



**BLACK HISTORY
MONTH: LOOKING
BACK AND
MOVING FORWARD
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Advancements in AI technology spark debate

STORY AND GRAPHICS: MAURA MCSWEENEY AND MAURA SULLIVAN, ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

What do you think of when it comes to artificial intelligence? The constant villainization of it by movies and media or the incredible potential of growth it could bring to our society? Either way, whether we like it or not, technology is advancing everyday to make it even smarter than most of humanity. Chat GPT is just one of these advances that has brought a lot of controversy, especially in the education community. Chat GTP, also known as Generative Pre-Training Transformer, was released by OpenAI in November of 2022 and is “a large language model that can be used for natural language processing tasks such as text generation and language translation.” To put it in simpler terms, the user can ask the bot questions or give it prompts and it will uniquely answer based on data it has access to. There are many pros and cons to this program which display the constant evolution of technology in our society.

Chat GPT threatens academic integrity and personal creativity

By: Maura Sullivan

After being assigned an essay on transcendentalism, what should a student's next course of action be? Read the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson or Henry David Thoreau? Walk through the woods observing nature for a moment of introspection? Or perhaps request Chat GPT, an artificial intelligence platform which allows users to engage in conversational chat, answer questions and even request research papers. While technology has shaped our society and continues to transform our everyday lives, its latest evolutionary chapter poses more of a threat to our learning, integrity and thinking than any potential benefits it could possibly provide.

First, Chat GPT provides yet another technological venue for student abuse, as students may request the application's programmed essays rather than writing the papers themselves. In fact, many teachers now fear that Chat GPT will make cheating easier than ever, resulting in an increase in the number of student cheating incidents. And even if all students were able to resist the temptation of presenting an AI (artificial intelligence) paper as their own, the suspicion as to whether the work was the student's own or AI written would always be present. The possibility of this form of cheating would require school administrators to put yet another check in place to verify student's own work as their own and not the work of an AI program, thereby increasing workloads on educators and costs to educational institutions.

“I think Chat GPT is a cool resource,” senior Abby Sobeck said. “But I think people may try to take advantage of it and use it to cheat.”

Technology companies have become very profitable, partially from their pricing strategies. Although the Chat GPT is free to consumers today, it will undoubtedly become a future revenue generator. Applications like Chat GPT are often introduced with free pricing only to

increase pricing once consumers have adopted their technology. Chat GPT has even developed a tool to help teachers identify a Chat GPT paper. Therefore, the company has positioned itself to not only profit from the software application itself but also from its detection and remedy.

Also, there is a real threat that by allowing an application to think for us, we give too much responsibility to the developers to control content and expose us only to opinions and views that they deem acceptable, according to cyberwise.org. If we allow technology to think for us, are we not reducing the potential for individuals to think themselves and express unique points of view? The ramifications of allowing a select group of individuals to control our exposure to content can be very serious and even contrary to our constitutional beliefs.

Most importantly it discredits the art of writing itself and our unique abilities to create, develop and write by rewarding a product that does not allow for self expression. What would writing be if it did not allow for our own personal nuances and style differences? Are not the imperfections in writings what adds to their depth, uniqueness and authenticity? Although Chat GPT may make writing “easier” it is not “better” and students should not turn to a computer program to express their beliefs and opinions.

Chat GPT offers new opportunities and learning experiences

By: Maura McSweeney

Chat GPT is definitely a debatable topic when it comes to academic integrity, but what are some of the overlooked positives of this new development? According to the chatgpt.pro, it can be “useful for a wide range of applications, such as creating chatbots for customer service, generating responses to questions in online forums or even creating personalized content for social media posts.”

In addition, the program can assist with personalized communication and even help with marketing, making it extremely useful for business owners. It can simulate real life human interactions and conversations which can make it interesting and honestly fun to use. Chat GPT is also very accessible and easy to use, making it even more attractive to potential users. The Chat GPT website has almost all of the information you would need to make your decision on whether or not to use it from including examples to a step-by-step process on how to create an account and begin using it. Using it is easy and simple because all you have to do is type in a question or prompt and it will quickly answer.

“I don't know much about it but from what I know, it seems like it could help with grammar, run-on sentences and other stuff like that which can help improve the writing of many people,” senior Lilly Thornton said.

Though many may want to ban or put restrictions on the use of the platform, especially school districts, it is arguable that this technology should be introduced and integrated into schools and other places in order to familiarize students with the tool and learn how and when to use it.

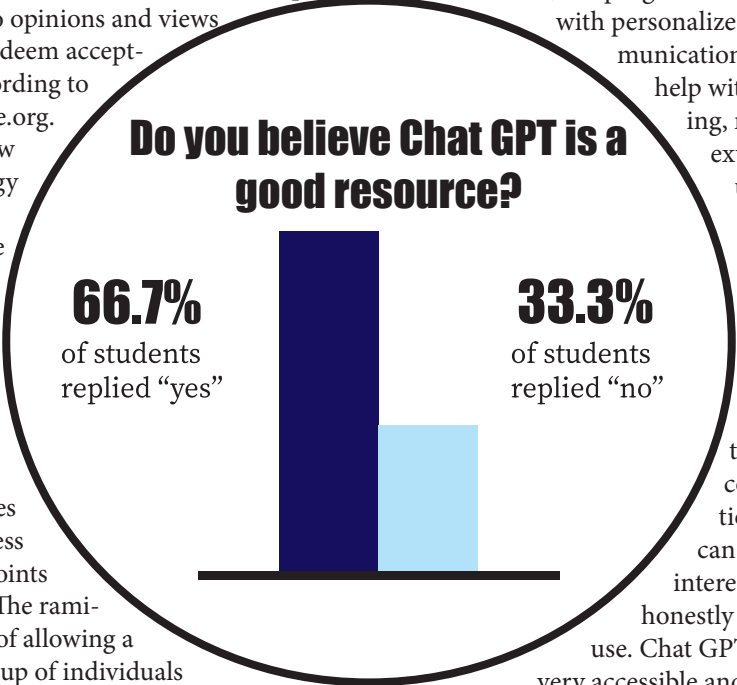
“Obviously if you use it as your own, it's a bad thing, but I've heard of teachers using it to produce examples and to use that to ask how it is or is not doing a good job,” Technology Integration Specialist Mr. Chris Janusch said. “It opens up a conversation about what is AI and what is machine learning and it, as a resource or reference tool, gives you a reference that was previously inaccessible.”

True, plagiarism will prove to be a challenge in the education world as well as the professional world, but it is something that is inevitable either way; people can plagiarize without technology too.

“Everyone in education seems to be worried about the plagiarism aspect because there's no good answer, but if teachers learn how to utilize it in the classroom maybe it will cut down on some of that,” IT Director Mr. Tom James said. “It's just such a new thing that I don't think anyone has a lot of answers yet.”

The cool thing about technology like this is that it is the technology itself that will come up with solutions to these problems. As we continue to advance technology, the need for it will continue to grow, but it may be up to us how much power we give it.

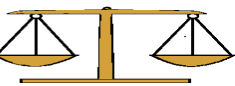
“It can generate paper because it's pulling information from all these resources and compiling them together. It's going to be able to identify them as being AI written by looking for patterns that exist within the paper,” Janusch said. So the solution to the problem is going to come from that same artificial intelligence.



