

A modern twist on family fun: Activate

Nia Moreno, Celebrations Specialist

It's common, for people of all ages, to feel a sense of childhood nostalgia, competitiveness, and fun after entering a family entertainment center.

The Pembroke Pines community has recently acquired a new entertainment center called Activate, and it's the talk of the town for a reason.

"Activate" stands out as not your typical family gaming premises. Often, in other gaming facilities, a person is controlling a machine to play a game.

Activate is the world's first active gaming facility where people become the players. Their idea of a "new way to play" might just be the better way.

While visiting with my friends, I was amazed at the varied choices the company made. It was like nothing I've seen. I felt like I became the video game character in those machines I would control.

After my friends and I got checked in, the staff then walked us out to the gaming area. The space was filled with colored light and doors leading to the micro-arenas.

Each arena had a different layout and look. Outside of these spaces were screens providing the different types of adventures you could explore in that specific room. They offered games that were competitive and cooperative, ranging in difficulty. Activate's 14 micro-arenas included grid floors, basketball hoops, lasers, and more.

The first experience we explored was the grid floor. The objective was to stay in your colored square grid. The entire time we were on our toes, running and anticipating what twist was coming next.

By the end of the first game, I was already aware this experience was going to be one to remember. This facility definitely brings out that competitive side of a person, and I was ready to channel it.

Going from zone to zone, my friends and I completed games in the rooms: grid, hoops, hide, press, mega grid, and laser. All were amusing, yet one game kept all of us so intrigued. The area features a circular wall full of buttons. These buttons had light in them, allowing us to see different patterns of color.

The game we chose gave us three light patterns, and we were assigned to find the matching button of light. The trick was that the given patterns were hidden in three of the hundreds of buttons on the tray. It was a challenge, but a fun one.

Smiles were present on all my friends' faces as we left the game center. Overall, Activate is a wonderful place to spend quality time with those you love.



Gary Smith

Three people in the background playing one of the many minigames offered at Activate. This one in particular consists of jumping onto the colored tiles.

A new generation of leaders: National Honor Society 2026 induction ceremony

Daisy Ferguson, Sports Editor

Silence flooded the River of Grass (ROG) auditorium on Tuesday, March 10, at 6:30 pm as the melodic sounds of music flowed through it during the beginning of the National Honor Society (NHS) induction.

The new inductees walked towards the stage and sat down in their designated seats as parents were seated throughout the auditorium.

On the stage sat NHS officers, NHS sponsor Jillian Palacio, Peter Bayer, the principal of PPCHS, and Frank Castillo, the mayor of Pembroke Pines.

After the music stopped, and all inductees were seated, senior and NHS president Kaitlyn Oramas greeted the crowd and introduced herself, as well as the officers.

Oramas notes, "As I sat up on the stage, looking at the future of our organization, it reminded me of the time when I was sitting in those same auditorium seats, hoping to achieve great things within NHS."

She then called Sergeant at Arms, senior Paige McCarthy, to the microphone to say the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by speeches by Mayor Castillo and Principal Bayer.

These speeches honored the new inductees as well as explaining what NHS means to our school and the city.

After the speeches, inductees were sworn into the honor society. The whispers of them echoed throughout the ROG as they read the pledge to join NHS out loud.

This was followed by the names of the new members being called up to shake the hands of the sponsor, principal, and board members as they received their certificate of membership.



Amaya Jorge

National Honor Society inductees stating as they read the pledge off of the projector to join.



Mayor of Pembroke Pines, Frank Castillo making a speech to the audience during the induction. (Amaya Jorge)



Inductees standing with the current officers with their certificate of acceptance on the stage smiling for a photo. (Amaya Jorge)

Then, there was a candle lighting led by the officers as they lit “the four pillars,” symbolizing scholarship, leadership, service, and character.

This ceremony was a transfer of knowledge and leadership to the next generation and new NHS members.

This was followed by refreshments and cake provided to the audience and new members.

“It felt really cool to be recognized for things that I do within and beyond the school and to be a part of a community of peers with similar ambitions and interests,” mentions sophomore Shriya Sardesai.

This induction symbolized the stepping up of underclassmen and a new chapter of NHS.

The 2025-26 NHS members’ mark will be engraved at Charter, as they are finalists in the county for their service projects this year.

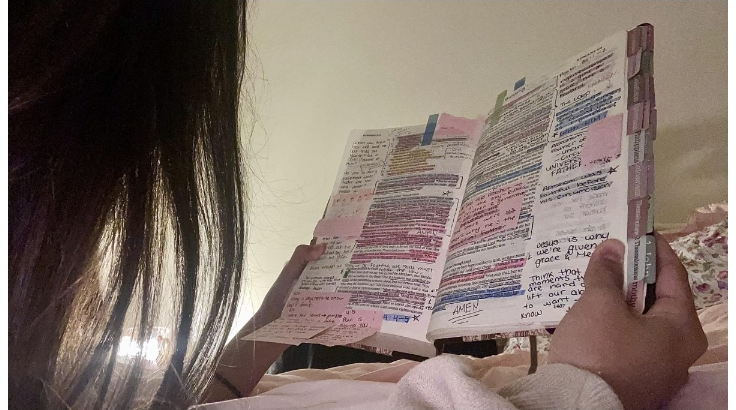
“As I leave this club in May, I have high hopes that the forte of this club will continue to carry out the legacy that we have created,” Oramas reflects.

A voice and message given from Christ: How the Lord changed my life, Part 1

Loraine Sanchez-Figueroa, Opinions Editor

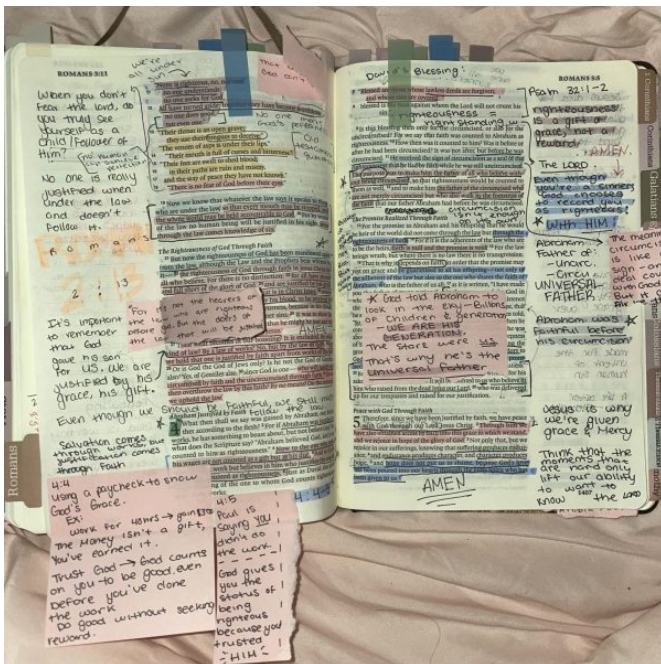
I used to be heavily controlled by insecurity and anger, and I couldn't see people experience any good without feeling jealous. At my worst, even good moments would turn into bitterness inside me. My anger was so intense that one day, I experienced a sudden clarity, like a light exposing everything I had become, urging me to turn away from hatred. So, people question why I became involved in religion, and the truth is—I was told to, not by my parents, **but by Christ**.

I used to be a very sensitive person—little things always seemed to upset or annoy me. My mind was filled with so much negativity that when I was overwhelmed by it, I felt like I was slipping and couldn't hold onto anything steady. That sensitivity caused me to lose all kinds of relationships, especially with my family and friends.



Loraine Sanchez-Figueroa

Loraine Sanchez Figueroa opens her Bible and begins to read as she starts her journey in finding God. She continues to read every day as she never stops craving for knowledge about Jesus.



Roman chapter 3-5. These chapters were where Loraine makes vast connections from the beginning of the Bible and marks one of her most exciting reads. (Loraine Sanchez-Figueroa)

This experience with what I knew to be the Holy Spirit sparked my eternal love for Christ, and from that day on, I finally felt ready to begin my journey of faith. I bought a Bible and began reading and studying every day, finishing the books of Proverbs and Galatians (wisdom and freedom) in just three months.

Letting go of my negativity

The Word has taught me not only how to change the way I react, but has shown me to love everyone—even my enemies. I find myself now wanting to get out of my comfort zone and connect with everyone instead of carrying grudges that are long overdue.

