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Jonathan Haidt: The Great Rewiring of Childhood

TERESA WANG
Staff Writer

HANNAH XU
Staff Writer

On September 26, Taft's student body gathered in Bingham to listen to social psychologist Dr. Jonathan Haidt's speech, "The Great Rewir-

ing of Childhood—And How Gen Z can roll it back and flourish," which is centered around his new book *The Anxious Generation*. A professor at New York University's Stern School of Business, Dr. Haidt has been researching social media's contributions to the decline of teen mental health and the rise of dysfunction since 2018. In his speech addressing the student body, Dr. Haidt eloquently explained shocking statistics and his proposals for mitigating the negative effects of smartphones on youth.

Using multiple statistical graphs, Dr. Haidt outlined the transition from play-based childhoods of the past to phone-dominated adolescence since 2010, demonstrating how the rise of social media, especially visual platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram, has caused skyrocketing rates of mental disorders, particularly among teenage girls. Dr. Haidt states that the essential issue is: "We have overprotected our children in real life and underprotected them in the virtual world." Yet, he holds a generally optimistic attitude towards the advocated resurgence of play-based childhood. During the Q&A session following the speech, Dr. Haidt pointed out that people are in an ongoing revolution of adapting to the new technologies of social media and smartphones, which takes patience. He emphasized the need for a collective realization to protect younger generations by advocating for smartphone and social media restrictions by schools and parents while encouraging parents to



allow children to explore the real world independently. Furthermore, he mentioned the future need for a Gen Z-led initiative to safeguard Gen Alpha from the harmful effects of social media and smartphones, advocating for proactive measures to shield younger generations from the disclosed pitfalls of the digital world.

Following Dr. Haidt's speeches, both students and faculty offered thoughtful reflections. Many students resonated with his critique of social media platforms like Snapchat as he explored the effects of

social media on Gen Z from a psychological perspective. However, some people raised questions regarding the depth of the data presented. A few students expressed concerns about whether the statistics fully captured the complexity of the issue, suggesting that they might have oversimplified some trends regarding social media and Gen Z. Some also pointed out that the way Dr. Haidt presented his speech might not have been fully tailored to resonate with Taft's audience, as he is used to teaching his studies to college classes. While appreciative of Dr. Haidt's overall message, several faculty members also noted a potential for some of his points to be seen as broad generalizations. Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge the limited time Dr. Haidt had to expound on such a complex topic. During the dinner discussion with some faculty students, and trustees, Dr. Haidt's critique of Meta sparked conversations. His strong stance on the influence of Meta on government and society prompted mixed reactions. While some agreed with his perspective, others felt that his tone might have been stronger than necessary.

Despite differing opinions, there was a general agreement on the importance of his overarching message: the need for a collective effort to rethink how society navigates technology's impacts on younger generations. Furthermore, his endorsement of the new phone policy helped put the changes into context, showing that the goal isn't to limit students' freedom but to create a healthier environment where students and faculty can focus better and connect more meaningfully with one another. His message is clear: in a world that's increasingly dominated by screens, sometimes we need to step away from them to protect our mental health.

Photos Courtesy of Robert Falcetti



The Importance of Guests at Taft: Amy Julia Becker’s New Job

MAYA WOODHALL
Staff Writer

Our summer reading books and school meetings have become normalities; a routine we complete without thought as to what we are asked to understand or to take away from long speeches in Bingham. At Taft this year, we have a row of carefully selected speakers who will be coming throughout the year. So many speakers simply want to propound knowledge and experience upon us, yet are overlooked and forgotten by 2:40 on a Tuesday.

Thinking about how this year might be different—with additional speakers based on How to Know a Person and Sophie and Theo’s stated theme of curiosity-- I talked with Mrs. Becker, who is in charge of coordinating and choosing the speakers and book. She shared that next year’s process will be different, hoping to catalyze ongoing and productive conversations by weaving in themes established in our community to the guest speakers’ talks. One change for this year is that each of the speakers will be allotted one hour, instead of trying to cram issues of import into a morning meeting block. In this future process, Mrs. Becker intends for more student involvement to be included when thinking about and eventually choosing the book, speakers, and topics that our community will learn and hear about.

Our Head Mons chose the theme of curiosity this school year, while Mrs. Becker is reflecting on how we all learned and talked about the concepts of xenophobia and philoxenia last year. Together, with both these ideas in mind, Taft leaders are addressing the importance of creating community. In Taft’s global and diverse school body, how can we move from fear to curiosity, welcoming the opportunity to truly get to know someone? Well, Mrs. Becker is hoping that the guests we have this year and in the years to come will genuinely foster recognition in not only getting to know another person, but also being able to engage, disagree, and



create real connections. On guests, Mrs. Becker also mentioned that in the future she aims to have a wider representation among performers and artists as well as speakers. We all learn and accept concepts in different ways, and adding different ways of thinking, producing ideas, and presenting knowledge in the form of guests will embody those differences.

Mrs. Becker acknowledges that, like with anything, one cannot be perfect whenever it comes to choosing guest speakers, but in the long term, addressing topics that foster community and cultivate knowledge is crucial. These subjects and their subsequent discussions will not be talks everyone agrees with (a perfect example is the differing opinions on

Jonathan Haidt’s presentation or the new cell phone policy). However, having genuine and difficult conversations, which Mrs. Becker is hoping these guests will encourage, is not going to push us further apart. Displayed in the words of upcoming guest Chloe Valdary, “Critique in order to build up, never to tear down,” these conversations are going to bring us together. Mrs. Becker is not only planning to alter the way we approach morning meetings, all-school-reads, and community discussions, but she is also creating a long-term change that will make these topics relevant outside of meetings and guest speakers.

Photo Courtesy of Amy Julia Becker

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WE WANT YOU
TO WRITE AND DRAW FOR
THE TAFT PAPYRUS

got opinions?

THE PAPYRUS EDITORS
ENCOURAGE READERS’
REACTIONS
TO THE CONTENT OF THE
NEWSPAPER.
TELL US HOW YOU FEEL!

The Haunted History of Halloween at Taft



TATE CELEBI
Staff Writer

Every year, Taft students celebrate October 31st by donning their scariest, silliest, and strangest costumes for the class day. Halloween at Taft is a fun tradition, but it has a dark side. Taft is an old place, rich with ancient history. These grounds hold secrets that may be best left untold. But once a year, the ghoulish specters of the past manifest themselves again.

Beginning in 1690, the Watertown Witch Trials were held on the very plot of land that would become the Taft School. It is rumored that the spirits of these so-called sorcerers never left, and are still seeking revenge. They are relatively harmless, as long as you're not caught leaving campus without SISO-ing. Of course, one of the most obviously haunted areas of Taft would be the neighboring cemetery. Anyone brave enough to wander there on Halloween night may encounter the ghost of Horace Dutton Taft, but legend says he gives good advice. What you really need to watch out for is the Pond Ghost, which has haunted the campus water feature ever since a student fell off of Jig Pat and drowned 100 years ago. If you want to avoid a similar fate, stay away from the pond on Halloween night. And don't think staying inside will keep you safe.