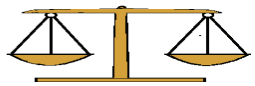
Several significant cases hit the Supreme Court this session

STORY AND GRAPHICS: ALYSSA TISCH, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

With so many different issues constantly being debated in government, sometimes it can be hard to keep track of everything that’s going on and what you should really pay attention to. *Newsprint* wants to help remedy this issue by providing a rundown on three significant Supreme Court cases that will be decided this session and why they matter.



Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College



To begin with, one significant case argued October 31, 2022 is *Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*. This case challenges the affirmative action programs that many colleges and universities have implemented and is paired with a similar case also being heard, *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. University of North Carolina*. While this wouldn’t affect schools in Michigan, where affirmative action programs are already banned, this will still affect many other schools outside of Michigan and everyone who applies to them.

In this case the *Students for Fair Admissions* sued Harvard over their admissions process, alleging that the process prefers African American and Hispanic

students over White and Asian American students and thus violates Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The district court, the first court that heard this case, issued an opinion in favor of Harvard. *Students for Fair Admissions* appealed this case to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit and this court affirmed or agreed with the lower court’s holding. Finally, this case was appealed again to the Supreme Court which granted certiorari (cert), meaning that they agreed to hear the case, and now we can only wait for the decision.

While the decision has not been leaked, many experts are already predicting that with a six justice majority, affirmative action programs will be banned

from here forward according to the Washington Post. The question that still needs to be answered, however, is what will happen with the consideration of factors that are very closely related to race otherwise known as racial proxies. For example knowing your zip code can allow people to make an educated guess on things such as your wealth, race and average school test scores, according to the Washington Post. Will proxies such as these be banned from consideration as well? How will this affect college admissions in the future?



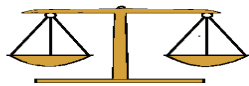
Another significant upcoming case is *Twitter, Inc. v. Taamneh*. In this case a U.S. citizen, Nawras Alassaf, was killed in an ISIS terrorist attack in 2017 at a Turkish night club. Relatives of Alassaf sued Twitter alleging that ISIS had used Twitter to expand its reach and as the platform did not attempt to prevent this, Twitter had aided and abetted an act of international terrorism, according to Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University. The district court dismissed these claims and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit reversed this decision. The Supreme Court granted cert on October 3, 2022 and the case is scheduled to be argued February 22.

Twitter, Inc v. Taamneh

This case is significant because it will determine how much social media platforms will need to monitor their sites. On one side, experts say that if they do hold that Twitter is liable for aiding and abetting international terrorism it would lead to social media platforms in the future taking down constitutionally protected speech in fear of liability. To counter this, they argue that instead the platforms should only be liable when they have actual knowledge that a piece of content provides substantial assistance to a terrorist act, according to the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University. On the other hand, the complaint alleged that the defendants’ platforms had



“played an essential role in the rise of ISIS to become the most feared terrorist organization in the world” according to the [supremecourt.gov](https://www.supremecourt.gov). They say that Twitter’s services allowed them to raise funds, create fear and recruit, radicalize and instruct terrorists, and thus Twitter should be liable and face consequences for their actions. This case will have a massive impact on the use of social media in the future, so especially if you have social media, it is an incredibly important case to follow.

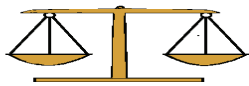


The final significant court case *Newsprint* will be talking about is *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis* which was argued December 5, 2022. In this case Lorie Smith, the owner of the graphic design firm, 303 Creative LLC, wanted to start creating wedding websites. However, due to her religion she is against same-sex marriage and thus would only provide her services for straight couples. This goes against the The Colorado AntiDiscrimination Act (CADA) that prohibits “any place of business engaged in any sales to the public and any place offering services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations to the public,” from discriminating on the basis of several different characteristics, including sexual orientation, according to The League of Women’s Voters. Smith decided to preemptively file a lawsuit against this act citing that

Creative LLC v. Elenis

it both wasn’t clear enough and violated her right to free speech under the First Amendment. The district court ruled that the CADA’s Communication Clause was valid under the First and Fourteenth Amendments and the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed this ruling. The U.S. Supreme Court partially granted cert but stated they would only look at whether or not CADA violated the First Amendment.

Now if this case sounds familiar, that may be because there was a similar case a few years ago in 2018: *Masterpiece Cakeshop, Ltd. v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*. In that case the cake shop owner, Jack Phillips, refused to make a wedding cake for a gay couple due to his religious beliefs. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Masterpiece, however, the difference in the 303 Creative case is that in



Masterpiece, the arguments were only related to the freedom of religion, while the 303 Creative case is all about the freedom of speech. The Masterpiece ruling was a very narrow decision that primarily focused on disparaging comments made by authorities about the baker’s religious beliefs. The 303 Creative case would have a much broader impact which makes it so significant.

During the trial, Colorado’s lawyer argued that CADA is directed at conduct, not speech, and thus does not violate her freedom of speech. Smith is not required to praise same-sex marriage, but she does have to design websites for all customers. The other side argues that the act does force Smith to communicate messages inconsistent with her beliefs.

For now, on these cases and the others we can only wait to see what the decisions will be and what lasting impacts are made. Be sure to keep yourself informed and don’t miss the rulings on these hugely significant cases.

Strong women in STEM inspire students

STORY AND GRAPHIC: LENA LAJOY

In society, countless women are diminished and told they will never be able to accomplish their goals. Especially in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers, where there is a majority of men, women are often overlooked and sometimes not given opportunities. Finding strong female inspirations that work in the field of STEM is important so young girls can find a voice to uplift them to accomplish their own goals. The International Day of Women and Girls in Science on February 11, and to celebrate, Newsprint staff share some influential women in the STEM field who can be role models for teenagers.

Marie Curie:

Marie Curie 1867-1934 was a brilliant scientist responsible for finding the elements Radium and Polonium. She is also notably remembered for her cancer research.

"With the discovery of Radium, Marie Curie created the beginnings of Radiology, a cure for cancer," Vocal Music Director Mrs. Abha Dearing said.

Curie, originally born in Poland as Maria Skłodowska, spent her life dreaming of being a teacher. While attending school in Paris she met her husband Pierre Curie who was a scientist. Together they researched and worked on new discoveries for radioactivity.

"There are so many people afflicted with this body of diseases that if she had not been so tenacious and such a challenge to societal norms, cancer would still be killing so many people," Dearing said.

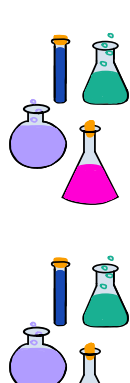
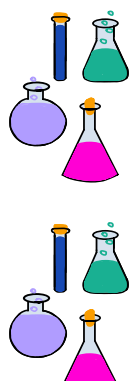
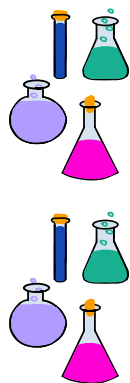
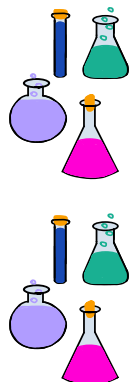
Together, she and her husband won a Nobel Peace Prize for their combined work on radioactivity. Years later, Pierre was killed in a car accident and Marie was left alone to work on new findings. Alone, she was able to continue her work and make new discoveries that would help millions of people, and inspire generations of women.

"Women need to be reminded that limits are placed on us by outside forces, by people threatened by our power," Dearing said.