I've learned to leave all the anxiety, negativity, and darkness in my life to the Lord and instead carry wisdom, love, and care for all. That means choosing patience when I feel anger rising, and choosing silence instead of reacting out of frustration. Not only has this made my life more joyful, but it has also helped me avoid lashing out, feeling vengeful, or fighting fire with fire.

Romans 12:21 expresses, "Do not overcome [evil] by evil, but overcome evil with good," and right before, Romans 12:19, it expresses, "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' says the Lord."

I don't want anyone to feel unwanted or hated around me. I used to feel alone, and I know what it's like to feel like no one is there for you. That kind of loneliness isn't just physical—it's something that sits inside you, even when people surround you. But when I found the Spirit, those feelings of isolation began to fade, and I haven't felt alone since.

Each relationship I had kept getting dispersed, and while I believed I was improving, I realized that nothing was actually changing. Though three years later, someone helped me change, someone showed me I'm not actually alone. That someone was Jesus Christ.

My first encounter with God

During a tiring night, at the beginning of January, my anger returned with nothing but hatred and judgment, but this time I didn't let it swallow me. Instead of reacting, I paused and chose to seek God's guidance.

As I prayed, I felt a conviction—like a voice I couldn't ignore. I heard him say, "You're doing wrong. Come to me for your conflicts, come to me for your aggravations," he added, "do not go to another person and speak ill of one another instead of recognizing you're wrong."

His blessings helped me understand my wrongdoings and taught me that the feeling of guilt wasn't truly mine but a message from the Lord—showing me His guidance by opening my eyes to the foolishness I had held inside.

What makes that feeling more profound is the melting pot of our world, brimming with diverse beliefs, opinions, and perspectives. In one place, a person's religion might be regarded as the truth, while in another, it could be dismissed as a delusion.

I've been shown, however, where I once divided because of how different we all are, I was taught that instead we are individuals created to connect with each other like missing puzzle pieces. Now, I no longer feel that separation because we are different.

God revealed to me that no matter where I am, I am never truly alone, and while I've felt judged or misunderstood, I no longer let those feelings define how I see myself because of the confidence Christ has given me. My sense of belonging is no longer rooted in whether others understand me, but in the fact that God understands me.

I'm truly happy where I am, and now I've learned how to work through some of the biggest things I've hated about myself with Christ holding my hand. Finding my faith allowed me to find myself too; becoming a new person born of the Spirit and no longer someone consumed by narcissism.

I know now that the Lord has brought me life and rebirth from who I used to be, as it says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." In that truth, I continue forward—not as who I was, as who I am becoming.



A rosary gifted by Loraine's Great Grandmother. Loraine shows her great appreciation for the rosary and uses it occasionally. (Loraine Sanchez-Figueroa)

A voice and message given from Christ: How the Lord speaks to me, Part 2

Loraine Sanchez-Figueroa, Opinions Editor

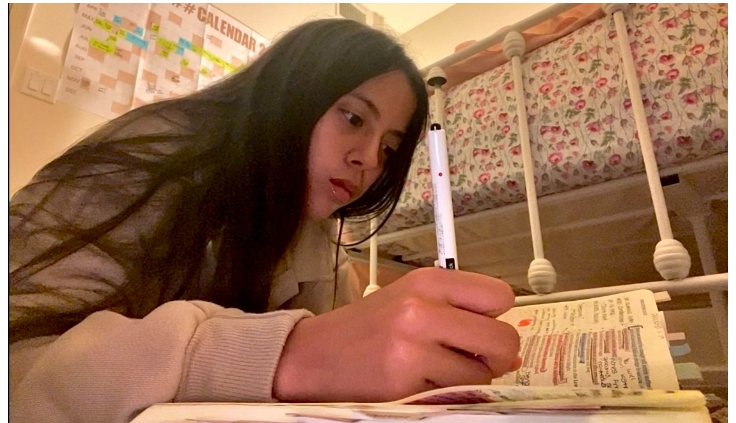
God speaks to us in different ways; the way I hear the voice of the Lord might be different from how you hear Him. That's what makes religion a beautiful thing – no matter who you are, the Holy Spirit has amplified His voice to make it easier for you to understand. This means He's simply showing you signs that He is here, hoping you'll hear Him and see that He's been there guiding you.

I never looked for Christ. In fact, it took me a long time to hear His voice. If you had asked me about religion before my conversion, I would have said it always felt scary to me. It seemed like the Bible was just a big book telling me what I could or couldn't do, and I only read it out of fear, trying to change myself just to avoid ending up in hell after I died.

Although I've realized that it's so much more than that, and it's not about changing by the law of the Bible, but changing by your faith. Before Christ, there was no true change in my actions because I hadn't met Him. So I tell others, "If the Jesus you know hasn't changed your life, you haven't met Jesus; you met religion."

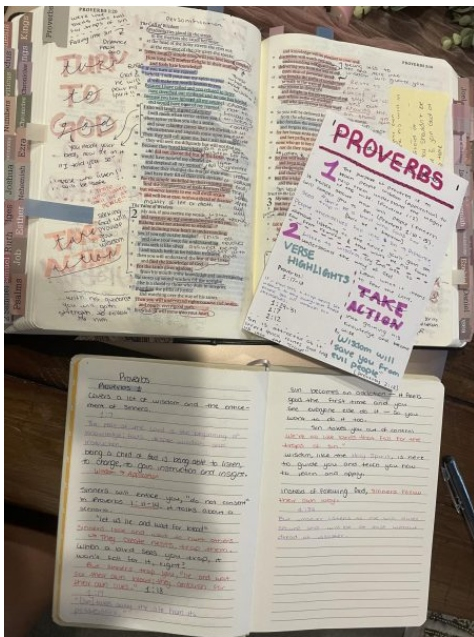
When I finally understood how the Holy Spirit revealed God's message to my mind, it became clear that He had been there all along, and that I was the one who hadn't looked for Him.

To clarify, the Bible states that God knows everything—from beginning to end, right? 1 John 3:20 says, "... God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything," and then Jeremiah 1:5 quotes the Lord saying, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you..."



Loraine Sanchez-Figueroa

Loraine Sanchez Figueroa sits on her floor as she reads and writes in her Bible as she continues to try and gain more wisdom to help others understand the Bible's teachings too.



Loraine's set-up for her Bible studies: her ESV translated Bible, a separate journal to write additional notes & thoughts, and small cardstock papers to make chapter summaries. (Loraine Sanchez-Figueroa)

He knows the outcome of every situation, whether good or bad. So, one night while I was in bed, out of nowhere, a gut feeling told me, "Something is wrong." I knew it was the voice of the Lord. He told me that someone I cared about, someone I constantly thought about, was someone I'd soon cut ties with.

Praying—I asked, "Lord, help me with my overthinking—if it's my mind, help me fight against it and clear the negativity entirely," I said, "and if you're warning me, show me the truth and remove whatever is in my life that shouldn't be,"

My request to remove anything that shouldn't be there had worked because right after my prayer, the person and I had parted ways. That's when I realized it wasn't just overthinking, that it's never been just overthinking, but God was warning me of what the future held for me.

Inspiration to pursue God's Word

Before I associated 'overthinking' with God's guidance, it controlled my life. Though once I learned to work with it instead of against it, I realized that my desire to spread the gospel grew. I started attending church and a youth group after school, while also making time on my own to host Bible studies for those interested in learning more about the Word.

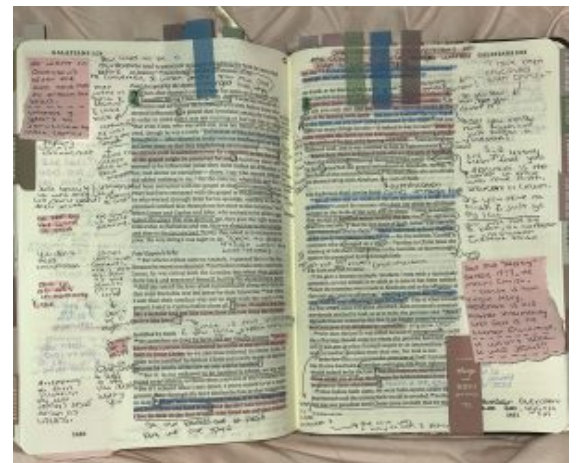
The Word has not only helped me find more peace in my life but also deepened my understanding of the biblical perspective on life and death.

I want to show people, through scripture, the differences between living in sin and living with Jesus. Teaching people the Word has become one of my many passions, and I hope to help someone one day be reborn in Spirit.

