulina Lee  
STAFF WRITER

Executives and educators from Cambridge University visited Troy Oct. 8 to observe how the Cambridge program has been established into the school’s curriculum.

The Cambridge International Education Program is a global education system for high school students that aims to foster critical thinking and provide college-level courses through AS-Level and A-Level classes. In the Cambridge curriculum, students take AS-level classes before A-level classes. Troy has incorporated the program into the school curriculum since 2019.

As an European-based program, Cambridge is less common in the United States, and Troy is one of the relatively few schools in America to offer the program. Cambridge officials visited to understand how Troy was managing and integrating the curriculum. According to

Principal Dr. William Mynster, the Cambridge team expressed interest in how Troy’s success with the program could serve as an example for further expansion to other schools.

“There are not many schools in this region that even do Cambridge because it is a hard course,” Mynster said. “One of the things [the Cambridge officials] were interested in was if we would be willing to help them further their program, not only in California, but in [all of] the United States.”

The visiting Cambridge team consisted of Director of Cambridge’s International Network Dr. Ben Schmidt, Regional Director of North America Cambridge Assessment Mark Cavone, National Manager of School Implementation Keith Lucey, Deputy Regional Director of North America Program Management and Strategic Communications Heather Tsonopoulos and Senior Schools Development Manager Allison Ibarra.

During the classroom visits, Cambridge officials spoke with both

Cambridge teachers and students to gain a better understanding of the program application that contributed to the success of the A-Level results.

According to Mynster, the visitors were highly impressed by Troy’s implementation of the Cambridge curriculum alongside the existing school curriculum. During the visit, the team viewed Cambridge Design Technology, Biology, English, Media, Computer Science and International Business classes to observe how the instructors were teaching, Mynster said.

“We did so remarkably well that it caught Cambridge’s attention,” Mynster said. “They were really interested in how we cover [the Cambridge curriculum] and wanted to know where we cover the material, how we cover the material and how we layer it in.”



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF FJUHS

Mynster highlighted the faculty and admin’s commitment to the program as being essential to the program’s success. Troy’s success with the program, as reflected by the students’ Cambridge test scores, was largely due to the dedication and hard work of the teachers, Mynster said.

“[Warriors] and the teachers have done a very good job in a relatively short [time] span, to where our [Cambridge test] scores are some of the absolute best in the world,” Mynster said. “We did some unique things here that we were able to do because of the teachers we have, the students that we have and the tech program that we have.”

# SPOOKTACULAR STYLES

Coming up with creative costumes that are both intriguing and easy to put together from pieces already in your closet can be a challenge. Here are some of Oracle's ideas to give you some creepy costume inspiration.

Compiled by Zoey Bahng, LIFESTYLE EDITOR, article by Kailey Reichman and Bianca Naranjo, STAFF WRITERS, collages courtesy of Disneynom, Wikifandom, Pinterest and Canva

## QUEEN OF HEARTS

Halloween is the perfect time to embrace your most eccentric ideas: Troy's very own Queen of Hearts is here to soak in the splendor. Senior Eunice Sung is set to stun during this spooky season in her elaborate Queen of Hearts costume. Inspired by the 1951 film "Alice in Wonderland," the costume draws components from the original heart-adorned dictator's black-and-red color scheme, dainty crown and cinched waist.

Adding her own flair, Sung incorporated a heart-studded skirt with a white petticoat and a black corset over a bell-sleeved shirt. Sung partially compiled this costume from pieces she already had: "The black part of the dress underneath is a lace top that I got in middle school, so it's really old," Sung said. She accessorized this outfit with several necklaces, black Mary Janes and an impressively detailed makeup look.

Sung describes the importance of the costume to her friend group: "We really wanted to do a group costume...this year because it's our senior year, and we ended up... with Alice in Wonderland," Sung said. Other members of Sung's Wonderland Halloween group include friends dressing up as the Mad Hatter, Alice, the White Queen and more. This year, Troy students will keep their hearts on their sleeves as they gush over Sung's stunning costume.