Curie won her second Nobel Peace Prize for her work in creating a way to measure radioactivity. Marie Curie was an accomplished scientist and researcher who inspires women of all ages to not give up and never let anything stop you from achieving goals.



Marie Curie. Photo courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org.



Mae C. Jemison:

Mae Carol Jemison was born in Alabama and is not only a doctor, but also a NASA astronaut and engineer. She has made many accomplishments throughout her life so far. Some of these accomplishments include: being inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame, being inducted into the International Space Hall of Fame and for being the first African American woman to go into space.

"Mae C. Jemison (born on October 17, 1956) was the first Black female astronaut in space," freshman Cora Lee said.

Growing up, Jemison knew she wanted to join the science field when she grew up, and had particular interest in astronauts. Specifically she was angered by the lack of female astronauts at NASA, which drove her to want to be an astronaut in the future.

"She is important to learn about, so we don't overlook the accomplishments of women-specifically women of color- in history," Lee said.

Jemison went to school and earned degrees in Chemical Engineering, Arts in African-American studies, and medicine. She did amazing work with these degrees including leading a study for American Medical Student Association in Cuba, working in a Cambodian refugee camp located in Thailand and working in the Peace Corps for two years as a medical officer in Africa.

"Mae C. Jemison inspires me because she paved the way for black women to take part in stem careers, and education," Lee said.

Jemison joined the NASA program in 1987, a year after the Challenger exploded. She went into space for the first time in 1992 as a Mission Specialist on a shuttle named Endeavor where she orbited the earth 127 times in total. Her accomplishments make her a very important role model for all women.

"She inspired many people, and helped women and people of color recognize that they too could have a job in stem," Lee said.

As a brilliant and skilled science influence, Jamison is a respected individual who reminds females they can accomplish anything they set their mind towards. Her determination from a young age and continued endeavors exemplify her attitude of hard work which is admired by all.



Mae C. Jemison. Photo courtesy of flickr.com.

Andrea Comba:

Dr. Andrea Comba is a scientist at University of Michigan who works specifically with a form of brain cancer typically found in the brain or spine. "She studies glioblastomas, a particularly aggressive brain tumor with very low survival rates and very high mortality rates," senior Angelina Hamati said.

Dr. Comba is originally from Argentina, and acts as an inspiration for young girls due to her immense success.

"I think it is important for women who are a part of minorities to look up to her. She is extremely successful in her field of study and in general and is making huge jumps in cancer research," said Hamati.

Most notably, Dr. Comba is the first person to find "oncostreams" which act as channels which tumor cells can travel through. As the first to discover this form of elongated malignant cells, Dr. Comba is proving herself to be a strong brilliant scientist.

"She is a reminder that anyone can do what they are passionate about when they put their head into it and work hard," Hamati said.

Hamati met Dr. Comba through an internship at University of Michigan Medical School, and through Dr. Comba, she was able to learn so much about the brain and research.

"I interned with Dr. Comba at University of Michigan Medical School. She taught me a lot of lab skills, experimental design, as well as the anatomy of the brain and about glioblastomas," Hamati said.

Dr. Comba's knowledge is impressive and the information she has found already will help with progress towards the deadly form of brain cancer. The information she holds already is motivating women like Hamati.

"Her wealth of knowledge is impressive and inspired me to also strive to learn more," Hamati said.



Andrea Comba. Photo courtesy of Andrea Comba.

Rosie the Riveter:

Rosie the Riveter is a national icon and symbol of female strength in STEM. Her image has continued to inspire women ever since she first appeared in 1942. Her slogan of "we can do it" was, and still is, important to remind girls they can be as strong as men.

"She shows great symbolism to female empowerment," senior Olivia Gray said.

During World War II, when men had left work to fight in the war, women stepped up and took their places. The roles these women took, in factories, were mainly male dominated, so her slogan helped inspire women to not be afraid or deterred.

"It is important for young women to see her as an inspiration because she's powerful and has a strong symbolic meaning," Gray said.

Rosie the Riveter is based on a woman named Mae Krier who during the war, worked on building planes like the B-17 and B-29. Krier is now 96 years old and continuing to live her legacy as Rosie the Riveter, and was recently awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award.

"Rosie the Riveter inspires me as a female because she is tough," Gray said.

Rosie the Riveter was a symbol of hope for millions of women wanting to step up and prove themselves in the labor industry. Her influence was vital during WWII to help females in STEM acquire more recognition and respect.



World War II propaganda featuring Rosie the Riveter. Photo courtesy of publicdomainvectors.org.

The importance of Black Student Unions

STORY: HELENA NAJAR

Mercy’s BASE is educating on racial issues and diversifying our school

The Black Awareness Society for Education (BASE) began in the 1990’s at U of D Jesuit High School. It has been a prominent club at the school ever since, and inspired the creation of Mercy’s BASE club. Counselor Arpna Hessler, one of the BASE moderators, explained its origins at Mercy.

“It was an unofficial club at Mercy in the mid to late 90’s for many years,” Hessler said. “Mercy didn’t recognize it as a club.”

Despite the administration’s reluctance to confirm the club’s presence, one senior fought to have it validated.

“One of our students, Elizabeth Jenkins, wanted to make it official so she wrote a proposal for administration and asked Mrs. Tarplin and I to be moderators for the club,” Hessler said. “We happily agreed and we have been an official club since 2011.”

Since its inception, BASE has had one major goal: to unite and educate students of various backgrounds on issues and events that occur in the world and which impact racial harmony. BASE is fighting to actively raise awareness about issues within the African American community.

BASE holds group meetings throughout the school year, they also participate in different events to help educate about the African American community.

“We attend an annual BASE convention at U of D Jesuit,” Hessler said. “Many other local schools who have Black Student Unions or BASE clubs are also invited to be in attendance. Mercy students always do an amazing presentation at the convention.”

BASE leader Janay Duncan describes BASE as the type of club where students of similar backgrounds can come together and discuss issues and get to know other people within their culture.

“It is a safe place for African American girls to understand each other and to feel connected with people who look like them,” Duncan said.

It can be difficult to be a Black person in a majority white community and BASE is helping students connect with people they

Pretty Brown Girl, a club for all shades of Brown at Mercy

BASE is not the only group at Mercy promoting diversity and inclusivity for young students of color. Pretty Brown Girl is part of a national organization working to promote self confidence in young women of color in majority white situations. Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Mrs. Traci Smith is the moderator of the Mercy chapter of Pretty Brown Girl.

“This is an organization that is specifically designed to instill self confidence, pride and leadership in girls of color, for all the shades of brown,” Smith said.

Pretty Brown Girl was started in 2010 by Sheri Johnson Crawley, a distinguished Mercy alum class of 1990. Smith saw this connection made the innovative organization a perfect fit for the Mercy community and introduced it three years ago.

“When I came in, I knew we needed this club,” Smith said.

Pretty Brown Girl brought a new perspective to Mercy,



Sheri Johnson Crawley. Photo courtesy of Pretty Brown Girl.

can relate to on a personal level.

“BASE allows students to have a circle of people who are similar to each other,” Duncan said. “It creates healthy relationships and shows how important it is for the Black community to stick together and connect with others in this community.”

BASE is the primary resource of education on the Black community and issues that may arise within the Mercy community. BASE has been instrumental in bringing awareness to problems that are commonly ignored.

“[BASE] shows that some topics should not be ignored or pushed under the rug,” Duncan said. “We sit and talk about everything, no matter how ugly it can be.”