It's a feeling you will be gifted when it happens—it's something that has truly changed my life, and you can discover it too. Then, once you realize you have, your heart will want to share it with others.

To me, this wasn't about forcing belief on others, but about living in a way that genuinely reflects Christ so that others become curious and are drawn not to me but to Him. It taught me that sharing the Word isn't about argument or perfection, but about planting seeds with love, patience, and truth.

Just as my heart was changed, I now feel called to be a light that might guide someone else toward that same transformation.



Galatians Chapters 2-3, where she learns about things like deception and also connects things to the beginning of the Bible, and makes this one of her most exciting reads. (Loraine Sanchez-Figueroa)

A work trip to California: Henri Humar's week-long internship

Derek Thompson, Business Manager

The average high school student's weekday plans usually consist of going to school, working on homework, hanging out with friends, and maybe even attending a club event or two. Junior Henri Humar, however, was in California working for the company Tether Production, helping on a 7-day photoshoot.

Humar's parents gave him the opportunity to work for their company, assisting with various tasks: prop shopping, model management, and location scouting. His official title was assistant production manager, where he was a helping hand to the production manager and any other departments that needed any kind of assistance.

He also got special permission from the school itself to miss class, with all of his absences for the week being excused. This allowed him to focus solely on the production and worry about his schoolwork later.

"It was a really cool experience," comments Humar. "I got to meet a lot of people, and it taught me a lot about both photography and management."

Tether Production is a South Florida-based company that specializes in photography for companies and campaigns. They've shot in locations like West Palm Beach and Miami Beach for famous clients like Komos and Iris Apfel.

Their most recent photoshoot took them all the way to the West Coast, working for client Urban Planet, which is a Canadian clothing company targeted at young adults, similar to Pacsun and Hollister. The shoot itself lasted a total of 7 days for their new spring campaign at well-known filming spots like the LA Galaxy soccer stadium and the Pink Motel.

One aspect of Humar's job was loading and unloading photo equipment when they moved from location to location. This sounds like a simple task, but when the equipment costs tens of thousands of dollars, it becomes a little more nerve-wracking.

"I wouldn't say I was scared to move the equipment, but the thought of dropping something definitely crossed my mind once or twice," remarks Humar. "I had to be really careful, because one slip-up could delay production and cost a lot of money."

Another one of his tasks was prop shopping, where he would get a general idea of what the client wanted in the scene so that he could find props to match. An extension of this was model management, another one of his responsibilities, where he would help pose models to make the shot most appealing for the clothes they were wearing. Any other questions they may have had were also directed at him, such as when the next break would be or anything similar.

After the shoot was over, Humar returned home and went back to school, continuing his normal high school life just as he had before, and finishing the schoolwork he'd missed during his time in Los Angeles. However, he wasn't the same as any ordinary kid anymore; this experience gave him knowledge he wouldn't just use in school, but also in his future.

Alumnus Logan Hall's soccer career off the Charter field

Emmanuel Baptiste, Jagwire Host

In the rafters of the school gymnasium, a banner hangs, permanently honoring Logan Hall, as the Gatorade Florida Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Beyond the shiny accolades he received was a legendary athletic impact he left behind.

Now a rising college standout, Hall has spent the past year establishing himself at Jacksonville University, where he quickly adjusted to the pace of Division I soccer.

In his freshman season, he became the first player in Jacksonville men's soccer history to earn Atlantic Sun Conference (ASUN) Freshman of the Year honors. He was also one of four Jacksonville Dolphins named to the ASUN All-Freshman team, a program record, and the only Jacksonville player to receive a conference superlative award.

Even with success nearly 300 miles away, Hall has remained close to his home. When the Jaguars opened the 2025 season with a 2-2-1 record—one of the slowest starts the program has seen in years—the alum returned to spend time around the team.

"I came back to Charter because that program helped shape who I am," Hall says. "When the team had a tough start to the season, I felt it was important to be around and show support. I just wanted to...remind them of what they're capable of."

Hall attended practices and was present during the Jaguars' Dec. 3 match against Western High School. Rather than stepping in as a coach, he focused on conversations with players and reinforced the mindset that defined his senior season.

That same outlook has shaped what Hall is building outside of Charter. Earlier this year, he launched Elite Lab, a private training program centered on one-on-one work and small-group preparation.

"I started Elite Lab because I wanted to create the kind of environment I grew up in," Hall says. "It was built on discipline, accountability, and belief. My upbringing taught me the value of hard work and giving back, and earning the opportunity to play at UCLA showed me how important the right mentorship and structure can be. Elite Lab is my way of passing that on."

"The goal of Elite Lab goes beyond just training players," Hall says. "We want to build character, leadership, and confidence. A big part of what we emphasize is mindset and habits that will help them succeed long after soccer."

Former teammate Noah Lewis, now captain of the Charter boys varsity team, has seen that effort firsthand. To Lewis, Hall's presence is proof that success has not made him abandon the community he came from.

"Logan's always been consistent," Lewis says. "It doesn't matter where he's playing or what he's won. He comes back and motivates not only me but also our whole team to keep working, reinforcing the belief that you never know how far hard work takes you until you put it in."

Hall's leadership has reached the team even when he couldn't be there physically. Before the team's regional final, he called the team with his own experience in the program.

"Calling the team before the regional final was about reinforcing belief," Hall says. "I wanted to remind them that they were capable of getting the job done. That moment meant a lot to me because it showed the connection and the culture at Charter are still strong."

For head coach Marc Lou-Young, Hall's continued involvement reflects the kind of standard the program hopes to sustain.

"When alumni like [Hall] come back, it reinforces the culture," Lou-Young says. "It shows our players what it means to care about something bigger than yourself."

Now committed to the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA,) one of the nation's top college soccer programs, Hall views the next step in his journey as another chance to keep growing.

"UCLA is an incredible opportunity," Hall says. "Competing at that level pushes you every day, and I want to keep growing as a player and as a person while representing the program the right way."

Still, when asked how he hopes to be remembered, Hall's focus has little to do with banners, awards, or records.

"Beyond awards like Player of the Year, I hope people remember me as someone who was consistent, selfless, and dependable," Hall says. "I always wanted to make the players around me better and represent the program the right way on and off the field."

Are Pakistan and Afghanistan in an “open war”?

Micah Lopez, Community Editor

Tensions between Afghanistan and its neighboring country Pakistan have escalated in recent months over their shared and disputed border. On Feb. 26, it reached an all time high with Afghanistan attacking Pakistan's military bases. In response, Pakistan carried out airstrikes in Afghan territory, marking one of the most serious escalations between the two countries in recent years.

Pakistan's Defense Minister, Khawaja Mohammad Asif, declared that Pakistan is engaged in an "open war" with Afghanistan, though neither country has formally declared war yet. After this statement, on Mar. 16, Pakistan launched an air strike on a drug rehabilitation center in Afghanistan's capital, reportedly killing hundreds.

Background and Causes

In August 2021, the Taliban took control of Afghanistan following the withdrawal of United States forces. The group remains in power today, governing the country under a strict interpretation of Islamic law.

Since then, skirmishes between the Afghan Taliban and Pakistan have reached nearly a daily basis, threatening the fragile peace treaty between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

"Pakistan has witnessed a sharp rise in militant violence within the country in recent years, including suicide bombings and coordinated assaults targeting security forces," stated Prime Minister Asif. "Pakistani authorities blame the Pakistani Taliban, known as ... the TTP, for many of the attacks, and accuse Afghanistan of providing a safe haven for the group inside Afghanistan."

More specifically, Pakistan has seen a sharp rise in terror attacks, which include suicide bombings and attacks on border security forces. Pakistani authorities blame the TTP for many of the attacks, and accuse Afghanistan of allowing the group to function without limits, a claim that Afghan Taliban repeatedly deny.

Despite these denials, Pakistan has launched strikes targeting suspected TTP positions inside Afghanistan. These actions have led to retaliatory responses from Afghan forces, creating a cycle of back and forth attacks between the two countries.

This has left many worried about the future of the region and the threat of violence entering into neighboring countries, one being senior Aaron Santiago. Santiago's family is from India, and he worries for his relatives still living there as its neighboring countries intensify their attacks.

"With everything already going on in the world, more casualties is something we don't need," states Santiago. "I hope that they can settle this quickly so it doesn't spill into other countries, like India. I still have family living there, and I worry sometimes for their safety."