## CORPSE BRIDE COUPLE

If you are on the hunt for the perfectly paired Halloween costume that portrays classic gothic charm, look no further than the deathly duo, Emily and Victor from Tim Burton's Corpse Bride. To channel Emily, the ethereal Corpse Bride herself, delve into your wardrobe for a white dress; you can also mix and match by styling a white skirt with a pale blue top and corset. For Victor, keep it classic with a simple white button-up shirt under a gray vest or jacket. Black slacks and a dark tie will pull the whole eerie look together. For the cherry on top of both costumes, make sure to embrace the Burton couple's iconic pale blue skin and hollow cheeks by using some face paint or eyeshadow. These hauntingly beautiful looks are sure to capture attention, even from the departed.

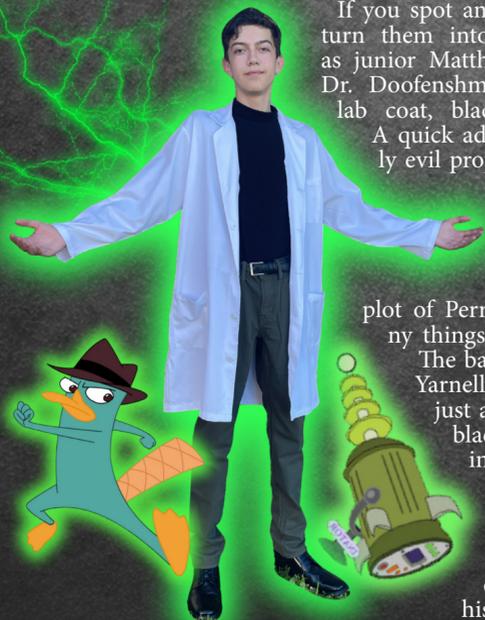


## PALS AND PEANUTS

The Peanuts characters are not just iconic comic strip figures; in a pinch, they also make for a perfect group costume choice. To assemble a Charlie Brown look, pull on a yellow shirt and draw on the classic chevron pattern with a permanent black marker—no worries if your design is not perfect, as it matches with the comics' charmingly messy style. Another fan-favorite is Snoopy: you can wear a black and white outfit with pigtails and a black spot on your nose. For the ears, you can wear pigtails or sew black fabric onto an old baseball hat. Those with shorter hair will find Lucy's look to be a breeze: you can style her iconic bob with a simple blue dress. With some creative inspiration and closet-digging, dressing up as the Peanuts with your friends can turn out to be the most adorable group costume.

## DOCTOR DOOFENSHMIRTZ

If you spot any suspicious-looking platypuses, it is best you turn them into the nearest sharply-dressed scientist, such as junior Matthew Yarnell. Suited up as Phineas and Ferb's Dr. Doofenshmirtz, Yarnell styles the evil scientist's white lab coat, black turtleneck and straight-leg green pants. A quick addition to his simple costume may be a fittingly evil prop, like one of Doofenshmirtz's world-dominating "inator" mechanisms, or a stuffed Perry the Platypus doll. Yarnell wasted no time on deciding his costume, thanks to his appreciation for Doofenshmirtz: "That's really what caught my attention, the side plot of Perry and the Doc. Just a funny guy doing funny things to put smiles on people's faces," Yarnell said. The basic components of this costume can also allow Yarnell to transform into other iconic scientists with just a few tweaks. Sporting a blue shirt instead of a black turtleneck can instantly transform Yarnell into Rick of Rick & Morty, allowing him to enter the world of sci-fi adventures. Alternatively, buttoning the lab coat will turn his costume into the outfit of Professor Utonium, the father and creator of the Powerpuff Girls. Just like this evil scientist, Yarnell is sure to amuse people with his simple-yet-effective costume this Halloween.



## DWIGHT SCHRUTE

Get ready to embrace your inner beet farmer and paper salesman this Halloween by transforming into Dwight Schrute from The Office. Known for his no-nonsense attitude and offbeat humor, Dwight's look is both iconic and easy to pull off with a few key pieces. Start with a yellow button-up shirt—Dwight's signature color. Then, button up in a classic brown suit set—feel free to rummage through your dad's or grandfather's closet for a suitable option. Accessorize this look with a dark colored tie and a pair of glasses, ideally with metal frames. For added authenticity, you can even carry a beet from the fridge or a Dunder Mifflin name badge. With this outfit, you'll be ready to step into the shoes of the most hilariously serious character of the night.