However, BASE is not just for black students. Dean of Students Eleasha Tarplin explains that BASE can be used as a resource for non-Black students in order to learn more about the Black community.

“I don’t feel like BASE is just for the Black students,” Tarplin said. “It would be nice if others came to BASE meetings so they could learn about Black students and what their life is like, it gives good insight for others.”

Black history Month is a main focus of BASE throughout the school year. They prepare to educate the Mercy community about black history month by hosting events and activities.

“Every year, BASE has taken part in the Black History month assembly,” Hessler said. “They have worked in conjunction with the Human Relations Council to help with it.”

The existence of BASE in and of itself is Black history. Black History Month is a celebration of culture and community and BASE is only one small part of this celebration.

“BASE being a group for Black students, it is a way for Mercy, our school that is majority white to be able to celebrate the experience of Black people and the Black community here at Mercy,” Tarplin said.

Many members of BASE, including freshman Jamesyn Doug-

las, view the association as an exciting way to meet people within their community.

“BASE is so much fun, the people are really nice and it is a great way to meet other people of color,” Douglas said. “It’s a really good outlet for black people at Mercy and it is a great organization.”

Douglas also described BASE as a source of confidence and security in her Black identity.

“Even when you’re in a place where you don’t feel supported in your race, [BASE] will give you a place to be accepted and supported,” Douglas said.

BASE is a diverse, welcoming and loving community where Black students can find refuge when they feel unwanted.

“BASE makes it so that black students don’t feel alone,” Douglas said. “They can be around those who understand them and relate to their struggles.”



BASE members and their moderators pose at the most recent BASE meeting in December. Photo courtesy of Eleasha Tarplin.

Members discuss a wide range of topics at meetings, but often focus on problems that teenage girls face in everyday life.

“Dating, how you’re treated, self image, how we allow other people to treat us, they do vision boarding and also talk about issues with race, sexism, all those different things.”

Pretty Brown Girl is helping to create a space for young women of color to learn more about themselves in a safe and accepting environment.

“I joined Pretty Brown Girl in order to grow into my own skin and learn to love myself more,” junior Erin Ikwechegh said. “I think the best part of Pretty Brown Girl is that I was able to do just that along with meeting new people and making new friends.”

“Pretty Brown Girl is honestly just such an amazing club, it’s quite healing and it is such an amazing experience,” Ikwechegh said.

In the conversation of Black History Month, Pretty Brown Girl is extremely relevant because it focuses on the personal lives of people of color. Although the club is not exclusive to Black people, many of its members are and it is helping these young women find a voice for themselves in spaces where their voice might not always be welcome.

“The focus [of Pretty Brown Girl] is on women of color and it’s founded by a Black woman, that’s Black history, living Black history, living Mercy history because the founder is a young girl who walked these halls as well,” Smith said. “Black history is about honoring the legacy of Black people in America.”

“I think that’s what makes it important to Black History, it helps Black girls and women and girls of color to expand their minds and to change the terms of where they could be, who they are and where they’re going,” Smith said.

Road to inclusivity in English classes

STORY AND GRAPHICS: MAURA MCSWEENEY

Changes are happening all around us all the time, and, whether they are big or small, each change can have a positive or negative outcome. Mercy’s English Department is just one example of something that is undergoing change in order to better enrich students’ education.

In recent years, the English Department has revamped many different courses that it is offering and the literary texts that the students read. Many of these changes have included adding diverse works of literature in the course structures to better represent Mercy’s diverse student body.

“As a department, we looked at the curriculum and decided that it needed revamping and so we decided to look at who the student population is,” English Department Head and teacher Mrs. Jill Herold said. “Also it being 2021 at the time, we needed to modernize it a little bit to reflect who we are and where we are.”

English 9, a required course for ninth graders, has changed the books that it covers throughout the last couple of years to include more diversity and perspectives. One of the most important changes that has been made is the addition of “The Hate You Give” by Angie Thomas. A well-known novel around the world, “The Hate You Give” approaches issues prominent in society today such as racism and police brutality. The novel offers an important point of view and is one that stands out to many students as one of their favorites reads of the year.

“It’s a text that causes people’s emotions to run high, but it’s also a necessary conversation to have about race and the way things are in society,” English teacher Mr.

“The Hate You Give”

A novel by Angie Thomas follows 16 year-old Starr Carter as she faces racism in her predominately white school. This eye-opening story sheds light on injustices within the police system and racism that is still prominent today. After being published in 2017, the novel was later adapted into an award-winning film in late 2018.



“The Color Purple”

Another novel read in a junior-senior class, Women’s Literature, is “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker. The story follows Celie, an African American woman, who attempts to fight back against the discriminatory views of her based off of her race and sex. The novel was later adapted into a film starring Whoopi Goldberg in 1985, three years after its release.

Continuing the journey to a better Mercy

STORY: ALYSSA TISCH, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

While clearly many improvements have been made over the years at Mercy discussing race both inside and outside the classroom, that’s not to say that everything is perfect now. As a community we still have a ways to go and many student leaders are dedicated to helping us to get there.

Junior class officer Kennedy Dobson made a proposal to Human Relations Counsel (HRC) for this year’s Black History Month assembly to try and improve the way it is run. As pointed out by Dobson, across the United States many students have assignments during Black History Month that are either a quick worksheet on Martin Luther King Jr or one on Rosa Parks. But what about all of the others who have made a difference?

“Let’s talk about the people in history we don’t talk about so much. The people we just say a quote from,” Dobson said. “What about them? Why were they so beneficial to our community? This assembly is going to be based around the people and groups we don’t talk about as much. But it’s going to be more of a production not just a slideshow. You are going to be engaged whether you want to [be] or not.”

The education provided to everyone both by this assembly and in their classes could prove invaluable and could really make a difference. However, for a change to truly occur, students have to be willing to receive this information.

“A lot of it is about the individual student and how their mindset is,” Dobson said. “You could have grown up in a house with certain views but you have to have your own mind as well.”

It is important for students to set aside any prior convictions they may have and

Steve Morgan said. “Even though it is difficult and awkward at times for people who are part of those conversations, they are necessary because of the societal issues that we’re having and the need for people’s voices to be heard.”

In addition, the sophomore English class has also changed. Up until this year, Mercy sophomores took Composition during their first semester and British Literature during their second semester.

“In American Literature, we literally dive into all facets of American culture, race and everything, and look at American cultures as a springboard for who we are and our journey,” Herold said.

During a Mercy student’s junior and senior years, they have the opportunity to select their English courses from a number of different options. Beginning next year, new courses will be added to replace old ones that were offered this year. The English department teachers are always reevaluating and adding diversity and voice into their curriculum to showcase different cultures and backgrounds.

“The student population is diverse and there is a need, regardless of your race or background, to learn about experiences and struggles that every person in the building might encounter or acknowledge and respect that there are things going on that should be recognized,” Morgan said. “And that’s part of the journey toward a more inclusive environment, open dialogue, racial harmony, and ending lacking understanding of people’s perspectives.”

truly be willing to listen and learn. If one wants to make a difference, the best place to start is by looking within yourself. Additionally, if someone points out something that you said or did wrong, you need to actually be able to make a change in that behavior.

“When people say you’re doing something wrong, listen. The problem with the world today is that we all think we are always right,” Dobson said. “We all have to listen to each other and hear what’s hurting each other.”