Anyone committed enough to study in the library on Halloween may fall victim to the Vampire Librarian, who enjoys sucking the blood out of bright young students. If this concerns you, just ask facilities for a wooden stake, and head to the dining hall for garlic cloves. While you're there, try brewing up the fabled Cum Laude Potion, which instantly launches all those who imbibe it into an academic comeback for the ages. To make it, mix yellow Gatorade, chocolate milk, eye of newt, and toe of frog in a cup and pop that unholy concoction in the blender for a good twenty seconds. Now that you're an academic weapon, you don't have to brave the MAC during study hall on October 31st, as that is the stomping ground of the Cursed Salutatorian, who, according to Taft folklore, missed the title of Valedictorian by .01 points, and has been studying in the MAC ever since. This spirit does not appreciate interruptions.

Athletes aren't safe on Halloween either. If you venture up to the track after dark, you may encounter a mysterious, dashing, runner doing laps continuously. Do not approach this entity. It is either the Phantom Miller – an ancient Hotchkiss runner who died of embarrassment on the finish line – or it's me. Costumes are fun and all, but we want to make sure that the Big Red costume is locked up for Halloween. If not, it may be possessed and walk the halls of its own volition. If you see it, run—it is not your friend behind those soulless eyes.

I know what you're thinking, dear reader: "Well I've gone to Taft for 3 years and I've never seen or heard of anything like that." Well, Bartholomew, or whatever your name is, don't question that fact, be thankful

for it. Besides, ghosts only prey on students with aura. Heed my advice if you will, but if not, don't expect me to call the Ghostbusters when you have a nasty run-in with a ghou. Enjoy the holiday, wear a cool costume, and stay safe out there.

Illustration by Tate Celebi '25.

Taft Papyrus

The official student newspaper of the Taft School, est. 1893

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The Papyrus is run by students at the Taft School in Watertown, Connecticut.

Founded in 1893 and issued periodically throughout the school year, The Papyrus is devoted to the ideas and interests of the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of the Taft School. Since 2020, our newspaper has published content online (taftpapyrus.org).

Taft Mini Series: A Deep Dive into the U.S. Election

LOUISA PRENTICE
Staff Writer

A new initiative has appeared on the Taft campus this fall. Conceived by Ms. Bouffard with a serious contribution from the History Department, the Mini-Series is a sequence of informal discussions about the upcoming U.S. election. Taking place in the faculty room, they are open to students of all political inclinations. Ms. Bouffard believes the series will help students “learn about throughlines related to some issues that are relevant to the election.” These sessions address topics like immigration, women’s rights, economic issues, and civil rights, all of which are impacting the U.S. today.

So far, the Mini Series has been a success. It is important to have organized student-teacher discussions outside of the classroom, and this fulfills just that. It is also a lot easier for students to ask questions when they are not in a pressured environment. In fact, these meetings are pertinent to nearly all courses at Taft, because of their relevance to broader matters. This series prompts students to form educated opinions on national as well as international challenges, through open conversations and analysis of articles.

Upcoming Events

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| SEPT 24 AFTER SITDOWN IMMIGRATION | OCT 8 MORNING MEETING ELECTION LOGISTICS | OCT 8 AFTER SITDOWN US AS A SUPERPOWER |
| OCT 15 AFTER SITDOWN WOMEN'S RIGHTS | OCT 25 FRIDAY! 7 PM - 7:45 PM ECONOMIC ISSUES | OCT 29 AFTER SITDOWN CIVIL RIGHTS |

COME JOIN AND LEARN ABOUT SOME ISSUES IMPACTING THE UPCOMING US ELECTION!

ALL POST-SITDOWN EVENTS WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE FACULTY ROOM!

SESSIONS WILL LAST APPROXIMATELY 40 MINS! PLAN TO STAY THE ENTIRE TIME--NO DROP INS OR EARLY DEPARTURES PERMITTED!

Eleanor Lemon '26, who attended the first session, which focused on immigration, mentioned that the group uncovered myths surrounding it, and “challenged the perception that migrants have negative impacts on the economy” after considering the raw statistics.

As part of the series, Mr. Hawes and Ms. Ryan recently provided an eloquently presented slideshow on why we have the Electoral College. The presentation covered a challenging subject to present in an unbiased way and having listened intently, it was a success. As students are exposed to opposing viewpoints at Taft, these mini-series offer a great opportunity to learn about America’s political system and the upcoming U.S. election.

It is interesting to note that the majority of Taft students will not be voting in this year’s election. However, Ms. Bouffard thinks that “students who cannot vote are still impacted by the election as well as the leadership that will go on to shape these issues moving forward.” The multifacetedness of these meetings makes it easier to simply learn more, especially because of their open environment. Although there is a possibility of having another series in the future, it is limited to just the election for this year, but nevertheless is a great opportunity to consider in anticipation of the U.S. election, and consequently, the future of our world.

Photo Courtesy of Eileen Bouffard

Dining at Taft: Where Food Meets Heart and Home

EVELYN DOOGUE
Staff Writer

MOLLY WYNNE
Head Writer

This fall has been an exciting time for dining at Taft, with the implementation of new features like the smoothie station, a new location for the salad bar, and a fresh parfait station. But beyond these exciting changes lies the True Heart of Taft’s dining, a team dedicated to feeding students and creating an environment where every meal feels like home. This isn’t just about the dining hall; it’s a second home for students and staff alike where community and innovative meals are woven together into the fabric of daily life at Taft.

We had the privilege of speaking with Nicole Rodriguez, the Assistant Food Director, who has become the face of dining at Taft. Her journey here began 12 years ago as a night-time supervisor, and today she leads with passion, always bringing the conversation back to the people she works with. It’s clear that the relationship between staff members is just as inspiring as the meals they create for the students. The team includes talented chefs like Chef Will and Chef Brandon, whose work behind the scenes makes Taft Dining a standout experience.

Take, for example, the pizza station. Over the summer, Chef Will with his signature mustache, worked tirelessly to perfect hand-stretched pizza dough, a labor of love that he passed to Chef Brandon. Now, we can enjoy pizza made with the care and expertise of these chefs who have honed their craft for us. This dedication isn’t about serving basic meals: it’s about creating dishes that show care and intention.

What makes Taft Dining unique isn’t just the food, it’s the people who run it and how they prioritize making everyone feel at home. Nicole and her team work long hours; many arriving around 5:00 a.m. and not leaving until after 7:30 p.m., to ensure that each meal is fresh, flavorful, and satisfying. It’s not just about filling plates, it’s about making connections with students. Nicole told us that she loves seeing timid freshmen grow into confident seniors and that graduation is the most bittersweet time of the year.

The dining staff understands the challenges of catering to such a di-

that graduation is the most bittersweet time of the year. Consequently, she looks forward to alumni days.

The dining staff understands the challenges of catering to such a diverse student body. With students from different cultures, backgrounds, and dietary preferences making everyone happy can be tough. But Nicole’s team doesn’t shy away from feedback; they embrace it. Whether it’s a request for a specific dish or a critique of an offering, they view every comment as an opportunity to improve. Nicole told us that students are the reason the dining hall exists, and her team strives to make the dining hall experience feel like a comfort zone, especially on those tough days when a good meal can turn everything around.

The dining hall is evolving to meet student needs in fresh, exciting ways. For Nicole and her team, it’s not just about the food but about making Taft Dining a space that feels welcoming and inclusive. They’ve added QR codes and business cards throughout the dining hall so students can easily provide feedback ensuring that their voices are heard.

But Nicole’s Ambitions for the future don’t stop there. Taft Dining hopes to one-up Hotchkiss fresh basil with a sustainable Babylon stem Garden complete with Hydroponic herbs and a partnership with the Economon program. Nicole’s team is working toward making Taft’s Garden a true powerhouse, with a mission to bring fresh herbs straight to the kitchen. And, on Hotchkiss Day, the goal is always the same: make every Hotchkiss student wish they chose Taft.