As of Mar. 13, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan recorded at least 75 civilians killed and 193 injured since the start of this conflict. The stakes of the conflict are high, with Pakistan being a nuclear power and both China and Russia as its major defense partners. The Afghan Taliban has stated its willingness to negotiate with Pakistan, though no attempts have been made.



Jacob Hladek

The Afghan flag (left) and Pakistani flag (right) are displayed opposite one another. Amid ongoing violence, the futures of these countries are uncertain.

Back on the court: Boy's volleyball begins

Caroline Curl, Staff Writer

A sweet taste to the Jaguars, yet a bitter one to their opponents, the hunt for victory begins at the den for the boys' volleyball team. After ending last season with a historic run and revamping the program, ending with a 19-5 final record, the Jaguars boys' volleyball team is back on the court for the 2025-26 season.

Senior Godly Thomas reflects on their last season, "Our team started strong, going 19-5, and we won our first-ever district title. When we reached regionals, we did not play to our full potential, which ended our season. The biggest lesson was that every game matters."



Senior captain Gabriel Castro setting the ball so that it could be spiked by one of his teammates. (Juliette Othon)



Juliette Othon

Junior captain Adrian Navarro jumping in the air to serve the volleyball. Aiming to lead his team to victory.

Last season, only two players graduated, so the majority of the team is returning. Since the game is based on high speed and intensity, all players are similar in this regard, having gained knowledge from last season and focusing heavily on communication and teamwork.

Building on the fact that this is a new season, there are many new additions to the team, most of them being underclassmen and middle schoolers.

During the month they had to practice before the season, the Jaguars used every moment they had to gain new experiences. This helped them make adjustments as they learned from their peers and coaches.



Senior Xavier Soto using all of the power in his body to hit the volleyball, getting a point for the Jaguars. (Juliette Othon)

leads them throughout the season.

"Even though we have fallen short in some of our games, I am confident that we will bounce back in the playoffs. We have been putting in the work, and will continue to reap the benefits through playing our game."

The practices focused heavily on improving consistency in basic volleyball skills. Practicing passing, setting, and serving every day to improve their in-game performance. The practice of basic skills can also assist with the removal of simple mistakes during games.

Communication during games is the Jaguars second major concern for the upcoming season. Volleyball is a game that requires players to think quickly and respond immediately during each play. Improved communication skills will allow the team to remain calm during critical moments.

The team also aims to develop better chemistry during the upcoming season, as the players are aiming to spend more time together. Doing this by practicing together outside of high school ball. This allows them to become more familiar with each other's playing style as well as get to know one another on a deeper level.

The Jaguars main goal this season is going far in the playoffs as they have been rebuilding their program. All of these factors are an attempt at this. Junior captain Adrian Navarro is making sure of this with his team as he

Behind the spotlight: The dark side of Hollywood

Gianna Jaric, Celebrations Specialist

Los Angeles (L.A.) is one of the most notable cities in the world, the center of the nation's film and television industry, and home to millions of aspiring artists and performers. From behind-the-scenes studio tours at Paramount Pictures to the iconic Hollywood Walk of Fame, L.A. has so much to offer that it can make most people's wildest dreams come true.

However, beyond all the glitz and glamour, a different and less photogenic reality creeps through.

From the early 2000s to the mid 2010s, one of the most dominant branches of film and television was the childhood entertainment industry. Targeted toward teens, preteens, and below, the Disney Channel and Nickelodeon networks weren't just silly sitcoms and skits for little kids to enjoy. They had their own empires.

Among this commercial success, countless stars, once just normal kids hoping to land a cool acting job, became household names for the youth. To many, they weren't just actors. They were idols.

"I first heard of Ariana Grande when I would watch *Victorious* growing up. I was literally so jealous of all of those actors and how they were kids like me, but instead super rich and famous," comments sophomore Emma Estevez.

Like Grande, many former child stars carried their fame into adulthood. Demi Lovato, first recognised for her role in the *Camp Rock* movie franchise, used those origins to kickstart her music career. From then on, her fame skyrocketed.

Yet, away from the spotlight, the Disney star faced many private struggles. Later interviews from Lovato revealed the decade-long drug addiction that she faced, starting in those formative years. Poor mental health, eating disorders, drugs, and exploitation are just the surface of the personal challenges Lovato faced.

In 2021, she came forward with a detailed YouTube series, *Demi Lovato: Dancing with the Devil*. The pressure of being an idol brought some terrifying experiences to her life, including a near-fatal overdose in 2018.

Lovato's case is just one of many. In 2025, Tylor Chase, a former child actor who appeared on Nickelodeon's *Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide*, went viral on TikTok after videos surfaced of him appearing to be homeless.

Many viewers were absolutely shocked—a once successful child actor, now famous for a completely different reason. Despite many people from the internet offering their help, it seems as though no real advances have been made for Chase. This proves that early fame does not always lead to long-term stability.



Benaiah Samuel

In 2024, HBO released a documentary, *Quiet on Set: The Dark Side of Kids TV*, diving into the behind-the-scenes experiences of some of the most beloved Nickelodeon shows of the 2000s. One of the most shocking testimonies to come from this documentary was that of Drake Bell, most widely known for the hit series *Drake and Josh*.

It was revealed that, at the peak of his career, portrayed as a successful, carefree child star, Bell had been sexually abused by a prominent dialogue coach who was very intertwined with the entertainment industry. While the Nickelodeon and Disney Channel networks worked hard to put up their perfectly polished brands, the harm and abuse behind-the-scenes was completely unknown to fans.

This documentary also renewed a white-hot spotlight on one of the biggest names in the child entertainment industry: Dan Schneider. Although Schneider has publicly denied all allegations of sexual misconduct with minors, former cast and even crew members have come forward with many uncomfortable and inappropriate experiences involving the producer and screenwriter.

"I've always watched and loved Nickelodeon shows, especially Dan Schneider's. After a while, though I heard about what a creep he was, and it kind of ruined it for me," sophomore Joshua Tomlinson states.

Away from the spotlight and beyond the famed Hollywood sign, dreams often fade into reality and reveal the harsh truth: success can come at a cost that very few are truly willing to pay.

Busy isn't always better: The power of quiet in a loud world

Caroline Curl, Staff Writer

Many students now juggle a lot of academics and extracurricular activities, but since being so busy is viewed as the 'norm,' it often leads students to focus more on academics than on their social life.

Society teaches us that every second must be used to the fullest, and if we aren't active enough, then we fall behind.

Though when people realize that one of the most productive things you can do is relax and enjoy the quiet, living a usually busy life turns soothing.

This constant drive for productivity comes with a hidden cost to our mental well-being. When spending all day scrolling or studying, we slowly lose the ability to simply exist and experience life. We need to give our bodies a chance to cool down, because that constant need to be productive can lead to burnout.

Choosing to embrace quiet moments is not out of laziness—it's self-care. Real reflection happens when the external noise slowly fades away. During those short moments of quiet and stillness, we can finally hear our own thoughts and emotions to plan our future with more clarity.

The world around us is designed to capture our attention and hold it hostage. Apps are designed to keep us scrolling, and schedules are built to keep us moving from one task to another.

When we allow ourselves to be bored, something happens to our minds: our brains begin to wander into new and unexpected places, cutting brains off from external stimulation.

This daydreaming is actually where most ideas are born. By staying constantly busy, we are unintentionally closing off the brilliance we are trying to achieve.

Being able to take time out of your day to have a quiet moment can help in so many ways.

It can be as simple as leaving your phone in your pocket during the walk between classes or, maybe, sitting outside for five minutes without any music or podcasts playing.

These small windows of peace and quiet are almost like a reset button for your brain.

People often fear silence because it forces them to confront themselves without distractions, yet leaning into that discomfort is how we grow as individuals. We learn what we truly value when we aren't being told what to think by a screen.

Developing this internal compass is more important than crossing off items on a list.

There are many things you could do and try during that period of quiet. These things can range from meditation, controlled breathing, and self-compassion to more engaging activities, such as yoga, reading, journaling, or taking a walk.



Amaya Jorge

PPCHS Freshman River Furgeson sits next to a tree and reads a book as she enjoys the peace and quiet of her day. It resembles how you can gain a moment of quietness no matter where you are and enjoy the moments of not worrying about academics or extracurriculars.

Celebrating student heritage: PPCHS hangs flags honoring cultures around the world

Gianna Jaric, Celebration Specialist

Every student in the Pembroke Pines Charter High School system has their own background, their own story. The cultural roots from which a person comes are a very large part of who they are.