Mercy can and should continue to do more to help this. By calling people out more on the comments that they make and additionally explaining why they are wrong, this could ideally prevent future comments from being made. Rather than just letting issues go because they are “sensitive”, those are the kind of topics that really need to be discussed.

One way to do this is through restorative circles, a method that has been proven efficient over and over. A restorative circle is a way to talk about a conflict in a healthy, open and honest way. Those who feel they have been wronged are encouraged to share how they feel and how they think the issue should be resolved going forward. Then it is on the other person to make sure they listen and commit to helping.

“Everything is so sensitive now and we just don’t talk about it. We need to talk about it though or it will just keep happening,” Dobson said. “We need to be more open with each other and also talk about those issues, because not talking about it will just create more issues.”

Keeping all this in mind, go into this Black History Month ready to make progress, and ideally, we will.

February brings an abundance of excitement

STORY AND GRAPHICS: HELENA NAJAR

Open your heart and wallet for Frozen fundraiser

This past September, it was announced that Mercy had been given the opportunity of a lifetime. Mercy became the first high school in Michigan to be awarded by Disney the rights to perform “Frozen, The Broadway Musical” during the 2023-2024 school year. To make this production its very best, the Mercy performing arts department will be hosting the Love is an Open Door fundraiser.

“[This fundraiser] is basically a talent show, we are inviting many of our performing groups to perform, the cast of Matilda will be performing as well as the Mercyairees and Mimes,” Performing Arts Department Chair Mrs. Shelly Bajorek said.

Not only is this fundraiser a way to showcase the numerous previously established performers at Mercy, but also acts as an opportunity for students outside the program to display their talents to the school community.

“We’ve also asked other students to audition in things like dance, or individual performances, duets, small groups, instrumentalists and even some spoken word or speech related components,” Bajorek said.

This fundraiser will be crucial in gathering funds to provide materials required to bring “Frozen” to life.

“We are taking this [fundraiser] as an opportunity to do some upgrades to our auditorium,” Bajorek said. “We are putting it on in hopes to fundraise enough money to cover the costs of some things that were not originally in our budget.”

Although the Mercy auditorium is very technically advanced it does not have all the up-to-date functions that are necessary for a production as elaborate as “Frozen”.

“The money is going toward updating our current lighting,” Bajorek said. “We do have one strip of LED lights, but we are actually raising funds to update all of our lighting fixtures from regular, bulb lights to LED lights.”

These new lighting changes will expand the ability for

special effects during next year’s production.

“This will give us the option for colored lights and it will also eventually be a cost saver to the school because we will not have to replace lights as often, it will be better for the performers because it will lower output of heat,” Bajorek said.

LED lights are not the only upgrade that Mercy performing arts is hoping to raise funds to purchase.

“What we’re really excited about is, we are fundraising to purchase a projector, which will allow us to have digital backdrops and video backdrops,” Bajorek said. “We can actually have a snowstorm in “Frozen” and see the snow moving.”

These changes that will be made to the auditorium with the help of the fundraiser will also affect many other aspects of school life.

“This will allow us to do so much more, not only in the performing arts but also in the auditorium space,” Bajorek said. “We can use this technology for masses and assemblies and even renting out our auditorium, so it’s a great thing to support.”

By supporting this fundraiser you are showing an interest in the arts, and are helping students to grow in their love for theater and in their experience.

“Performing arts is such a bright spot in so many students’ lives, so it really is supporting your community.”

Mercy stage manager junior Hannah Kennedy wants it to be known that this fundraiser will not only help with the production of “Frozen” but it will also be an exciting way to see all the talent that the Mercy community holds.

“You should come see Love is an Open Door because everyone is so very talented and it will be an amazing show,” Kennedy said.

Don’t miss Love is an Open Door on February 10 at 7:00 p.m. in the Mercy High School auditorium.



A Mercy student and her father get down on the dance floor at the 2019 Father Daughter Dance. Photo Courtesy of Patricia Perry.

Father Daughter Dance

Present day teenagers are busy. Aside from school, many teens work, play sports, take care of family and have various other obligations. With all this work it can be easy to forget about the most important parts of life, friends and family, and often the family that is forgotten are fathers.

The father daughter dance is a long standing, annual tradition at Mercy High School. Junior Class Officer Grace Eliya, an organizer for the event, says that this dance gives students the chance to make unforgettable memories with the people around them.

“We felt like this would be a really good opportunity for people to bond with their father figures,” Eliya said. “Especially for upperclassmen, they’re going to be going to college soon and for most people this will be their last father daughter dance ever.”

Along with fathers or father figures, the father daughter dance can be an amazing way to bond with the rest of your family and with other Mercy students.

“This event is for the school, it’s so fun to see everyone in one place having a good time,” Eliya said. “You can even bring younger siblings, even if they don’t go to Mercy.”

This event is not simply just a dance, there is also a plethora of other exciting activities to enjoy with your loved ones.

“We are going to have games, like cornhole, a hot chocolate station and a bunch of other stuff if you don’t feel like dancing,” Eliya said.

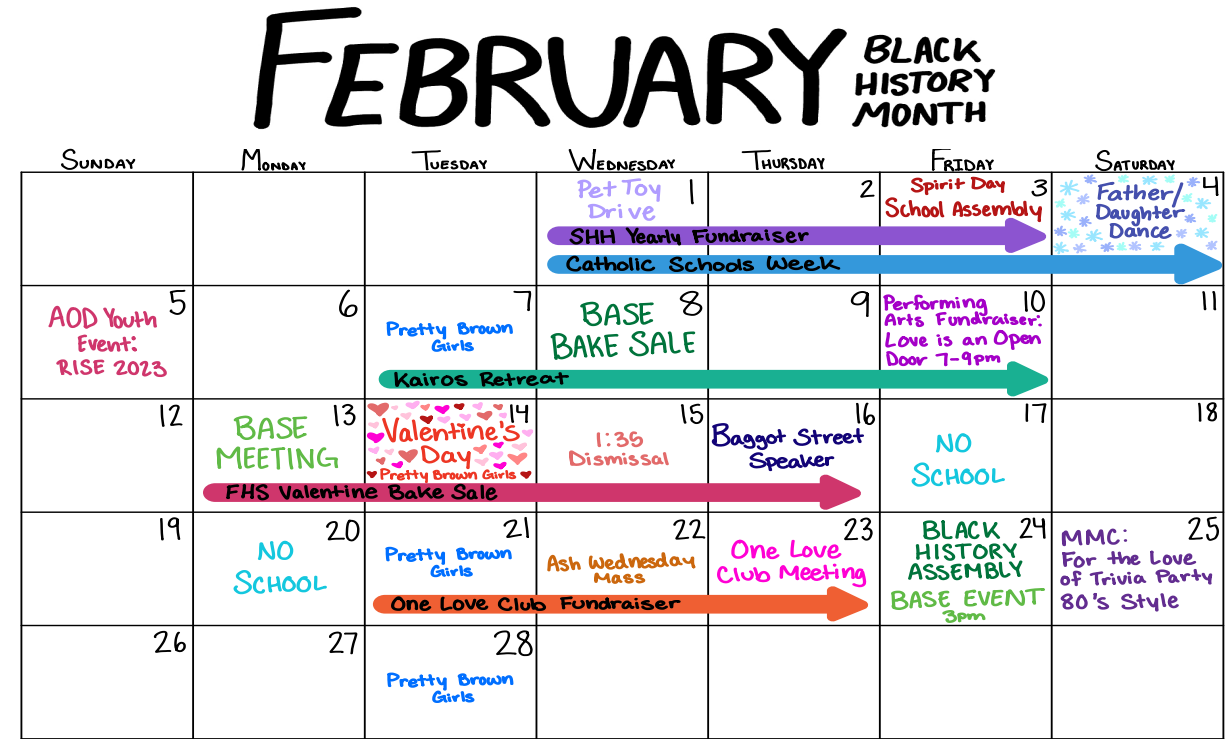
The father daughter dance is not only an exciting experience to share with a loved one but also benefits the school in many ways.