Running the dining hall is no small feat, especially when you consider the scale of the operation. The goal of the entire team is to make sure when students come to the dining hall they feel like they’re coming home. Whether it’s a student’s favorite dish or a smile from the staff, Taft Dining is much more than just meals; it’s about community, connection, and making everyone feel at home.

Dear Horace...

ALEXIE BLAKE
Features Editor

Dear Horace,
Should I shoot my shot?

Dear Hopeless Romantic,

Although I wish I had some more background, I say go for it—you miss 100% of the shots you don't take! Odds are they feel the same way unless you are completely delusional... Trust your judgment, but don't overthink it. At the end of the day, it depends on whether you'd rather feel a little bit of embarrassment or a whole lot of regret—your choice. Good luck soldier!

Dear Horace,
Will I get into college?

Dear Wishful Thinker,
I'm no fortune teller, but I'm gonna go with yes. If all else fails you can be like me and give anxious teens life advice. Hang in there and keep your chin up—everything happens for a reason!

Dear Horace,
What should I be for Halloween?

Dear Innocent Reader,
DO dress up for school, but please DO NOT opt for a too-short skirt and tiny crop top—I promise you will be the only one rocking that look! Keep it silly; the point is to make people laugh, not to impress!



Photo Courtesy of taftschool.org

Need New Books? Here's October's Book Recs!

ELEANOR PURICELLI
Contributor

Kill for Me, Kill for You - Steve Cavanagh
Set in the Upper West Side of New York City, *Kill for Me, Kill for You* by Steve Cavanagh follows the story of two women longing for revenge. Strangers Amanda and Wendy realize they both want someone dead, but neither can afford to be caught. The two women continue talking, and they come up with a deal: if you kill for me, I'll kill for you. As their plan unfolds, secrets and plot twists begin to surface. For those of you who love psychological thrillers, *Kill for Me, Kill for You* is my recommendation for you!

Crying in H Mart - Michelle Zauner
Michelle Zauner's memoir, *Crying in H Mart* reflects on her life as a Korean American, her mother's death, and hiding her identity while dealing with grief. Growing up, Michelle was the only Asian-American at her Oregon school and often struggled to fit in. She would bond with her mother through traditional Korean food and their culture, but as Michelle became older, their relationship became lost. After her mother's death, Michelle's visits to H Mart, an Asian supermarket, allowed her to grieve her loss, as the Korean food brought fond memories of family and heritage. *Crying in H Mart* will undoubtedly leave a strong impact on all readers!

Every Summer After - Carley Fortune
Carley Fortune's *Every Summer After* is a romance novel following Percy and Sam. Told in alternating time lines through six summers and one weekend, the readers become deeply engrossed in Sam and Percy's relationship. During their childhood, the pair spent countless hours swimming, reading, and working in Sam's family restaurant. Percy and Sam are inseparable until one moment causes them to completely fall apart and never speak again. However, when Percy returns to their hometown for Sam's mother's funeral, she realizes she must confront her past mistakes and rediscover her relationship with Sam. If you are still reminiscing about summer, then *Every Summer After* is the perfect book for you!

Dear Edward - Ann Napolitano
Dear Edward by Ann Napolitano follows the story of a young boy, Edward Adler, who survived a plane crash that killed all other passengers, including his family. After the crash, Edward struggles to find himself in his new reality. The readers meet many other passengers and can visualize how Edward must deal with his grief and public attention in his new world. *Dear Edward* is a heartfelt story that explores the importance of healing, and the strength it takes to rebuild your life after an inconceivable event.

Why Seniority Rules

IZZY READ
Editor-in-Chief

This is an annual article. Each year, someone writes about the concept of seniority and senior privileges at Taft, and each year, there are mixed reactions. Some really care about seniority, and others couldn't care less. I would argue that, having been at Taft since my freshman year, and now a senior myself, the general attitude surrounding seniority has changed dramatically—whether this is a good or bad thing has been a subject of recent debate. I have observed other upperclassmen, including myself, marveling at certain actions of underclassmen, exclaiming how said actions “would not fly” had it been our freshman year. It is interesting to think that something that was such a big part of the Taft culture just three years ago has seemingly ceased to exist, furthered by things like the removal of the senior line in the Jig, and a push towards inclusion across classes, which has appeared in countless other boarding schools, not just at Taft. Now as a senior myself, and having been acquainted with the precious badges of experience that being an upperclassman brings, I understand why senior privileges mean so much to members of the graduating class, and find myself writing the article that I rolled my eyes at as an underclassman. I do not intend to offend or demean any underclassmen, but I would like to argue that senior privileges are highly important to the overall culture of Taft—not just for seniors themselves—and that they should be respected and preserved.

Senior privileges give people things to look forward to. Taft is a structured place, which can be simultaneously positive and negative. We live communally under the same guidelines, and while it is unifying and equalizing, it can also have the potential to feel restrictive, making any exception to rules the whole school obeys just that much sweeter. For example, everyone has to go to sit down, but seniors can use a skip if they wish. Everyone has to wait in line at the Jig, but seniors could, once upon a time (we need to bring this back), utilize the senior line, and cut their wait in half. Those smaller bits of freedom are coveted by the whole school and take four years to manifest, therefore giving students something to look forward to, and to highly anticipate. It also makes the celebratory occasion of becoming a senior truly *feel* different, when the milestone in actuality bears no tangible difference in the body and soul than the change from Monday to Tuesday.

Half the reason why the student body should obey seniority and its privileges lies in respecting the hard work of the senior class. The other half is because disrupting the tradition of respecting senior privileges ruins the idea of it for everyone, underclassmen included. If underclassmen reject its principles, and the seniors don't enforce them, the meaning behind senior privileges would cease to exist, and students would not have the exclusive, significant pieces of freedom to look forward to once they are seniors. Along with diminishing the element of anticipating a future reward, devaluing seniority makes receiving said privileges less exciting, thus dulling down the celebratory nature of becoming a senior, and it does nothing but irritate the upperclassmen who have patiently waited for them. Four years of learning, living, making mistakes, laughing, crying, losing, and winning culminates with the senior year of high school. Rightfully or not, seniors earn their places in the sun just as each grade to come after them will. Therefore, due to the magnitude of time and physical and mental sacrifice it takes to reach senior year, the meaningful privileges we are rewarded with are owed respect from those who have not yet gotten to that place in their Taft career.

So, taking all of this into consideration, on behalf of the senior class, and all of the seniors in the future, if you are an underclassman, I kindly compel you to choose not to dine in Prentice, and maybe not venture to the library or Jig during study hall. Treat everyone who crosses your path with kindness—teachers, dining hall staff, custodians, classmates, friends, and even yourself (an important reminder for the whole school, not just underclassmen). Continue to opt for the comfy new chairs on the right side of the Jig, and, for the love of God, keep your butt in your Bingham seat until the preceding grade has exited (just because stricter means of enforcement were used in the past does not mean that they can't be used again...).

Underclassmen, we understand you. We used to be you, but you haven't quite become us just yet. So, should you ever feel irritated due to the imposition of an article of seniority, just smile and remember that one day, that too will be you, joyfully exercising the privilege you have earned from working your butt off for four years. You will have earned it, and it's a special feeling. Until then, appreciate the privileges of your youth that we miss so dearly, such as not having to write college applications, and not having as high of expectations and responsibilities. Most importantly, enjoy your time. Your journey through this amazing place has just begun, and it will be the most amazing, exciting, scary, formative experience that you have yet to go through in your life. It truly goes by fast, and before you know it you will be leaving Bingham first too.