## WICKED WITCHES

With the highly anticipated release of the new Wicked movie this November, Wizard of Oz fans should seize the perfect opportunity to dress as the iconic witches, Glinda and Elphaba. Glinda's delicate personality is beautifully mirrored in her signature style. To replicate her dainty outfit, wear your most extravagant pastel pink dress. Add a silver tiara to top the look off, which can be easily purchased last-minute online. Elphaba's character, on the other hand, represents a darker persona. A classic black robe and witch hat are essential pieces that are conveniently found in every costume store. While you shop for those, don't forget to grab some green body paint for Elphaba's signature green skin. Together, these contrasting costumes are perfect for a spooky and stylish Halloween night.

# THIS MONTH IN TROY ATHLETICS

Kicking off the start of the season with wins, the Warriors are looking forward to coming first in league, CIF and competitions. Catch up on the teams' successful month of October, pushing them towards their goals.

Compiled by Kusuma Kothamasu, **SPORTS EDITOR**, articles by Seungwoo Lee, **STAFF WRITER** and Tejas Konka, **STAFF WRITER**  
graphics courtesy of Canva

## Girls Tennis

Girls Tennis had a strong start of the league in October, winning most of their games.

Starting this month with the game against Esperanza, the Warriors destroyed them by 14-4, marking their third league game since the season started.

After their loss to Sunny Hills in the first round of league by a single point, the girls' biggest goal and most anticipated game in the league is to defeat them.

"[Sunny Hills] are the only ones we've lost to, because we lost by one game," Michelle Tan, the Varsity Girls Tennis Captain said, "So, we are changing up our strategies, and the lineup for all the players, and then we're trying to calculate it, and we think we will win."



They practice everyday, working on double matches, due to most of the players on the team being single match focused.

Girls Tennis has had many improvements and will not stop pushing forward to win league and eventually CIF as well.

## Football



Football has been consistently training and working as hard as they can to come out on top.

On an average day, they can be seen in the weight room, and on the field running routes. During the month of October, the team had important games against Kennedy High School and Canyon High School.

Football has crucial games against rival teams such as Fullerton Union High School.

Roy Bou Akar, Varsity offensive lineman, said, "We're going against our friends and that competitive spirit that we have with the other team is just a completely different feeling."

Although the football team has been winning most of their games, they lost one against the Foothill Knights. From this game, the team started focusing on their weaknesses.

"After that, we definitely grew from there, and it was just like a completely different vibe."

## Girls Volleyball

With the loss to Sonora in league, the Girls Volleyball team is aiming for the goal of second place in league. The month of October has been an exciting and eventful month, filled with games, tournaments and events like Senior Night.

With the team nearing the end of league and entering CIF next month, they practice every weekday and sometimes go into the weekend, improving their communication skills and real game situations.

On Oct. 10, the team celebrated their Senior Night and the seniors' last home game. Mirayah Buena-Toquero, a Varsity starter, talked about Senior Night.

"Our seniors are appreciated for their hard work in the season and just what they've done for the program so far," Mirayah said.

The Warriors pushed forward with their season along with strong will power and determination.



## Boys Water Polo

Troy Boys Water Polo has been hard at work during the month of October with one goal in mind: to win as many games as possible.

With multiple tournaments taking place in the month of October, the team is trying to build on their strong win streak. Although they have suffered

many injuries to their starters, the team does not give up, and instead, the benchwarmers are stepping up to the spotlight.

Sophomore Riley Link on Varsity said, "Boys Water Polo will soon be playing our rivals, the Sunny Hills Lancers."

With many important games this month, the team has been on a constant grind. They will also be playing a big tournament in San Diego. The boys have been persistently practicing in the pool, improving their technique.

Link said, "We've just been going through drills and just grinding over and over again to perfect our stuff."



## Flag Football



This year's flag football team is the newest sport at Troy. With a record of 12 wins and two losses, the team has started off strong.

The Warriors played against the La Habra Highlanders, the main competition for the team. After a hard fought game, the Warriors came out victorious.

They had another big game against the Brea Olinda Bobcats on Oct. 14.

"It was really physical and everyone was getting really into it," Junior Tressa Williams described.