So, when students enter campus and see their own ethnic flags hung from the ceiling, this appreciation and recognition foster a schoolwide sense of inclusion.

Walking through the school breezeway outside of the cafeteria used to feel like a regular part of students' school days. It was nothing special, just a high ceiling, bare of any decoration.

Now, however, it's impossible not to look up. Nations' flags, some from even the smallest of countries, fill up the once-empty space. The ceiling is now vibrant and full of life, turning an ordinary hallway into an impactful display of culture and ethnic identity.

"What inspired the installation was actually kind of funny," junior Sanjana Balla, who helped implement the display, comments.

"As we were cleaning [Kelly Schwab's room], we found a lot of old flags from some old showcases or whatever. We were just playing around and thinking, 'Hey, they should put these up along with the American flag. That would be cool.' So, we went to our principal's office, Peter Bayer, and he loved our idea."

After juniors Karla Frontado Fuenmayor, Zachary Samuels, and Balla created a schoolwide survey to gauge students' nationalities, the information was sent to Bayer, the flags were ordered, and the school got to work.

While the students weren't directly involved with putting the flags up, seeing their project come to life was very fulfilling.

Principal Peter Bayer explains, "The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive! I think it is a great example of the diversity and inclusivity that make up our student population. It brings awareness and recognition of our students' background and heritage while uniting us all under our own US flag. Furthermore, a plaque is coming to be installed in the breezeway to commemorate and explain the installation!"

National flags are not meant to only represent a mass of land, or just a region of grass, oceans, and trees, but instead the people who make it whole.



Omar Mohsen and Amaya Jorge

Two PPCHS students look at flags hung from the breezeway ceiling. Each flag represents students' nationalities, celebrating schoolwide diversity.

Generations of history and heritage are represented at PPCHS, whether it be a first-generation Cuban American, a third-generation Jamaican American, or even a first-time Japanese transfer student.

"The flags definitely make the school feel more inclusive," Balla comments. "I remember, when the American flag went up, not everyone loved it or appreciated it, but once the flags of all the countries went up, everyone loved seeing their own country. There are definitely plans to include more flags on display. As we enter our senior year, we'll send out another survey and see if we get any new countries not included. We want everyone to feel represented and included in this school."

Seeing a flag that represents an entire family's home or ethnicity is more than just recognition; **it's a reminder that every story matters.**

For some students, it might serve as a symbol of where their parents came from: their first language spoken at home, or traditions carried across generations. For others, it may represent a place they or their family had to leave behind.

"I really love seeing the Colombian and Cuban flags up there in the breezeway. At first, when I saw only the American flag, I did wish the diversity of the school was more included and displayed. I was happy to see that happen," sophomore Emily Bello Contreras states.

As Bayer expressed, the symbolism of each nation coming together under the American flag highlights PPCHS's unity and diversity.

No two students share the same story or background, and now those stories can be told with the help of what was once an empty, ordinary ceiling. Now, it serves as a vibrant display of diversity, culture, and identity that will be represented for generations to come.

CHAT Chime In: Senior Mental Health

CHAT Newsroom

It is now officially Spring, the season of decisions and, for some, renewal. Time has flashed by as the seniors are desperately trying to grab whatever time they can back. College decisions have all been sent out and made for students. It is now our turn to decide what we want our future to look like.

However, here at Charter, stress and anxiety over this topic are just a couple of emotions going through the seniors. The CHAT seniors chime in to give insight and truth to the reality of this journey.

For some seniors, choosing a college and sending out applications is the leading factor for this decrease in mental health.

"It's a combination of everything, including college applications, extracurriculars, and the overall expectations from the people around you. But for me, mostly it has been college applications. The feeling of not being committed and not knowing where you are going really takes a toll on your mindset. It's hard to balance everything while also having an ongoing dread about your dreams not becoming a reality or being rejected from the school you've worked so hard to get into." – *Janeyliz Baez, Multimedia Editor-in-Chief*

"What caused me the most stress this year was college applications at the beginning of the year. Planning and writing my college essay, filling out applications, and balancing AP classes and my extracurriculars overwhelmed me at times because I felt a lot of pressure." – *Lizbeth Manoj, News Editor*

"I feel like I'm desperately trying to imagine 50 different versions of myself in all these different places to try to help me make my decision. In the end, I just feel a lot of self-doubt if I'm picking the right place for college or if I'm choosing the right journey." – *Julianna Perez, Editor-in-Chief*

However, it is also constantly drilled into the minds of seniors that we have to remain present and focus on what we're working on now: maintaining our grades. With the addition of balancing extracurriculars, current school work, social lives, and the process of committing to a college, seniors have seen extreme switches in their mindset and emotions.

"The most stressful part of senior year is how everything seems to happen at the same time. You're trying to keep your grades up while also working on college applications, personal statements, and everything in between. It definitely feels like there's always another deadline coming up. Sometimes it feels like everyone expects you to have everything figured out, whether it's your parents, teachers, or even yourself. At the same time, senior year is supposed to be fun, with events and memories you're supposed to enjoy before graduating. Trying to balance all of that can make it feel overwhelming." – *Emmanuel Baptiste, JagWire Host*

"I think the expectations placed on seniors cause the most stress. Even though a lot of us are already burnt out, we're still expected to keep up with the same high standards, like coming to class every day, finishing assignments, and studying for tests. After doing the same routine for four years, it can start to feel really exhausting. Also, some seniors are already committed to colleges, which can make it harder to stay motivated while still trying to meet all of our teachers' expectations." – *Areeba Haq, Clubs Editor*

It is guaranteed that it is not only hard to feel yourself fall into habits and a mental health space you're not used to, but also for your peers as well. For the CHAT seniors, extracurriculars, religion, and their loved ones keep them grounded and help them push through.

"What has kept me going this year when times get hard is volleyball and the Lord. Volleyball has always been a hobby of mine that I care so much about and really just allows me to take my mind off of everything. Whenever my mind starts to race, I always pray to the Lord and ask him to give me strength to help me get through this hard time." - *Marlee Jaworski, Co-Managing Editor*

"Knowing that I surround myself with my family and friends who are always here to support me, and also finding joy in other things such as playing soccer or dancing, gets me through." - *Madison Casanova, Social Media Editor*

"Well, I'm a Christian, so the Word of God keeps me going. It tells me that God has a plan for all that is happening and will use it to His good. Also, that hardships are a part of life, and they help shape us into better versions of ourselves." – *Micah Lopez, Community Editor*

With graduation fast approaching, it is important to remind yourself that you are not alone in this process. There is no rush to find the mature, decision-making version of yourself. To all the seniors reading, you are doing your best, and that is being noticed. Mental health should always be a priority. So until our caps fly in the air, remember to be kind to yourself.

Culture and pride: It's beyond a music performance

Zyra Rodriguez, JHS Member

This year's Super Bowl halftime show was not just background music between the first two quarters and the end of the game; it was a moment of cultural clarity.

When Bad Bunny stepped on the stage, not only did he perform, but he also displayed himself exactly how he is: authentic, proud, and unapologetic. No translating, no toning it down, and definitely not watering down his culture for anyone. His authenticity made his show just that much more powerful.

One of the moments that stuck with me the most was not his choreography or his best hits; it was when he brought out several Latin American flags and named several countries like Canada and the United States of America.

It was simple, yet significant, creating a moment where there was no picking sides but bringing countries together as one. The set was authentic, proud, sentimental, and nostalgic for many. The show itself spoke in volumes that were not performative; instead it was intentional and meaningful.

Bad Bunny's message was not political or argumentative; it was only meant to bring people together, to remind everyone that they are not just Americans, Latinos, enemies, or allies, but that we are all people and that there is no need to pick a side.

The five lined up perfectly with what he's been standing for, and for years he has never been quiet about inclusivity, and during the Grammys he showed it even more. "The only thing more powerful than hate is love."

During the halftime show, the performance spoke volumes, as he used his platform to invite people to celebrate as one without having to change themselves to be united, while also showcasing his culture and the pride he has for it.

His words were not just to say either; they were real, showing unity is not weakness and that love is the only thing that truly matters, not division.

While the Super Bowl is built on competition and rivalry, the halftime show was a complete parallel. Instead of "us against them," it was just "us" because there was no "them" to be against. Different languages, cultures, and expressions, all on the same stage. Unified.

This year's show was its own moment. Many fans adoringly renamed the event itself as the "Benito Bowl," which became very fitting. The show was not just entertaining; it was a reminder that representation matters and that joy is the most peaceful form of resistance. And during those fifteen minutes of the "Benito Bowl," love was winning against hate.