Love, the Class of '25

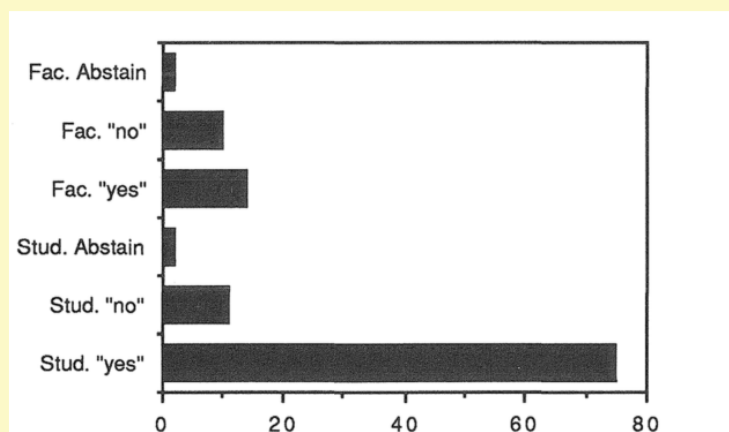


Super Sunday my freshman year :)

Pap Poll!

The Pap Poll was a staple of the Papyrus in the 90s and we're here to bring it back! In each Pap Poll, one question is asked to a random group of students to gauge a variety of honest opinions on the subject. To reintroduce this new column, we are starting off with a question first asked in a 1991 issue: **should the Taft Health Center provide free condoms to its students? (NB: they currently do)**

Back then, the results were categorized into the following graph:



We had five students respond to the same question, and here are their responses:

“Yeah they should; Choate does.” 10th grade girl

“If teachers didn’t walk in, then yes.” 12th grade boy

“People are gonna have sex either way; make it safe.” 11th grade girl

“Nah.” 10th grade boy

“I mean, I don’t see why not.” 12th grade girl

USGD Rocks

COCO O'BRIEN

A&L Editor

When considering where to live as upperclassmen, USGD is rarely ever brought up. Its small size and tucked-away location make it easy to forget about, and the majority of Taft students have probably never even visited the dorm. Most upper school girls choosing where to live would much rather opt for Centen or Voge, with their larger rooms and nicer bathrooms. The dorm has even earned itself the nickname “The Rock,” a reference to Alcatraz, highlighting its somewhat isolated location. When I tell people that I live in The Rock, I receive looks of pity and concern—sometimes even questions about my sanity. However, despite its rather bleak reputation around campus, my time living in the dorm has been nothing but amazing. I think The Rock is criminally underrated and should be considered one of the best dorms on campus for a multitude of reasons.

First, its location is unbeatable. While Voge is a trek from the Athletic Center and Centen feels miles away from the dining hall, The Rock is perfectly situated just off Centen Quad. It's a mere two minutes to the Main Building and not too far from the athletic center either. Plus, it's just a stone's throw away from the food delivery kiosk, a perk that many residents take advantage of regularly. The dorm consists of only singles, perfect for those who value their precious alone time. Some rooms even have the luxury of in-room sinks, adding an extra touch of convenience for past lights-out teeth-brushing. The dorm's one-story layout gives it a cozy, home-like feel that fosters a warm atmosphere.

But what really makes The Rock great is not its physical attributes. There is a sense of solidarity amongst its residents that sets it apart, making it more than just a place to live. When asked to reflect on her time living in the dorm, Senior monitor Ny'Ana Hauser, shared: “I've loved being a part of this small but mighty community.” Unlike Centen and Voge, where residents tend to retreat to their rooms after the 10:15 sign-in, Rock dwellers often come together in the common room, sharing food and catching up on their days. This nightly gathering cultivates a sense of camaraderie that larger dorms sometimes lack. It's in small moments like these that the dorm truly shines, turning what many see as a limitation, its size, into an opportunity for close-knit connections. Even some non-Rock inhabitants have chimed in on the dorm's greatness: Centen resident Lauren Duque says she “cherishes her visits to The Rock.”

While The Rock may not boast the same grandeur as Centen or Voge, it offers a sense of community and connection that is truly one of a kind. This, combined with its ideal location and cozy atmosphere, makes it the perfect choice for anyone looking to make lasting memories and friendships at Taft. I wholeheartedly encourage any rising upper-school girls to consider requesting a spot in The Rock next year. You won't regret it, because as senior monitor Meredith Werblow puts it, “The Rock rocks!”

The Mastery of Main Hall

QUINN LEONARD
Staff Writer

At the end of every tour, the most popular corridor in the dead of winter, the heart of Big Administration, and the previous home of student recognition, Main Hall is one of the most densely trafficked areas of campus. As a result, it ought to commemorate the legacies of Taft students. It ought to remind us why we chose Taft, and why we are proud to be here. In years past, Main Hall did not fulfill this mission, but I fear that the redesign brought us farther away from this mission. Our administration has temporarily removed the Head Mon plaques, permanently removed the Honor Roll plaque, and left only the age-old lists of annual Cum Laude inductees as a relic of Taft’s past. We often walk through Main Hall indifferent to the monotonous wall decoration, so let’s have a hallway worth our attention and pride.

As I reflect on the building legacy of the 2024-2025 school year, the word “change” comes to mind. Yet in this era of novelty, Head Mons Sophie Brown and Theo Weisman have maintained our beloved traditions while guiding our curiosity and openness to unprecedented modernizations. It’s an impressive juggling act even before mentioning their other academic and athletic endeavors. Sophie and Theo represent the best parts of a Taft student, and they deserve an honorific plaque engraved with their names to grace Main Hall.

I, old and gray, hobble back to Taft to reminisce in my senior year of high school, those two names on the wall will remind me of the magical days and how we adapted to the reimagination of Taft.

In assembly, Mr. Becker explained the removal of the Honor Roll Board as a minimization of academic competition, to not shame



Photo Courtesy of Quinn Leonard '25

the students with a grade point average less than ninety, so to speak. Removing the Honor Roll was a logical solution to this problem, but is it the right solution? I know many students, including myself, who are overjoyed to spot their name on that board and excited to congratulate their peers’ success. To the academic high-achievers, removing the Honor Roll invalidates the hours and brainpower dedicated to academic excellence and fulfilling Taft’s Portrait of a Graduate.

Honor Roll is a goal sought after by many and achievable to anyone, without restriction to the top twenty percent of the class. In my book, making the Honor Roll is a celebration of success, not a condemnation of failure.

As of today, the sole Main Hall survivor is the Museum of Cum Laude plaques. I am a proud member of the Cum Laude Society, but I don’t know a single inductee from before I came to Taft two years ago. Those faceless names represent the academically excellent portion of Taft students from the past 85 years, but they lack the rest of Taft’s motto and spirit: our service, athletics, arts, and community. Cum Laude is an incredible honor, but its representation is better suited for a space dedicated to academia - the library.

In my imagined redesign of Main Hall, I first envision a large plaque for our current Head Mons with this year’s motto beside the door to Mr. Becker’s office. The ten most recent Head Mon plaques can have a place near that, and the rest should be relocated or digitized into a TV. Next, the Honor Roll should be reinstated but updated every half-semester. This will provide more students with recognition and make Honor Roll a more measurable goal. For the rest of Main Hall, I would love decorative ornamentation, mirrors, and sparse clusters of framed photographs encapsulating moments at Taft.