“All the proceeds [from the dance] are going towards prom for the class of 2024,” Eliya said. “It brings down the cost of prom for everyone by a lot because we always raise a good amount of money.”

The junior class officers have worked tirelessly to make this event worth your while. With months of intense planning it is sure to be amazing.

“We’ve been planning the father daughter dance since about October and [it] has been our main focus for the year so far, it’s gonna be so much fun,” Eliya said.

The father daughter dance takes place tomorrow at 8:00 p.m. in the gym/lobby.



Super Bowl Sunday draws near

STORY AND GRAPHIC: JULIA LORELLI, SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROMOTIONS EDITOR

The clock is ticking down to Super Bowl Sunday, February 12, where the Philadelphia Eagles will take on the Kansas City Chiefs in Glendale, Arizona at 6:30 p.m. The Eagles soared past the San Francisco 49ers with a score of 31-7 in the semifinals. The other semi final game was much closer as the Chiefs barely squeaked out a 3 point win against the Bengals (23-20).

According to ESPN Stats & Information research, Philadelphia center Jason Kelce and Kansas City tight end Travis Kelce will become the first brothers to play against each other in the Super Bowl. The game will also feature the youngest combined age between starting quarterbacks in Super Bowl history.

The Chiefs are hoping to win their second Super Bowl in three years. The Eagles have not been to the Super Bowl since 2017 when they beat the New England Patriots.

According to foxsports.com, the Eagles are favored by 2.5 points, meaning this should be a tight and exciting game to watch. The over/under is set at 49.5 points. The Eagles

are at -128 while the Chiefs are at +110. The plus sign in front of a number shows which team is the underdog.

Super Bowl Sunday has increased from just a football game to determine the best team in the NFL to a day of festivities.

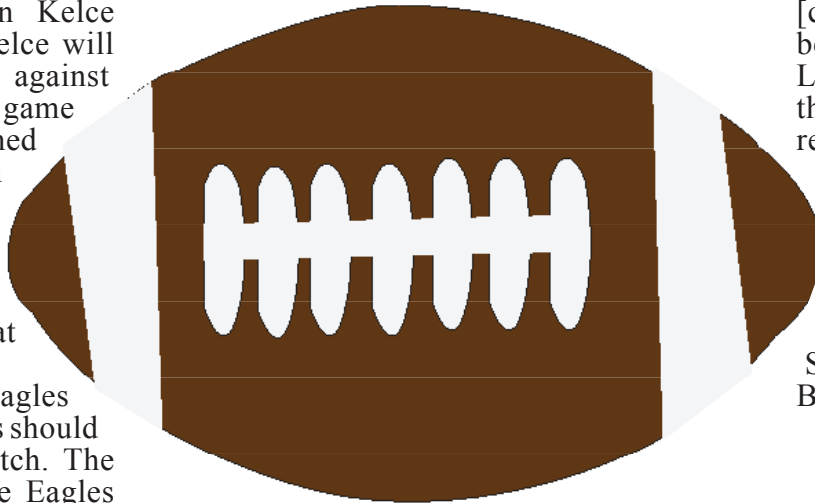
Approximately 103.5 million plan to attend or throw a Super Bowl party while 17.8 million plan to watch the game at a restaurant or bar, according to nrf.com. While the game is

exciting, there are many viewers that will only watch for the commercials. Some of the biggest companies spend millions of dollars for 30 seconds of commercial time on Super Bowl day.

The game is only one exciting part of this spectacle, including the hours of pre game show and the half time show, which is headlined by Rihanna.

"I'm super excited to see Rihanna [continue] her music career at the Super Bowl because of course Riri is amazing," senior Mia Lienhard said. "Some people think that maybe this could be a new song drop since she hasn't released an album since 2016, but we'll see."

No other performers are guaranteed yet. However, almost every Super Bowl Halftime show has had special guests. According to parade.com, for 2023, these surprise guests may include Jay-Z, Paul McCartney, Clavicle Harris, Eminem, Shakira, Jeezy, Kendrick Lamar, Coldplay, Bryson Tiller and/ or PARTYNEXTDOOR.



Winter athletes fight through their season

STORY AND GRAPHIC: JULIA LORELLI, SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROMOTIONS EDITOR

Mercy Marlin winter sports are well underway as each team has had multiple competitions or games to compete in.

"Some [teams] are doing really well, some are not as well and are having a rebuilding year," Assistant Athletic Director Kate Scalzi said. "Basketball's doing really well, ski's doing well, boardercross is doing well, bowling is doing well and hockey, It's a rebuilding year, finding our feet."

The varsity basketball team has had the best luck. Despite having a small roster, they have won all 11 of their games.

The varsity hockey team has had a really tough year winning only four of their 12 games. They placed fourth in the Mid-Michigan showcase with a record of 1-2 with their only win coming from a shootout goal from junior Faith Lapham.

"I think we have improved by bonding more as a team and playing our positions better and creating plays," senior and assistant captain Maddie Morgan said. "I think we can make it pretty far into the playoffs if we keep playing as a team."

The varsity ski team placed third in their first event, the Giant Slalom, with 65 points. They placed first in their second even, which was also the Giant Slalom, with 38 points, edging out the powerhouse,

Brighton High School, by one point. The varsity ski team placed second in their third event, the Giant Slalom with 35 points.

The varsity figure skating team placed third, fourth and fifth at their first meet. They also placed second, third and fourth at their second meet.

"I love basketball because you can watch in the gym where it's warm," Scalzi said. "Ski and boardercross are also fun to watch, but cold. Everyone should be going to matches and games and supporting."



Senior Lauren Smiley protects the ball from Marian. Photo courtesy of MVB Hoops Instagram.

Upcoming Events

Basketball:

February 3 vs Edison, 7:00
February 7 @ Divine Child, 7:00
February 10 vs Cass Tech, 7:00
February 15, CHSL Semifinal
February 18, CHSL final
February 21 vs Cranbrook-Kingswood, 6:30
February 23, Operation Friendship
February 27, March 1, 2, MHSAA Districts, North Farmington
March 7, 9, MHSAA Regionals, Royal Oak
March 14, MHSAA Quarterfinals, UDM
March 17, MHSAA Semifinals, Breslin Center, 5:30
March 18, MHSAA Finals, Breslin Center, 6:15

Hockey:

February 3 vs Skyrun at Eddie Edgar, 4:30
February 10 vs Down River United at Eddie Edgar, 4:30
February 17 vs Gross Pointe South at Eddie Edgar, 4:30
February 18 vs Washburn United at Ann Arbor Ice Cube, 3:00
February 22 vs Livonia United at Eddie Edgar, 6:00

Figure Skating:

March 4, Farmington Hills Ice Arena, 4:30

Boardercross:

February 6 at Mt. Brighton, Make-up race
February 8 at Mt. Brighton, Wildcard race
February 13 at Mt. Brighton, Individual Qualifier
February 15 at Alpine Valley, States

Bowling:

February 4 vs Divine Child, Oak Lanes, 8:30 a.m.
February 6 vs OLSM, Wonderland Lanes, 3:30
February 10 vs Mercy Gold, Wonderland Lanes, 3:30
February 11 @ Mercy Tournament, Universal Lanes, 8:30 a.m.
February 15, Post Conference Singles, Oak Lanes, 3:30
February 18, Catholic League Championships, Oak Lanes, 7:00 a.m.
February 24, MHSAA Regionals-teams, Century Bowl, 8:30 a.m.
March 2, MHSAA Regionals-Singles, Century Bowl, 8:30 a.m.
March 3, MHSAA State Finals-teams, Thunderbowl Lanes, 7:30 a.m.
March 4, MHSAA State Finals, Schuss Mountain, 9:00 a.m.