Justin Betancourt

Spotify's global top artist, Bad Bunny, stuns the audience with a unique performance at the Super Bowl. Many people believe that Bad Bunny can change lives and minds with his halftime show.

Day and Knight: Dylan Capiro competing at Charter to UCF

Daisy Ferguson, Sports Editor

The water polo game commences, and the roars of coaches, players, and referees echo across the pool. To an athlete who played five years on the water polo varsity team, alumnus Dylan Capiro hears this noise as the soundtrack to his eventual victory. To this day, incorporating his technique into an athletic journey in college.

Before graduating in 2025, Capiro was the captain of the varsity water polo team. It was during his senior year that the alum decided to make a splash, helping lead the team to regional quarter-finals.

Beyond athletic leadership, Capiro was extremely involved in student-run extracurriculars. He favored working with the robotics club, Science Olympiad, engineering club, and National Honor Society.

But out of every cherished memory, Capiro holds his time at Grad Bash being most dear. He had the ability to attend a field trip with the same friends he has known since elementary.

Capiro also appreciates his time in Tyler Kapela's classroom, hanging out with the teacher's dog—Amber; cheering at pep rallies; and competing in the annual Forza Stefano water polo tournament.

When he was newly graduated and taking his first steps into student involvement at the University of Central Florida (UCF), he had no idea of what would pique his interest.

There was Greek life and a roster full of new clubs he had not seen before—but what truly attracted him was the ability to play a sport he had known and loved for years.

When the opportunity to play water polo came back to him, he did whatever it took to get on the team.

Capiro joined during the spring semester, since the club was inactive during earlier periods of the year. As of his first few months of being on the team, he loves it, noting that it has brought him so much joy.

"Being part of the team has allowed me to build many connections and friendships," Capiro notes.

More than friendships, this sport also brings the alumnus a new opportunity to learn through the eyes of a freshman, as he currently plays with students more experienced than him.

Now on his way towards being the club's future treasurer, he is currently shadowing the president and vice president of the organization to learn more about it and how to run it.

Capiro adds, "The team is composed of many experienced players who have so much to teach me."

But when he is not in the pool, he is involved in other clubs UCF has to offer. Within his first year, he joined the Asian Student Association, the Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers, and UCF Baja, a dune buggy engineering club.

In the pool or on the Knights' campus tile, Capiro is still working towards becoming a mechanical engineer. But in that time period, his camaraderie and commitment to his many extracurricular activities has made his college experience even more memorable and meaningful.



Donated by Dylan Capiro

Capiro throwing the water polo ball at the goal during his high school years.

From History to Hoops: Dr. Garcia expands his impact to students

Malia Nortelus, Staff Writer

At Pembroke Pines Charter High School, upstairs in the U building, you will find history teacher Brian Garcia, otherwise known as Dr. Garcia to most of his students, engaging in an intellectual conversation with his students.

Passionately teaching a wide range of subjects, from the fall of the Ottoman Empire to the ways the U.S. government works. His motivation, however, extends beyond the classroom to teaching basketball.

Working as a teacher for over 17 years, Dr. Garcia has explored many different pathways to get to his current position. Sitting in his education classes in college, he realized that he found enjoyment in teaching and working with kids.

Combining this with his fondness for history, there was no question about where his future would lead.

Also, since childhood, he has always played basketball, even to this day. He takes his years of experience and shares it by coaching an eighth grade travel team.

The excitement of the game and the luxury of teaching his son, Austin, give him an extra push when it comes to coaching.

"It's a lot of fun seeing those kids grow up and progress. I enjoy it a lot too; it's like taking a hobby and doing something you love and helping out kids," Garcia reveals, reminiscing about how much he enjoys coaching and teaching.

Broadening his love, he created a business called 'Garcia Learning Labs,' focusing on helping athletes with their basketball skills while also providing the opportunity to be mentored on the subject of history.



Donated by Dr. Garcia

Garcia (right) stands on the sideline with his travel basketball team. He turns his passion and experience of basketball into something real by coaching student-athletes with their skills. Garcia plans on expanding this with his teaching business.



Garcia's business logo for his learning labs is called 'Garcia Learning Labs'. He plans on focusing on strengthening and conditioning for his athletes and tutoring AP world history for students who plan on taking his class in the future. (Donated by Dr. Garcia)

The basketball side of his learning lab dwells on strength, conditioning and training workshops for student athletes who want to enhance their performances on the court.

His academic learning class will focus on those who need tutoring, especially those who would like to improve their writing.

It will be set mainly on Advanced Placement (AP) World History and eventually expand with the intention of more teachers joining his learning lab.

It would take place in the summer for students with the desire to sign up for his class, preparing them immensely.

Earning his approval for his business from the state just a few weeks ago, the process of starting his learning lab is officially in the works.

Overall, the inspiration for this business plan comes from his doctorate in applied learning sciences. It helps him create a safe and professional learning environment and even takes it a step farther, making it virtual to make it accessible to even more students.

Another new milestone of Garcia's life would be his newborn baby, Romeo Lorenzo Garcia, born in February, who has been a new light in his life.

"I think having kids has definitely made me more compassionate and empathetic. Especially to my AP world kids, because by the end of the year, they feel like my kids," Garcia expresses when comparing how having children translates into his teaching.

While 'Garcia Learning Labs' hasn't completely started yet, it has shown much promise already, with the impressive percentage of Garcia's students passing their AP exams and his coaching of his travel basketball team. There is no doubt that much success for the business is headed Garcia's way.

From silence to stance: PPCHS students enter the political conversation

Malia Nortelus, Staff Writer

"I had not really paid attention to politics in the past," a sentence that has been repeated through the PPCHS halls for many years, as most students never paid much mind to who was running their country, but when paying close attention, a shift can be noticed. On Jan. 20, 2025, the current president, Donald Trump, was elected, and now students are starting to take a stance on politics.

President Trump is most commonly known not for his work but for his views and the policies he plans to implement during his presidency. Some things that students seem to have strong opinions about, such as strengthening immigration by tenfold, removing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), rolling back LGBTQ+ laws, and overall, creating a more conservative America.

"I would say somewhat that my views have changed; I've been paying more attention and listening more. There are some things I still don't know, but it's okay because I'm going to learn," says senior Jasmine Salmon, elaborating on her interest in politics.

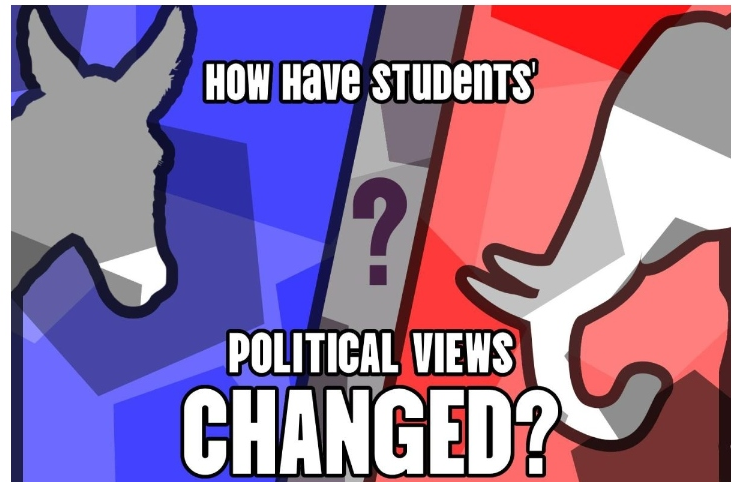
Depending on the household, parents/guardians, and even religion, political values are often passed on to students. When raised into certain ideologies, it's easy to continue that sentiment or even pass it on. Over 80% of teens (ages 13-17) share the political views of their parents.

Naturally, students take the realm of politics with a grain of salt. Junior Olivia Ortiz has never paid much regard to the government, and is still navigating building an informed political opinion.

"I never really paid attention to politics. It didn't exactly interest me, and I would say it still doesn't. I don't exactly have anything I want to see, but just kindness in the world. I think we could all benefit from kindness," Ortiz explains when talking about her curiosity surrounding politics.

It is easy for high school students to overlook the world's problems, especially when they don't affect them. With high school students, or Gen Z, however, many students who are queer or have immigrant families want a more progressive United States.

As a result, they start to make a change. On Feb. 6, PPCHS students engaged in a walkout against Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), skipping instruction to fight for their beliefs and for their community.