LUCY RYAN
Staff Writer

October Horoscopes

- Scorpio (October 23 - November 21):** Watch your back Scorpions! There may be someone you consider close who isn’t as consideate behind your back...
- Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21):** This is a lucky month for you Saggitarius! Get out of your comfort zone and try something new, you will be rewarded!
- Capricorn (December 22 - January 19):** Take this time to focus on your studies Capricorns. This may be a time of academic pressure, but as long as you take your time, everything will be fine.
- Aquarius (January 20 - February 18):** Have you been wanting to change something about your look? Now is the time! Get that haircut or piercing you have been contemplating.
- Pisces (February 19 - March 20):** Look for an outlet Pisces, perhaps one in the arts. Painting could be a great way for you to release your stress!
- Aries (March 21 - April 19):** Stop worrying so much and comparing yourself to your peers! Comparison is the thief of joy.
- Taurus (April 20 - May 20):** Talk to people you may have left in your past. Old friends are full of valuable advice.
- Gemini (May 21 - June 20):** Take this time to reflect on your actions. You may have done something you regret; own up to it.
- Cancer (June 21 - July 22):** Travel this month! Go somewhere you have yet to go and meet people!
- Leo (July 23 - August 22):** Don’t be scared to meet new people this month! Say hi to strangers and be friendly to people you otherwise wouldn’t.
- Virgo (August 23 - September 22):** Reflect on the past month and consider your mistakes. Have any of them allowed you to grow?
- Libra (September 23 - October 22):** Be decisive. Dwelling on your mistakes or missed opportunities won’t fix them.

Watertown Wonders: Town’s Hidden Gems

ALEX WERNER
Staff Writer

Whether you come from a ‘big city’ with a bustling nightlife, a small quaint town with big values, or even a whole other continent with a vastly different culture, adapting to daily “CT” life in Watertown can prove challenging for everyone. Many Tafties fill their daily schedules with hectic class loads, energetic main hall interactions, and the occasional quality friend time, often packed around the same dinner table. But let’s face it—sometimes this isn’t enough. When, on the off chance, the stars so graciously align, and you have no home-work due the next day, or you simply need to take your mind off a to-do list... Surely, that is the perfect time for an adventure!

This begs the question: whaddya do in a town like Watertown?

And to that sneakily important question, many retort: “Nothing! Nothing at all.” But this is simply not true. After a three-year study of all 29.6mi² of our humble but historic and beautiful town, I present a curated and categorized list of the best accessible spots for every occasion:

Food:

We’ll start with everyone’s favorite: the food. Although our dining hall staff works tirelessly to serve us the most delicious and innovative buffets (three times a day!), sometimes we need to change things up. Some ideas:

Thai Bowl: Starting strong with the first of the unspoken “holy trinity” of Watertown food spots, Thai Bowl offers an affordable selection of Asian flavors and a comfortable atmosphere. With staple dishes like Pad Thai, pho, curries, and uniquely flavored desserts, add Thai Bowl to your list of places to try. Best feature: you don’t need to bring your own Sriracha!

Simply Bowls: Whether you are rushing off for a game and want to bring your lunch to go or are looking for a comfy place to relax, Simply is a convenient staple in the life of a Taft student. It offers healthy, seasonal smoothies, açai bowls, and savory bites like wraps, sandwiches, and eggs. The main downside: bring your own Sriracha.

Fino Wood-Fired Pizza & Bar: Whether the parents are in town, it’s a friend’s surprise birthday party, or perhaps a first date (oooh!), Fino is the spot. It offers great shareable options, like

pizzas, wings, a handful of starters, and indulgent desserts such as the Nutella pizza and the “pizookie” (pizza-shaped cookie), to name a few. Bonus points for being open on Sundays!

Echo Craft Kitchen: “EAT • DRINK • GATHER” are the perfect words to describe this new Watertown hot-spot. To many faculty’s dismay, Echo Craft is now a staple amongst Tafties. After renovations last year, Echo provides excellent ambiance, food, and drinks (for the adults, of course). Sriracha status - undetermined for now.

The Middle: A new spot has emerged just

up on our favorite snacks, toiletries, and the new stock of Halloween candy.

Starbucks: the go-to Sunday morning spot. What else can I say? Whether you’re just going for a coffee or are looking for a change of scenery for work, Starbucks is a great place to sit awkwardly across another Taft student (usually the same select few Starbucks warriors) while reading Shakespeare or reverse engineering a quadratic.

Marshalls: If the weekly walk to Walgreens is starting to wear you down (there’s medicine for that) and you’re looking for something more, an

extra 18 minutes of walking will get you to Marshalls. This hidden gem is definitely worth exploring the next time you have the urge to redesign your room or buy a new sweater or two as it gets colder. And it does, for sure, get colder... **Adams Home-town Market:** Conveniently located right next to Marshalls, this supermarket has millions of aisles of pure fun and variety. And think about it: when was the last time you were in a supermarket?



around the corner from G’s Burgers. The Middle offers family-style dishes made from fresh, locally sourced ingredients, perfect for sharing.

Gayle’s Depot Square Farm Shoppe: This American-style diner is the ultimate affordable breakfast spot. It provides a vast selection of home-style, hearty breakfast foods that can be combined with various items on the menu to curate your perfect meal. Boom! A build-your-own breakfast plate at Gayle’s will only cost you \$8.49, and I’d argue that that’s a good price to pay for a meal imbued with so much love!

Leisure:

Not hungry? Well, Watertown still has a lot to offer, so get your comfiest walking shoes on (parental Hokas are acceptable), and let’s go.

Walgreens: Many people will scoff if they hear that going to Walgreens is considered a “leisurely activity.” But hear me out here: the short 14-minute walk is just enough to get outside the radius of our Taftian sun... and we can still experience the leaves turning and the fresh air. Most importantly, we can hang out with friends as we stock

Random:

Still not convinced? If you’re really in search of a Saturday afternoon “side quest,” I’ve got you covered:

Watertown Meat Center: buy a rib eye to cook up in your common room and share with your friends — be careful to open a window or some doors to avoid it looking and smelling like the dining hall on burger day.

Nail salons: Maintaining a fresh and clean manicure at Taft is difficult, especially when your local dorm nail artist has a Biology test the next day. Head down to Ak Nails & spa or Mena Nail Spa for a relaxing touch-up.

Hair cut: The same goes for that tough time when your hair is starting to infiltrate your line of vision, and your go-to Taft barber has a big math test to study for. Assuming you have no alternative, head down to the Elite Barber and support local barbers for a fresh fade and some old-school banter.

The Photo Kids

CHRISTIAN YEUNG
Opinions Editor

If you’ve been attending sporting events recently (which everyone should be), you’ve probably seen a few people with cameras of varying sizes sniping you at these games. “*What happened to Mr. Falcetti?*” you might ask yourself. Well, with the large number of games that we have here at Taft and the small number of places Mr. Falcetti can be at once (since he cannot clone himself), he has recently enlisted the help of a few Taft students to help him.

Who could blame him? All of our star-studded athletes, from varsity all the way down to the passionate players of thirds and fourths, want to see their epic goals and shots posted on Instagram. At the very least, all Taft parents yearn for their child to be displayed on a post, for bragging rights, and probably for the fridge at home too.

Even the shots that maybe can’t capture the “ideal” angles still find a home on Taft Athletics Reporting’s Almost Game Day posts. So, it’s no surprise that a couple more cameras have appeared on the fields as of late. There really is no end to the “Photo Gallery” emails, but without them, where else could you find your next profile picture to showcase your athletic prowess?