Ski:

February 3, JV Championship, Mt. Brighton, 10:00 a.m.
February 6, CHSL Championship, Alpine Valley, 2:00
February 9, Divisional Championship, Mt. Brighton, 9:00 a.m.
February 16, MHSAA Regionals, Mt. Brighton, 9:00 a.m.
February 27, MHSAA Finals, Schuss Mountain, 9:00 a.m.

WHAT KIND OF VALENTINE ARE YOU?

STORY AND GRAPHICS: MAURA SULLIVAN, ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Valentine's Day is quickly approaching. This means we will soon be surrounded by everything romantic and beautiful, from delicate pink and red hearts, to romantic love songs and movies. But what type of Valentine are you? Take our 6 question quiz to know your true Valentine's Day self.

1. VALENTINE SWEET TART CANDIES HAVE BECOME A TRADITION. WHEN YOU HAVE A BOX OF SWEET AND SOUR MESSAGED HEARTS WHAT DO YOU DO?

- a. I read every candy and distribute them to the appropriate person based on the message.
- b. Share with my friends randomly.
- c. I eat them. Sometimes I read them.
- d. I throw them at people.

2. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR VALENTINE'S DAY ATTIRE?

- a. All red and pink, of course.
- b. Usually something kind of cute.
- c. Sweatpants and a big sweatshirt... I can never remember it's Valentine's Day.
- d. Anything but red and pink. I hate being dressed overzealously for any holiday.

3. WHAT ROMANTIC MOVIE DO YOU LIKE TO COZY UP TO?

- a. "The Notebook"
- b. "50 First Dates"
- c. "10 Things I Hate About You"
- d. "The Hunger Games"

4. ON VALENTINE'S DAY, I USUALLY FIND MYSELF EATING....

- a. Chocolate covered strawberries
- b. Sweet tarts
- c. The same thing I eat every other day
- d. A pint of ice cream

5. WHAT ITEM OR ACCESSORY MUST YOU ALWAYS HAVE CLOSE BY ON VALENTINE'S DAY?

- a. Breath mints. Fresh breath must always be top priority.
- b. My phone. I need to keep up with everyone else's relationship status.
- c. My earbuds, to tune out all of the Valentine's chatter.
- d. Same items I needed on February 13th.

6. WHAT ONE WORD WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE VALENTINE'S DAY?

- a. Romantic
- b. Fun
- c. Annoying
- d. Miserable

Now, that you have completed our quiz, here is a breakdown of your Valentine's day profile. Assign point values for each question as follows: a=1, b=2, c=3, d=4 and then take an average of your Valentine point value.

1.5 OR LOWER -
HOPELESS ROMANTIC

Holidays for this girl are always fun and it would not be surprising if this person goes out for any special occasion. This Valentine wears her heart on her sleeve but every once in a while, may need to wipe the hearts out of her eyes to get a true perspective on her relationships.

2.5 - 3.5 -
INDIFFERENT VALENTINE

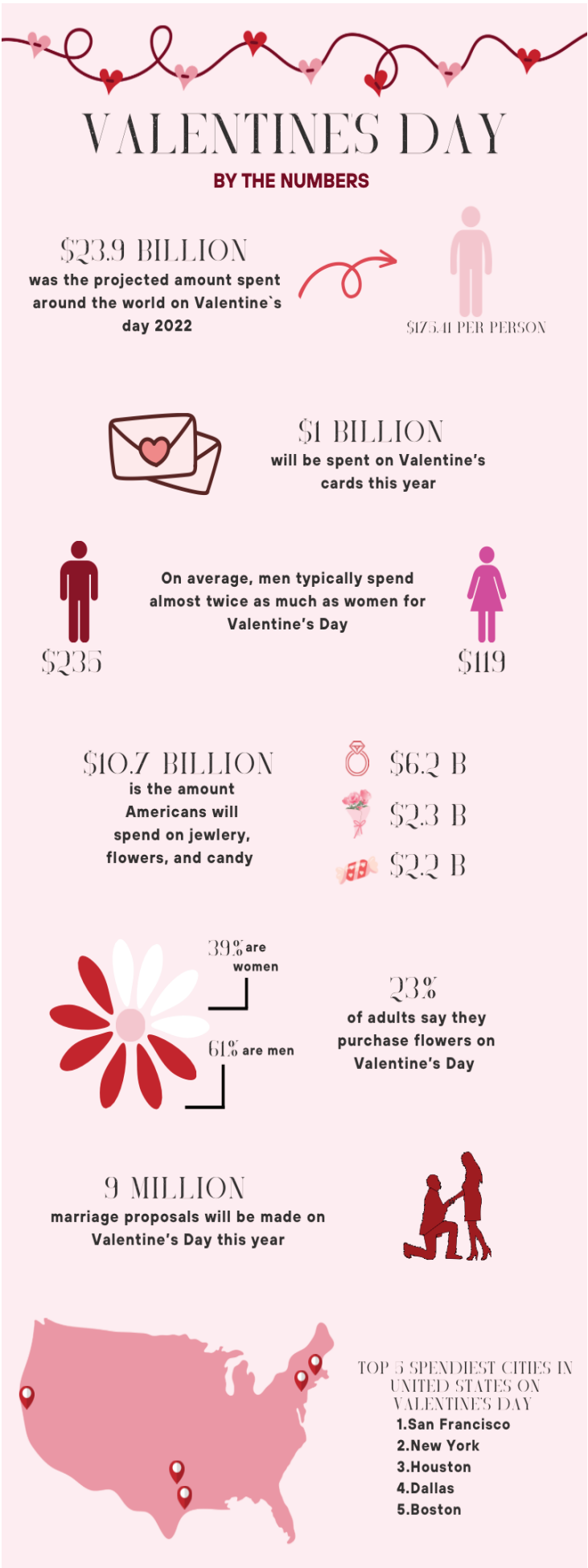
The Indifferent Valentine appears disinterested, especially to the Valentine's Day holiday. The Indifferent Valentine may have some romantic possibilities, but doesn't care to invest the time in a relationship, making them even more mysterious.

1.5 - 2.5 -
ULTIMATE VALENTINE

For the ultimate Galentine, the holiday is all about fun and friends! If a cool guy comes into the picture, it's really not a big priority. The Galentine wants to be out and seen! There is no stopping this girl!

3.5 OR ABOVE -
VALENTINE VETERAN

"Been there, done that" may be the motto of our Valentine Day Veteran. The Veteran may have weathered past broken relationships and just prefers to spend the night alone and relaxed. But lighten up Valentine Veteran...throwing heart shaped candy at people is too much!