Joshua Goetz

A donkey and an elephant, representative of the Democratic and Republican parties, respectively, are positioned opposite each other with a gray area in the middle. Whether students' views have become more liberal, conservative, or neutral, the Trump administration has undoubtedly changed their political perspectives.

PPCHS isn't the only school in the country with student protests; many other schools across the United States have staged student walkouts against President Trump's policies, whether it's ICE, gun protests, or climate change.

Even on the other side of the spectrum, students have had the right of exercising their beliefs as well by not protesting but implementing programs that align with their views.

Programs like Turning Point USA (TPUSA) were created by conservative debater Charlie Kirk, who passed away in September of last year. This cause was met with support from Florida Governor Ron DeSantis for high schools and has been introduced to many universities. Social media has boosted TPUSA off the ground, profoundly shaping teenagers' political views by mixing entertainment and activism, raising student awareness of national and global issues.

"I've been deeply aware and affected by politics since I can remember, around fifth grade, when I heard my parents arguing about things I wanted to understand. I've been more left-leaning and definitely consider myself a Democrat. I just want to have a president who listens to the common people and not the 1%. Listen to the people who matter," sophomore Andrea Sanchez comments, hopeful that everything in the future will turn out right for her and the nation.

From underdogs to champions: Lady Jags varsity soccer season recap

Madison Casanova, Social Media Editor

In the history books of Pembroke Pines Charter High School, the 2025-26 Lady Jags Varsity Soccer team is one that will stand out the most. After a historic run that featured the girls winning a district title and paving their way to the regional finals, this group set a new standard for the future of Lady Jags varsity soccer.

Although their dreams of a state championship appearance fell short of one win, they walked off the field one last time with a new name for themselves.

"At the start of the season, we didn't think we would make it this far, so it is great to see that we accomplished so many great things this season," senior midfielder Amanda Fernandez notes.

After losing three seniors the previous season, the Lady Jags were ready to rebuild their program and find new key players to fill the roles of seniors that graduated.

Freshman defender Riliegh Sabel and seventh-grade forward Oreofe Soyode stepped up and were able to fill the empty spots in the lineup.

Sabel contributed to the 11 shutouts recorded by the Lady Jags this season. As her defense prevented many goals and protected the Lady Jags' net.

"Getting to be such an important part of this team as a freshman means so much to me, and I am so happy I was able to help this team be so successful," says Sabel.

Soyode was another key factor in the Lady Jags offense, this season, she scored 11 goals and assisted her teammates with scoring three goals. From assisting her team to victory to her clutch moments, for example when she scored a last-minute goal against the rival of the Lady Jags, Archbishop McCarthy, in the district final she has been a crucial part of the team. Helping bring another district title for the Lady Jags.



Donated by Lady Jags soccer

The Lady Jags captains holding the district champion trophy while their teammates run to them to celebrate.



The Lady Jags standing together on senior night before the senior's last regular home game.

Leading the team this season were senior captains, Madison Casanova (goalkeeper), Catalina Castro (midfielder), and Amariah Ayum (defender). After getting the opportunity to lead their team this season, Castro expresses that she feels “very happy to have been able to give the girls the motivation to have fun but also play at a high level at the same time.”

Another vital player is the leading goal scorer, junior Madison Connacher (midfielder). This season, she tallied up a total of 25 goals and four assists. She contributed significantly to the Lady Jags’ season, scoring in key games, including the regional final against Lourdes Academy.

This season, Connacher was labeled First Team All-Broward for the Sun Sentinel and Miami Herald. Committing to Florida Gulf Coast University to play Division 1 soccer and also being the captain of her travel team at Sunrise Surf, Connacher is ready to lead the Lady Jags next season.

Connacher notes, “This season and team are such a blessing. Every moment with them was so much fun. I can’t wait to play with these girls again, make more memories, and make it to states.”

The Lady Jags significantly improved their record from the previous season, from 11-6, to 14-3-2 this season.

Becoming back-to-back district champions and making it to regional finals this season after falling short in the regional semi-finals to Archbishop McCarthy last season, the Lady Jags varsity soccer team has left their mark in Charter history. They are ready for next season and looking forward to making their state championship dreams a reality.



The Lady Jags celebrating their victory together moments after the whistle blew at the end of their senior night.

Going full speed into season: The Jaguars track team is ready to race

Aniya Williams, Staff Writer

After months of long practices and conditioning filled with Florida's relentless heat and humidity, the PPCHS Jaguars track team is back. With tryouts being held during mid-to-late January and the roster recently being released, athletes are anticipating the opportunity to showcase their speed this season.

Every week since late November, the Jaguars track team has held numerous practices and conditioning sessions with the purpose of building their athletes' strength, stamina, and endurance. Now that the team has been finalized, players feel as if giving 110% every practice has finally paid off.

"Preseason conditioning has been intense but rewarding. Now that preseason track conditioning has started, my speed is slowly coming back. Physically, I feel ready, and I can see that the work I put in during the off-season is paying off," notes senior distance runner Kameron James.

Distance events range from 800-meter races to a whopping 10,000 meters. These events test not only athletes' endurance but also their mental resilience to keep pushing to the finish line.

With many of last season's athletes being seniors and graduating, plenty of spots were left open for newcomers to take. However, questions have been raised as to how these new athletes will make up for the empty space; they have to prove themselves.

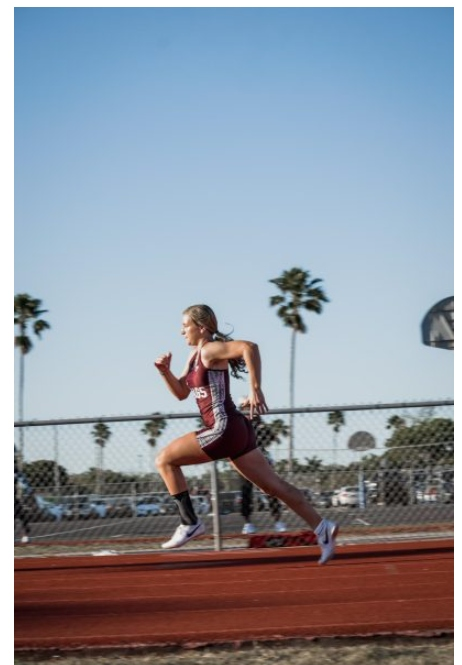
Sophomore long jumper Jayson Lauriston says, "As an incoming athlete and first year for track, I think I bring versatility to the team. My main event is long jumping, but because of my speed, the coach puts me in multiple different events, such as the 400-meter and the 4×400-meter."

Jumping events include high jump, long jump, pole vault, and triple jump, with the Jaguars competing in two of the four events. Athletes need to combine speed with power to bound off the ground into the sand pit or mat, with the winner being determined by either how far or how high the athlete jumps.



Donated by: Zahara Durand

Senior Sarah Rogers sprints into her season at her last first meet of the season.



Senior Lauren Pfeiffer sprints, using power in each step. (Juliette Othon)

Sprinting events include 100 meters, 200 meters, and 400 meters, with relay events also being included in the mix. Relay events range from 100 meters to 1500 meters, consisting of four athletes handing off a baton to one another after completing their assigned distance. Relay events test team bonding through synchronization, as they test an athlete's speed.

Although newcomers feel they have a lot to contribute, some veterans feel as if they have bigger shoes to fill. However, recognizing this, these athletes plan on putting in the time, energy, and work to get to where they want to be this season.

"My shortcomings from last year taught me that I need to train my hardest to become better and that I need to focus and give my all during practice," says sophomore thrower Ayanna Johnson. "I feel more confident going into this season because of the time that I put in training with my private coach and the determination that I have to do better than last year."

Throwing events include discus, javelin, shot put, and hammer throw, with Pines Charter competing in three of the four. Winners are determined by who can throw the object the furthest, with these events designed to determine an athlete's strength and going against the norm of track and field, typically involving running.

Other events include hurdling, which ranges from 100 meters to 400 meters for women and 110 meters to 400 meters for men. This event is truly a survival of the fittest for track athletes, as it tests not only speed and agility but also timing and coordination for an athlete to time their steps perfectly between hurdles.

The Jaguars have already burst out of the blocks and competed in their first three meets. Their next one takes place at Flanagan High School on Tuesday, February 24.

It's an expectation, not a hope: Jaguars basketball brings home state title

Daisy Ferguson, Sports Editor

To the Pembroke Pines Charter High School Jaguars basketball team, winning the state championship game was not a question. It was an answer. "To what?" you may ask—to their whole season.