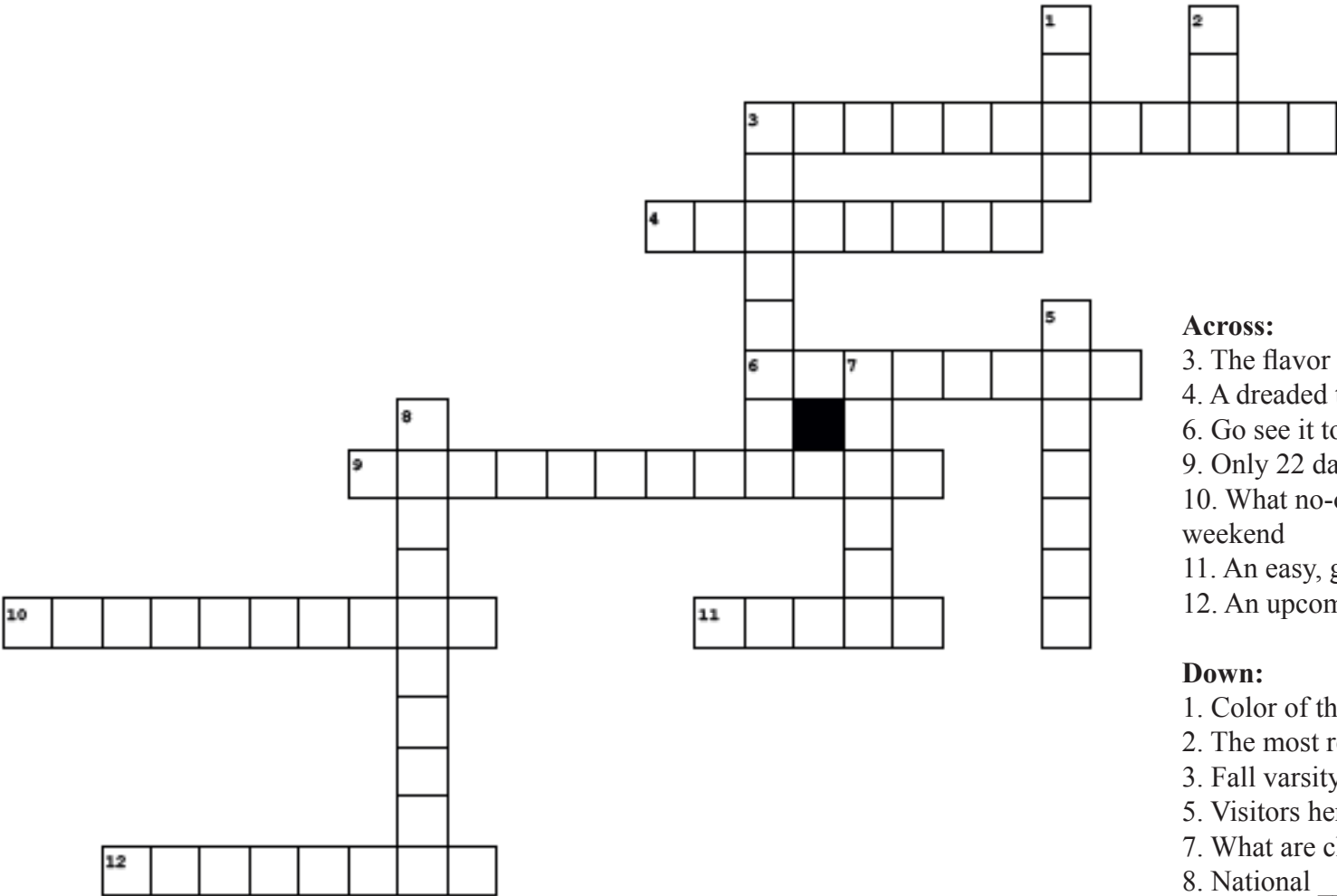
“*But who are these photographers?*” You might ask yourself, as you shoot a goal, imagining a sea of paparazzi swarming the field as the ball finds the net and you win the Premier League. The flashes are going off. The camera shutters are rapidly clicking. The crowd is roaring. But then you turn around, and it’s really just William Yang ‘26, or Kaiyun Xu ‘26 and Yuqi Qian ‘27 taking some quick flicks of you.

All three of them are Mr. Falcetti’s newest varsity photography recruits, and they’re here to take some fire flicks of you on the court/field/pitch/track. So don’t be too afraid if there’s a 12-inch lens pointed at your face as you’re desperately trying to finish the cross-country race, that’s most likely just Yuqi with his obscenely large camera. Whether it’s rain or shine, as long as there’s an athletic event at home, you can count on the photographers to be there, and hopefully, you’ll also get to see yourself more on the Taft Instagram.

But what about those of us who perhaps aren’t as athletically gifted? Fear not, dear reader, for these photographers are always looking for more people and activities to take pictures of. William, the head of the Photography Club, would be more than happy to take a few pictures of Robotics or the school play. If you’re really nice to him, maybe he’ll even come to your Life Fitness meetings to witness some top athletes at work. I didn’t “officially” confirm any of this, but I’m sure he won’t mind the extra advertisement.

So anyways, don’t be scared of the new cameras at school, just smile and say cheese! And for all the images you feel have violated your self-esteem or if you’ve been “done dirty” by one of the photographers, please send all complaints their way.

October Crossword



- Across:**
- 3. The flavor of the fall
 - 4. A dreaded time of the year
 - 6. Go see it tonight in Bingham!
 - 9. Only 22 days away!
 - 10. What no-one wants to think about over long weekend
 - 11. An easy, go-to Halloween costume
 - 12. An upcoming Red Rhino Fund event
- Down:**
- 1. Color of the month (in honor of a special cause)
 - 2. The most recent dance
 - 3. Fall varsity teams are pushing for these!
 - 5. Visitors here with us this weekend!
 - 7. What are changing color and falling down?
 - 8. National _____ day, when instagram is full of couples photos

A Relay For Life

ELEANOR LEMON
Staff Writer

Cancer has been one of the leading causes of death in the United States for the past 75 years. The American Cancer Society, a global leader in cancer research and patient support, has estimated that this year alone, there will be over *two million* newly detected cancer cases. Data from the World Health Organization has shown that 30-50% of these cases are treatable if caught early. Prevention and early detection ensure that everyone has hope and the opportunity to treat and survive cancer. Cancer research, advocacy, and support can transform lives.

This fall, Taft is partnering with the American Cancer Society to host the Relay for Life. Since 1985, over 60,000 Relay for Life events have been held in the country. The movement honors those who have fought or are fighting cancer and remembers those who have lost their lives to cancer. 136 high school-held Relays have raised over \$6.3 million toward cancer treatment, research, and advocacy. At Relay for Life events across the US, teams camp out overnight at local parks, campgrounds, or schools, and members across various teams take turns walking around a track or path.

Relays around the world share several signature elements. Because cancer does not sleep, Relays are held overnight, and because the fight against cancer never stops, one representative from each team is to be walking at all times. Relays not only honor the fight against cancer but also celebrate survivors and caregivers. The Relay opens with the Survivors' Victory Lap, a lap of the track dedicated to survivors of cancer diagnoses and caregivers. Charged with spirit, it celebrates the incredible courage and strength of those who have battled the disease. The Victory Lap is a beacon of hope, reminding us why we fight, and why we relay. As the night progresses, the track will be lit by hundreds of luminaria bags, for the Luminary Walk. The Walk honors all lives touched by cancer; it symbolizes hope for the future

and perseverance within the present and is a memorial and time of healing for some.