In order to achieve their goal of winning CIF, the team has been pushing their boundaries with tough practices.

"We practice from like 2:00 to 4:30 [in the afternoon] and usually just practice our defense and then we practice our routes."

This big time commitment is for the team to achieve their goal of winning as many games as possible.

## Red Hots

Troy Red Hots have been engaged in a variety of events for the month of October, starting with their weekly halftime dances during football games, and their dance at the Homecoming Rally.

In the Homecoming Rally, the Red Hots performed a new style of dancing with pom poms, like a cheerleader.

However, the Red Hots' main focus during October is planning for their first competition in January. Training with new choreography and routines, they focus upon cleaning their moves to look simultaneous as one.

The dancers practice after school every Wednesday and Thursday for their small groups and their team dances every morning.

London Silzer, a Red Hots Unity Leader, said, "This month, we've had football games, homecoming rally, and just for us as a team, our big events have been every single day, working on our dances, cleaning them, and making sure they're ready for competition."



# LIZARDS AND LEGACIES

With the shutter of a camera and the flick of a reptilian tail, join Junior Nicole Giacoletti in a one in a chameleon-like journey of self-discovery and exploration!

Compiled by Eileen Um, **FEATURE EDITOR**, article by Kathleen Hong and Emma Gong, **STAFF WRITERS**, photos courtesy of Nicole Giacoletti

Shimmering scales flash under shining camera lights as a yellow and black snake slithers around the terrarium, reaching up to greet the camera just outside the glass enclosure. Behind the lens stands Junior Nicole Giacoletti, who captures the snake in a thrilling beauty, proud to introduce her new friend to her family’s reptile shop, Reptile Island. As a core part of her family’s generational reptile business, Giacoletti spends her weekends interacting with bright-eyed customers and animal friends. In this familiar surrounding, Giacoletti strives to embrace her individuality each day through her passion for photography and film.

The business’ story first starts with an act of love, more specifically with Giacoletti’s grandfather, who worked in pest control and had a curiosity for various forms of reptiles. In an effort to immortalize his warm-hearted fondness for his cold-blooded family, he partnered with his equally passionate son to open up Reptile Island in Yorba Linda, California. Having been raised in this loving environment, Giacoletti inherited her grandfather’s deep admiration early on, and sees it as an important part of her identity. From counting scorpions to befriend new snakes in the shop with her dad,

all at just four years old, Giacoletti has always lent the business a helping hand. Now that she’s grown, she’s inherited more responsibilities, helping her father inventory merchandise and funds, maintaining the animals and their enclosures, and interacting with the curious new customers looking for their own scaly partner. She also helps set up and manage Reptile Island’s booth at the annual reptile expo the Reptile Super Show, interacting with fellow animal enthusiasts and forming new friendships within the reptile community. Under Giacoletti’s father’s leadership, these friendships have extended to multiple influential organizations and people such as Fear Factor, Kevin Hart, Steve Harvey and Orange County’s local Knott’s Scary Farm, providing animals for their various events and shows.

“There’s a lot of happiness and excitement,” Giacoletti said, “because...it’s cool to see so many different types of people into so many different types of reptiles.” While helping out at the shop, Giacoletti realized the importance of individuality within the familiar environment she grew up in. Giacoletti recalls struggling to balance her volunteering at the shop with school and her other passions, like photo and videography. However, after considerate and mindful exploration, she learned to combine her interests with her roots by utilizing her volunteering as practice and a source for creativity. She found inspiration through her father, learning and adopting

his opportunistic and friendly nature, then using it to fuel her own passion and interest in the film industry. Giacoletti takes this inspiration to guide many business-related film projects. A recent shot was taken at an anniversary celebration of Reptile Island’s trusted exotic vet, who takes care of all the animals’ health issues. Giacoletti expertly filmed a recap video for the veterinarian and their anniversary, pouring her own artistry and creative influence into the project. Flourishing under her father’s guidance and her own love for filmography, Giacoletti developed a fundamental appreciation for her own passions and individuality among the tall glass enclosures and stacked shelves of the shop. “I’ll take pictures for things, like pictures of the animals and of the shirts,” Giacoletti said. “I like that I can combine the family business with my passion in that way.”