Reflection on life as a Black woman at Mercy

STORY: SAGE JOHNSON, GUEST WRITER

“If you’re colored, you get the short end of the stick. If you’re a woman, you get the short end of the stick. So what do we get for being colored and women?” - Sherri L. Smith, Flygirl.

High school is a unique experience for everyone. Fitting in is difficult no matter where you come from, but sometimes it forces you to change to fit in. Trying to find myself and navigate a whole new environment is a challenge too many people battle alone. Mercy removes gender competition in the classroom, meaning no lingering feeling that “men are superior.” Class does not become a big divider, even though we have a variety of socioeconomic statuses represented here. The one factor that becomes an unavoidable divider is race. It creates a common experience with minorities, seemingly alienating them from the majority population. Cliques become based on race and not on things such as interests and hobbies.

Freshman year, I would find myself trying to change my behavior to fit into a group or changing myself

to not seem “as Black” to make other people more comfortable. But in no way or form should I have to change for someone else’s benefit. And you shouldn’t either. If they ask or imply for you to change, they are not the people for you. At Mercy, I have classes where I have often found myself to be the only Black person in the room. There are times when you get that feeling that with anything you say or do represents all Black people. That feeling can force you into overextending yourself or remaining isolated. It is an unintended responsibility that falls upon Black people especially when people in the class have never held a real conversation with someone who doesn’t look like them.

The Black Awareness Society for Education (BASE) at Mercy has become my place of comfort because it is a space where race becomes the common factor and not the dividing factor. The people who have come and gone through BASE were people who you could share similar experiences with and learn how to not lose yourself. Without BASE, I would not be my true self today.

People from various backgrounds come to Mercy

because of the education that produces successful women. I chose to attend Mercy because I knew it would prepare me for any college of my choosing and put me in an environment with like-minded women. Success looks different for each student. Every girl wants to be supported and encouraged as they go through life. Because of our different backgrounds, there will also be people we meet who are unsupportive and unencouraging. I, like so many others, look for people to connect with and places to feel included. I look for relationships with people from any walk of life with goals and ambitions. It takes time to find your people, but your place is wherever you are.

Editorial: pros of technology outweigh negatives

STORY AND GRAPHIC: NEWSPRINT STAFF

In our world today, technology is a powerful tool that can be used in multiple different ways. In some ways, technology is a necessity vital to society and in others, technology can be a source of conflict and problems.

Most teenagers have access to and/or use social media. Social media can also allow people to share their experiences, inspiring and bringing together people from all over the world. In contrast, this platform can be toxic in some ways due to negative comments which aim to diminish self love and confidence.

When dealing with the negatives sometimes associated with social media, it can be difficult to not second guess or criticize yourself. To deal with these feelings, there needs to be support groups formed by students where everyone can discuss their feelings and help each other find themselves.

At Mercy, technology is a major part of schooling and learning. Every student is supplied with an iPad to use for all four years of school, where, for the most part, all assignments are done. With the advancements now available through technology, students have access to thousands of online tools and resources to help them be educated and successful. Without technology in school, life at Mercy would be completely different, relying on paper and books to find answers and copy notes.

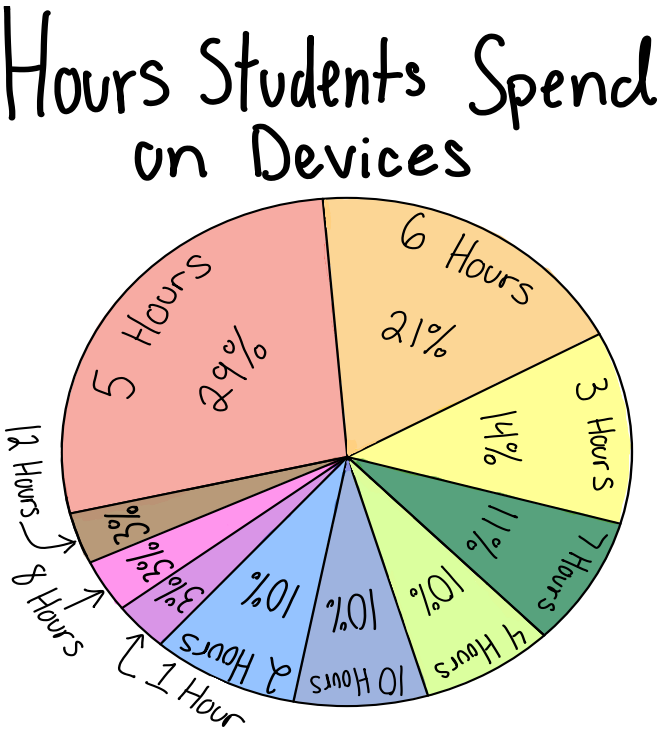
Technology is heavily relied upon for everyday life. In fact if the internet was down for a day, disaster would likely ensue. Memories, homework, notes, important information and year old streaks would be lost. As students, we spend mornings on our phones, school days on our iPads, hours doing homework on technology and then watch TV or go on TikTok for hours until sleeping.

Technology is clearly crucial to life, yet its presence drags us away from everyday life and experiences one cannot find through a screen. Because teenagers will spend hours a day on electronic devices, there is little to no time to go out and participate in activities in the real world. Technology can be distracting and dangerous due to its ability to capture attention for long periods of time.

Technology is a beautiful creation which us humans depend on to live life, thrive and grow through time. Although the use of technology today is excessive, it is needed due to how much is stored on the internet. Spending time on social media as a teen opens one’s eyes to opportunities, new people, new cultures and new views on the world.

So, regardless of the ways technology is handled, its being constantly used has

many positive and negative aspects. Teenagers use technology for hours a day out of necessity to stay on top of news and keep on track of work. The importance of technology for teenagers outweighs the downfalls of the system because of how drastically needed it is for everyday life.



Data from poll of 30 Mercy students’ screen time

How to: have the perfect Galentine’s

STORY AND GRAPHICS: MIRANDA MULLIGAN

HOW TO HAVE THE PERFECT GALENTINE’S

- ♥ The more friends the better - invite all the girls
- ♥ The perfect pink and red dress code - extra points for fun accessories like heart shaped glasses or a fun feather boa.
- ♥ Sweet treats - chocolate covered strawberries, cookies or conversation hearts.
- ♥ Cute decor, heart shaped balloons, streamers and colorful table cloths are all fun ways to elevate the Galentine’s set up.
- ♥ A good Rom - Com like “How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days,” “To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before,” “The Kissing Booth”)

According to Urban Dictionary, Galentine’s Day is celebrated on February 13—the day before Valentine’s Day. It’s known as the best time to celebrate your love with your besties!

“To me, Galentine’s is to show your love for the platonic relationships in your life.”
— Audrey Guyot

Check out our February Spotify playlist!



Open Spotify and Scan to listen!

January Photo Recap!



Mercy juniors attend a “women of faith” panel during their retreat January 18th. The day was spent at the Colombiere Retreat Center where they got to attend sessions about growing their faith, relationships and friendships. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Becker.



Mercy Varsity Golf team members smile as they hold up their state championship trophy during the basketball game. Members received their state championship rings in a ceremony held during halftime of the Mercy - Divine Child Varsity basketball game. Photo courtesy of Mercy Athletics.



Sophomore Ryley Kline works on a robot for The Riveters’ competition season. Photo courtesy of Jessica Koehler.