At Taft, the Relay will be held in McCullough Gym from 8 pm to 2 am on Saturday, October 26. Everyone is welcome to sign up individually or in teams through the link relayforlife.org/thetaftschoo1ct. Teams are able to fundraise in support of the American Cancer Society's effort through two platforms: each team will be given a fundraising link to collect donations

from friends and family, and will also be given a fundraising table at the Relay. These tables will be organized around the track in McCullough, and from selling cookies to organizing raffles, teams are able to coordinate individual fundraising efforts to support the cause. From these tables, teams can also cheer on and support their friends and teachers currently walking.

Through your fundraising link, you can also collect donations from friends and family. The Relay at Taft is led by a planning committee made up of faculty, staff, and students. If you are interested in joining the committee and volunteering to organize the event, please feel free to reach out to Ms. Shanley or Mr. Dunn.

Relay for Life means something different to everyone. To me, it is a chance to fight against childhood cancer and to advocate for early diagnoses. To Maya Woodhall '27, it is a chance to relay for her grandmother, and to Rachel Turer '25, it is a chance to support her aunt. To Ms. Shanley, it is a chance to connect with other community members who have been affected by cancer and to work towards a common goal of fundraising to end cancer for everyone.

Overall, the Relay is a chance for the community to come together to support the fight against cancer in the U.S. Relay for your loved ones, to honor those who have lost their lives to cancer, and to celebrate those fighting the disease. Relay for life.



Image courtesy of the American Cancer Society

The Most Famous Back-Up Quarterback (Ever?)

COURTNEY EDWARDS
Editor-In-Chief

It's not often that a backup quarterback gets more press and publicity than the starter; however, that is exactly the situation at the University of Texas, Austin, the (as I am writing this) current number one team in college football. You may have heard of Quinn Ewers, but more likely, the name Arch Manning will ring a bell (emphasis on the last name).

Arch Manning is the nephew of Peyton and Eli Manning, two generational football talents; Peyton was inducted into the National Football League Hall of Fame in 2017, and his brother is likely to join him once he qualifies for nomination next year. The football bloodline even extends to Arch's grandfather, Archie Manning, a college football hall-of-famer and former New Orleans Saints quarterback.

Arch, the top recruit in the class of 2023, could have attended any college of his choice. When he committed to UT Austin, football fans worldwide assumed he would spend his first season as a red-shirt, learning from and studying the game of returner Quinn Ewers. However, what they didn't anticipate was Ewers staying in Texas for an additional year; Arch was set to watch his sophomore year with the Longhorns go by from the sideline.

Even so, amidst rumors and speculations

of Arch entering the transfer portal, his loyalty to the burnt orange never faltered. Commendably, I might add, as college football has become a sport where the transfer portal and Name, Image, Likeness rule the minds and decisions of NCAA athletes. For example, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas quarterback recently announced that he is leaving the currently undefeated team because



Image courtesy of Texas Athletics

of the lack of Name, Image, Likeness money. But in a pre-game media session, Arch revealed that "There's nowhere else [he] want[s] to be" and that he couldn't imagine playing under any other than Texas coach Steve Sarkisian. He sent a clear mes-

sage: he would play for the University of Texas sooner or later.

On September 21, Arch was rewarded for his decision; he earned his first start, and though it was under the unfortunate circumstances of a Quinn Ewers injury, Manning seized the opportunity. He led Texas to a 51-3 victory over the University of Louisiana-Monroe, where he showed off both his long ball game and his running skills, including a 67-yard rushing touchdown (in which he broke the record for topping the fastest speed during a 67-yard touchdown). The next week, Arch sealed Texas yet another victory in their first SEC conference game against Mississippi State, where he finished 26-of-31 passing for 324 yards.

Though critics still claim that Arch is nothing but a kid riding on his last name, his recent performance has solidified in my mind that he has real talent. Though he is far from NFL-ready, his composure on the field—even when 300-pound linemen are charging at him—has shown me and Texas fans that their up-and-coming quarterback is no joke. As they look ahead to back-to-back games against Oklahoma and Georgia, two top-ranked programs, Ewers's uncertain return timeline creates the possibility that Arch will need to step up and continue to lead his team. My guess: that he will have no trouble doing so.

Meet the PGs!

ALEXIE BLAKE
Features Editor

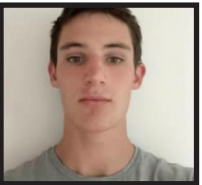
You might be wondering who the tall, athletic, 30-something-looking new students are wandering the halls: they are our glorious postgraduate students! I had the pleasure of interviewing them (chasing them down in the hallway and practically forcing them to give me 10 minutes of their time), and I'm here to tell you a little bit about each of them.



Meet Jojo Aidoo, a football player from Baltimore, Maryland! He has loved his time with the team and is excited for the rest of the season. Off the field, Jojo is tackling his increased workload while still making time to play video games with his roommates and occasionally watch his guilty pleasure TV show, *Boy Meets World*.

Fun fact: Jojo has a passion for ceramics! Before a game, you'll find him listening to Nino Paid or "Them Belly Full" by Bob Marley. Jojo is guided by his mother's wise words: "Know your path," and with that hopes to continue his football journey in college!

Meet Evan Anderson, a football PG from Southington, CT! He's grateful for the incredible friendships he's formed with his teammates, and so far this year, the highlight has been their thrilling win against Loomis in their first game. Before each game, Evan gets pumped up by listening to rock music, especially "Master of Puppets" by Metallica. Fun fact: he has both an older and a younger brother and enjoys unwinding with an episode or two of *Victorious* every now and then. One piece of advice that stuck with him comes from his mom: "80% of value is achieved with 20% of effort."



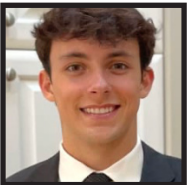
Meet Jack Anderson, a basketball player hailing from sunny Menlo Park, California! You can usually find Jack playing video games with his roommates, going for walks, or unwinding under his favorite thinking tree. He swears by the "valid science" behind his pre-game tradition of snacking on a Rice Krispie treat—I guess we'll see if it works! Post-game, Jack loves to feast on his mom's delicious pasta and meat sauce, which he's determined to recreate, even if he admits, "It's never the same" (although he's half Greek, so maybe cooking is in his blood). And we can't forget about his adorable corgi, Archie, who is his biggest fan. Before a game, you might catch Jack listening to Radiohead's "All I Need," as he embraces Coach Bernier's wise words that "There's no downside to pursuing basketball; it's all about giving your best effort no matter what you're doing."



Meet Ollie Clifford, a soccer player from the charming town of Burlington, Vermont! He has loved his time at Taft so far, especially the warm welcome he has received from his teammates. For Ollie, "Every day is a highlight—I'm just happy to be here." You can usually find him on the soccer field, playing FIFA, hitting the gym, or indulging in an episode of *Rick and Morty*. Before a game, Ollie fuels up with a Red Bull, tunes into "Headlines" by Drake, and dreams about his post-game Chipotle order. Fun fact: he has six siblings! The best advice he's received came from his dad: "Don't dwell on what you can't control."