Now continuing her involvement in Reptile Island, Giacoletti aims to continue exploring her passions with the support of the shop and her family members. She continues her volunteer work at the shop every weekend and school break, spending any spare minute with her loving family—both warm and cold-blooded. As Giacoletti reflects on her journey through the world of film and reptiles, she encourages others to remember their roots and embrace their individuality and uniqueness in their pursuit of passion.

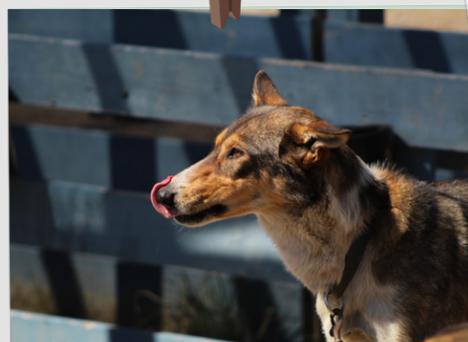
“Power through it because it won’t last forever,” Giacoletti said. “Sometimes you’re gonna have problems, but...my family store has had plenty over the years [and] we’re... at 30 years [now]. You can get through it.”



Young Giacoletti and a spiny tailed iguana.



Young Giacoletti and her brother at Reptile Island.



A photograph taken by Giacoletti of a dog in Alaska.



A photograph of a day gecko in Hawaii.

# SIBLING SENSATIONS

Come take a look at the best sibling duo in the music industry, featuring Finneas' latest album, "For Cryin' Out Loud!" and Billie Eilish's "Hit Me Hard and Soft" Tour!

Compiled by Kate Berger, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, article by Celeste Hollingsworth, STAFF WRITER, and Riddhi Arora, STAFF WRITER, graphics courtesy of the Los Angeles Times and Variety

With his new album "For Cryin' Out Loud!," Finneas masters the duality of commanding center stage and existing behind the curtains. Although "For Cryin' Out Loud!" is his second studio album, Finneas has had an unwavering presence behind the scenes for many years. He has thrived in the songwriting sector of the music industry, as Finneas wrote and produced many of his sister's, Billie Eilish, biggest hits over the years. Through its multifaceted nature, this album enhances Finneas' already impressive discography by not only making listeners cry out loud, but sing out loud as well.

By producing some of his sister's most successful songs in 2015, Finneas gained experience that further enhanced his skills for later works. Billie Eilish soon became one of our time's most well-respected and idolized musicians, but behind every fan-favorite was collaboration with Finneas' production and songwriting. However, her newfound appeal was also heavily intertwined with her ability to capture teen angst with an unprecedented eerie sound that Finneas helped create. In "For Cryin' Out Loud!," the noteworthy production drives the album as a result of his extensive musical expertise. Although this album is a

departure from the sounds of Eilish's typical music, Finneas' ability to create an unforgettable atmosphere translates, regardless of genre.

"For Cryin' Out Loud!" stands out among Finneas' other pieces, as it could be an album to cry to or an album to laugh to. While some variety in style is key to an album's versatility, the album is inconsistent in its impact. Finneas' attention to rhythm solidifies a spunky vibe in most of his songs, replicating the sound of a comforting coming-of-age movie. However, other songs lack dynamic changes essential to fully engaging listeners and connecting with them emotionally. Tracks like "Same Old Story," "Little Window," and "Starf\*\*\*\*r" follow a predictable pattern in their musical structure. For a master of production, the layering of the background vocals as the pinnacle of each song is underwhelming, especially with their repetitive timings. Regardless of this, he is still growing in his ability to fully delve into his creative ability and maximize the album's emotional impact on listeners.

Thanks to Finneas' expertise in production, the acoustic instrumentals blend perfectly with his voice,

enabling the listener to fully absorb the heartfelt lyrics. The song "Cleats" stands out because of its contrast between upbeat music and the heavy lyrics, which convey the heartbreak of an unrequited love. These complexities showcase his creative potential, along with the unconventionality of his music. The lyrical component of the album deserves special attention for "Family Feud," a song about Finneas' and Billie's struggles and triumphs in dealing with fame. It is an insight to a part of their lives that does not get much attention on a regular basis, only further showing Finneas's vulnerability and pure dedication to "For Cryin' Out Loud!"

Finneas' solo music career has yet to reach its peak, and "For Cryin' Out Loud!" is surely one of the first of many more successful albums that will leave fans craving another taste of a solo album.

From the catchy melodies lyrics, O u t c o n v e r s a t i o n s e v e r

to the heartfelt "For Cryin' Loud!" t a i n s e v e r y t h i n g c o u l d a s k f o r.

## BILLIE EILISH "HITS HARD!"

As an opener for Billie Eilish's "Hit Me Hard and Soft" tour, Finneas accompanies his sister as they perform at sold-out venues across the globe. The tour, spanning from September 2024 to July 2025, sold out to 18,000 people in Detroit, making for the biggest crowd Eilish has ever performed to. Eilish displays her signature outfit, consisting of a white bandana, oversized jersey, tight biking shorts and knee pads, while revealing immense versatility within her music. From melancholy songs such as "What Was I Made For" to upbeat tracks like "Birds of a Feather," Eilish proves to have music for anyone.

Though her performance singing each song is captivating itself, the stage crew of the venue go above and beyond, syncing the lights and lasers of the set with the harmonizations of Eilish's voice, bringing intimacy to the stage. Seen through Eilish's performance of her hit single "Lunch," the immensely gripping performance is displayed by the contrast between her whispery voice and the spectacular, bold lightshow behind her. Through Eilish's unique stage persona in "Hit Me Hard and Soft," her performance certainly hits fans "hard," leaving them with the "soft" sweetness of her voice.



# DRESS TO IMPRESS

Come take a look at Dress to Impress' latest Halloween additions!

Compiled by Kate Berger, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, article by Riddhi Arora, STAFF WRITER, graphics courtesy of Twitter and Roblox



The Halloween Dress to Impress update has certainly “impressed” Roblox users with its intricacy and spooky vibes! The trending fashion game adds an abstract simulation of modeling to Roblox’s vast array of games, taking the world by storm. Due to the game’s easy access, Dress to Impress has soared to heights of 250,000 active users on average. As the game’s popularity continues to grow, the creators of the game have received an influx of demands for new items, accelerating the game’s development. One of these developments is the production of the new, spine-chilling Halloween update, packed with new clothing pieces and accessories for young fashionistas to unleash their creativity. With fresh new emotes and styl-

ish sets, players will have limitless options to strut the catwalk in fabulous, unique outfits! Some of the latest additions include new accessories such as the pumpkin, palette or pillow. The addition of costumes such as the hotdog costume or witch set connects the spooky feel of the season to the game. Through these new additions of clothing and accessory items, an excess of new layering techniques are available, boosting the players’ creativity. New items also include 64 new custom makeup options and 39 new hairstyles including Harley Quinn’s eccentric pigtails. Some codes to be on the lookout for are DIORST4R, for a Star Bow and matching handbag, UM0YAE, for a new, unique, sleeve dress and the highlight of the update, S3M\_0W3N\_Y4Y, for the the creepy,

colossal new scythe. Lastly, a few new items were added for Dress to Impress’ VIP players such as the witch’s broomstick and a fur jacket dress; being cozy in the fall cold has never been so stylish! Dress to Impress’ spooky update bewitches Roblox gamers, escalating the game’s rise in popularity, and kicking off the Halloween season. The new additions make for numerous, eye-catching outfits, allowing players to explore their spooky sides and recreate their favorite Halloween costumes. With these new updates, Dress to Impress has inspired an endless amount of creative freedom, allowing anyone to be a top model!



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# Creepy Connections

Get in the spooky spirit with our Creepy Connections! Mark up the issue to concoct four groups of four categories.  
You can check your guesses using the QR code!

Compiled by Edyn Mai and Kaitlyn Zhang, EDITORS-IN-CHIEF, graphics courtesy of Canva

**SCRAM**

**POTION**

**DOLL**

**CHAI**

**SPICE**

**CLOWN**

**HAT**

**PIE**

**WINNIE  
THE POOH**

**MEGA**

**SPIRIT**

**MILE**

**SEEDS**

**BROOM**

**AW**

**CAULDRON**



Check  
your  
score  
here!