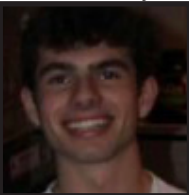
Meet Asher Cort, a basketball player from Westchester, New York. Before a game, Asher enjoys snacking on Sour Patch Kids and listening to his go-to hype song, "Narrow Alley." In his free time, Asher enjoys playing basketball and video games with his roommates, taking naps, and every once in a while indulging in his guilty pleasure: *Twilight*—though I'm not entirely sure I can back that choice given that he's team Jacob. Fun fact: Asher also speaks fluent Spanish! Looking ahead, Asher is planning to play college basketball and study finance and economics. With his dad's wise words, "Rejection is redirection," guiding him, Asher is ready to take on whatever comes his way, both on and off the court.



Meet Drew Fisher, a soccer PG from San Francisco, California! He has loved the time spent with his teammates—"I love the guys—great team culture, super happy." Drew's highlight of the year so far was beating Deerfield in BVS's first home game. Adjusting to "living at school" and "tons" of work in his Senior Research and Composition class, Drew is juggling multiple responsibilities while still making time for what he enjoys—playing pool and ping pong in the Jig and occasionally catching an episode of *Rick and Morty*. Fun fact: Drew has a brother who is adopted from India. Before a game, Drew listens to "Sorry 4 the Wait" by Lil Wayne and engages in a "grounding" ritual, which involves connecting with the Earth...I think. Don't ask me for details—I direct all questions to him!



Meet John Fisher, a lacrosse PG from Haymarket, Virginia! Having met his team over the summer, John came to Taft knowing some people and has quickly found his groove. John's highlight of the year so far was Super Sunday (despite not being on the superior royal blue team). At Taft, John is adjusting to an increased workload while always allowing time for Sunday night football and his guilty pleasure entertainment show, *The Bachelor*. Before a game, John enjoys napping and listening to "Hate It Or Love It" by The Game to hype himself up. John will be playing lacrosse at the University of Richmond!



Meet Christian Graziano, a squash player from Greenwich, Connecticut! Christian loves spending time with his teammates on and off the court—"We've got players from all around the world, so there's a lot of culture and personality." In his free time, Christian enjoys golfing, and when he's home, watching *Gossip Girl* with his sister. Before a match, Christian practices breathing exercises and gets hyped up to "Capo" by NLE Choppa. Fun fact: Christian is fluent in Spanish! His favorite advice came from his grandfather: "Hard times create strong men." With that, Christian will be playing squash at the Naval Academy next year!



Meet Calvin Kulik, a football player from Buffalo, New York! On Sundays, you can find him watching the NFL and cheering for the Bills. His favorite pre-game tradition is listening to music, especially "Hells Bells" by AC/DC. Post-game, he loves indulging in pizza. Fun fact: he has three cats! Calvin's guilty pleasure is watching *The Notebook*, and he can't live without chicken wings—specifically, Duffs in Buffalo. The best advice he's received came from Coach Whitley: "Meet new people." Calvin is hoping to continue his football journey in college!



Meet Alex Lalonde, a hockey PG from Bloomfield, Michigan! Alex is already pumped for hockey season—"Great group of guys. We're gonna be buzzing this year—come out to the first game!" You can usually find Alex in the OSL hanging out with Ms. Shanley or playing pool in the Jig. Pre-game, he listens to "Crazy Story 3" by King Von and looks forward to using the meditation techniques Rev. G has taught him. Fun fact: Alex swears he is a "really good dancer" and occasionally relishes an episode of *Keeping Up with the Kardashians*. His best advice comes from the wise Samaad Brown '25: "Don't be nonchalant."



Meet Charlie Lowe, a lacrosse player from Chatham, New Jersey! Charlie's highlight of the year so far has been meeting new people and spending time with his teammates. On Sundays, you can find him watching his favorite team, the Jets. Before his games, he enjoys watching lacrosse highlights and listening to his hype song, "Kickstart My Heart" by Mötley Crüe. Fun fact: if you name a movie, Charlie can tell you when it was made—I can attest it's pretty incredible. His guilty pleasure is *Two and a Half Men*, and he can't live without his family, especially his two brothers. The best advice he's received came from Navy SEAL Matt Myer: "Never get too high, never get too low." Looking ahead, Charlie is set to play lacrosse at Bates College!



Meet Ethan Marquis, a soccer player from the great state of Maine! Before a game, you can find Ethan reading his bible and listening to his go-to hype song "What You Need" by Don Toliver. It must work because Ethan scored three goals against Deerfield in Boys Varsity Soccer's home opener—what a way to kick things off! With plans to play soccer at Stonehill College next year, Ethan is taking his game to the next level, all while keeping his dad's advice in mind: "Always give 100% and do something that makes you proud." Just don't ask him about his Saturday classes—he's still recovering from the homework overload, especially in Ms. Hernandez's Senior Research and Composition Class!



Meet Matthew Olsen, a football PG from the (greatest) state of Maryland! You might see him walking around with his red Stanley in hand—if you do, say hi! So far this season, he's cherished his time spent with the team, with a standout moment being their victory over Loomis. While tackling schoolwork—especially in his Senior Research and Composition and Infectious Disease classes—has been a challenge, he's adjusting quickly! Matthew plans to continue his academic and football journey in college. When he's not on the field, you can find him napping, enjoying pizza or burgers, and listening to his favorite hype song, "No Flockin'" by Kodak Black. Fun fact: he has five dogs, including a German Shepherd and a Chihuahua!



Meet Zach Proctor, a football player from Seattle, Washington! Zach is enjoying a great experience with his teammates and, highlighting their big win against Loomis, is looking forward to what the rest of the season has in store. Off the field, Zach is tackling Ms. Hernandez's "extremely difficult" Senior Research and Composition class like a champ. Fun fact: he enjoys fishing and has Norwegian roots! When he's not on the field, he's likely gaming on his Xbox or binge-watching *Gossip Girl*. Post-game, Zach enjoys mac and cheese (I agreed with him until he said he liked Kraft...). The best advice he's received came from his grandpa: "The man on the top of the mountain didn't fall there." Looking ahead, Zach hopes to play Division 1 football in college!



Meet Arvid Sillberg, the Swedish football sensation! When he's not busy doing homework (which he insists is "WAY too much"), Arvid is rallying his teammates with his go-to hype song, *När Vindarna Viskar Mitt Namn*, and planning to conquer Division 1 football with four offers on the table. The highlight of his year so far was beating Loomis in his first game—an exciting start to what he hopes will be a great season. On Sundays, you'll find him sitting by his gaming console, taking a nap, or dreaming of his favorite post-game meal: Swedish pizza (yes, it's a thing). Fun fact—Arvid is also a fierce competitor in drone racing. Don't ask me what this entails—I direct all further questioning to him!



Meet Asher Ziv, a lacrosse player from Warren, New Jersey! Asher has loved hanging out and practicing with his teammates, and he can't wait for the spring season. In his free time, you might find him watching *Shameless* or cheering on the Bills (with some Chipotle to feast on, if he's lucky). On the morning of a game, Asher likes to "Write out [his] day on a piece of paper"—"It makes me feel comfortable and ready." Later, he'll get hyped up to his go-to song, "Bad" by David Guetta. Asher is an avid sports watcher and an "entrepreneur" in CPT. Next year, he will be playing lacrosse at Yale University!



Meet Angel Quilles, our lone baseball PG from Queens, NY! Angel is excited to be forming great friendships with his teammates and is looking forward to hitting the field this spring. Before each game, Angel gets hyped up listening to "6 in the Morning" by Nate Dogg. Fun fact: he has a five-year-old brother named Adrian—12 years apart! When he's not practicing, you can find him indulging in