The Jaguars started their hunt for the state title the second they stepped on the court for their first practice of the season. From the long, heavy practices that started at 5 pm and ended at 9 pm to the six-hour road trips to games and tournaments, the Jaguars knew what they were going to get this season: the state title.

"Winning a state championship is not just about the final buzzer—it is the payoff for months of work that nobody sees," junior captain Zacuras Dawson notes.

Though the Jaguars ended their regular season with a final record of 15-6, a loss to Miramar High School in the BCAA tournament left them with a bitter taste. This setback, however, became the fuel for their revenge arc.

The Jaguars then went on to win the district champion title, regional champion title, and state champion title, being 7-0 in the postseason as well as being ranked #1 in their region, 5A, with a final record of 22-6.

Returning to the arena after two years, after the Jaguars won their second state title in five years during 2024, they made sure to make it four, as this was the seventh year. Yet, the lineup was completely different this season, with a whole new roster.

Once they reached states, which took place in Jacksonville at the University of North Florida, the only thing they thought about was standing with their medals and the trophy.



Donated by photoyou4life

The Jaguars basketball team standing together to pose for a photo with their state champion trophy and medals.



Senior Robert Guishard Jr. dunking the basketball in the state championship game at the University of North Florida basketball arena. (Donated by photoyou4life)

"This is my final high school game, so I know I have to finish off strong and bring it [the state title] home to my people," notes senior Robert Guishard.



Jaguars head coach Dave Roca holding the state champion sign cheering after the victory. (Donated by photoyou4life)

Gameday approached for the state semifinals, which took place on Wednesday, March 11. The Jaguars were ready, as well as their fanbase back at school, as most students attended the showing of the game at the school auditorium (the River of Grass).

They faced off against Lecanto High School and won the game 65-32, sending them to the championship on Friday, March 13, against Fleming Island High School, #2 in the region, located 30 minutes from the arena.

"We knew it was a home game for them pretty much... It did not affect us too much, and we would rather play with the seats not empty," notes head coach Dave Roca.

The Jaguars knew this game would be a tough battle, yet they did not doubt themselves once. Going into the game with a mindset of domination, they did what they thought:

win. The game was a nailbiter as the Jaguars led by only one point in the last 55 seconds of the game.

From that point on, the Jaguars did not give up and continued to make several free throws, ending the game with a victory of 52-48.

Senior captain Robert Guishard Jr. led his team with 19 points and 21 rebounds. Behind him, juniors Dawson and Anthony Walcott both helped shut the game down with a victory.

"You can frame it as more than a victory. It is validation," remarks Dawson.

Jaguar of the week: Alyssa Salmon

Alejandra Gomez Velasquez, Staff Writer

As the finish line grows closer in reach, sophomore Alyssa Salmon does not look back, as she focuses on the finish line. She does not allow herself to second-guess her decisions since one of the main things she has learned from track is that believing in herself is the greatest solution.

Cross-country and track runner Salmon has been nominated as Jaguar of the week, March 23-27.

Running has always been a huge part of Salmon's life. Ever since she played soccer at a young age, she has found enjoyment in the sport. During her freshman year of high school, she joined the Jaguars' cross country and track team due to her love for the sport and her school.

While many others find the sport stressful, Salmon finds it stress-relieving and helpful.

"Track means a lot to me because their ideologies and mindsets transfer to my everyday life," Salmon highlighted.

Through track, she has learned about perseverance and the art of having healthy competition. She learned to believe in herself through the mental toughness of the sport and the coaches who have helped her throughout her journey.

Salmon did not gain all of these tips and tricks through putting one foot in front of the other; she has learned them from the coaches at Charter. She believes that the program provides a heartwarming and close community that supports one another, and feels as if this has helped her succeed.

To Salmon, being a Jaguar does not just mean that she goes to Pembroke Pines Charter High School; she believes that it is a part of her lifestyle and has shaped her as a person.

Salmon expresses, "I feel honored and delighted to be nominated. I am appreciative that my work is recognized and considered for something like this."



Donated by: Chloe Shuch

Alyssa Salmon is sprinting to the finish line at a meet. With every step she takes, she represents Jaguar Nation, making sure to leave her mark.

Jaguar of the week: Brianna Barbee

Caroline Curl, Staff Writer

Senior captain of the Lady Jags flag football team, Brianna Barbee, stands on the field as the stadium lights illuminate it and the audience cheers. The simple 2020 quarantine activity, which started as a brief entertainment option, developed into a much larger venture.

The early decision she made at that time established a dedication that continues to guide her during her final years as a Jaguar.

"I started playing flag football during quarantine with my friend just for fun, but I kept playing and fell in love with the sport and decided to take it seriously by joining a travel team," Barbee notes.

Barbee understands that her time wearing this jersey will soon come to an end, as it is her senior year. She describes how her team membership creates special relationships that lead her to build friendships through the program.

The current Lady Jags flag football team has undergone both transformation and development due to the new addition of a quarterback and several new team members. The players on the team are developing their ability to work together while establishing their relationships with one another.

To Barbee, flag football is more than just a sport; it is a lifestyle built on discipline and determination. She views the field as a place where she feels most comfortable and confident, a space where she thrives.

She notes, "Being able to showcase all my hard work toward the sport is my favorite part, but I also value the connections I've made along the way."



Juliette Othon

Barbee during a game walking along the field preparing for the next drive.



Barbee lining up as the wide receiver waiting for the ball to be snapped and thrown. (Juliette Othon)

Her commitment exists outside of game days due to her demonstrating her work ethic and attitude and leadership skills to her younger teammates.

She mentions, "One thing that pushes me to continue flag football is the craving to compete at a higher level, or even nationally."

Barbee shows how dedication and belief in oneself can help people achieve their goals through her path from playing for fun to competing at higher levels.

Outside of sports, Barbee dedicates her time to her academics and participates in several extracurricular activities. An example of one of the clubs she participates in at school is the Black Student Union.

Also, she has received multiple awards and nominations from the English department at school as the elected student of the year for the course.

No matter what, Barbee will forever represent #2 for the Lady Lags and hold the lasting memories she has created on the field dear to her heart.

Jaguar of the week: Nicolas Murillo

Alejandra Gomez Velasquez, Staff Writer

The spark and love for a sport can be earned through anything, and Nicolas Murillo sought that glimmer by following in his mother's footsteps. Ever since he woke up with a passion for tennis, he has continued to enjoy the sport. Not just because it consists of a racquet and a ball, but also because of what the sport brings him. The journey has had many bumps, yet that is how Murillo discovered his true potential on the tennis court.

Sophomore Nicolas Murillo has been nominated as Jaguar of the week, for the week of March 30th to April 3rd.

Murillo began his journey with tennis at the young age of five when his mother introduced the sport to him. Ever since he stepped on the court for the first time, he has not been able to let go of the sport.

To him, tennis has brought him more than time consumption, it has given him new friendships, better mental health, and a passion that drives him to do better in every aspect of his life.

"Tennis means a lot to me because it is a hobby of mine that has brought me so many good things," Murillo highlights, "friendships, health, and it brought me a passion to keep on getting better."

Being a part of the Jaguars tennis team brings him intense joy, knowing that he is representing his school with his athletic ability. On the tennis court, he shows his heart for the game, not just by winning, but also by representing his school. Murillo's main goal is to ensure that he can exceed the opponent's points while performing his best.

He believes his latest season (25-26) has been a "great ride" for him due to the growth involved in it. Murillo adds that his high school tennis coach, Gustavo Rabines has pushed him to his potential and brought out something in him that no one else has seen.

Murillo will continue to compete in his future matches for the season as playoffs approach. As a captain, he will lead his team through districts in the next few weeks.

"Pines Charter is a great school that makes me feel great about representing, so I'm happy to be a Jaguar," Murillo voices.



River Ferguson

Nicolas Murillo running to the net to make a last minute save to get himself the point for the match.

Jaguar's soccer continues to shine: The 2026 all-star game

Madison Connacher, Social Media Editor

On March 3, 2026, some of the top statistical seniors from Broward County High School soccer took the field for the annual all-star game, which showcased the work these players put in throughout the season.

Several players from Pembroke Pines Charter High School were selected for this, including goalkeeper Madison Casanova, midfielder Catalina Castro, and defender Amariah Ayum from the Lady Jags soccer team. Along with defender Noah Lewis, forward Julian Iodice, and midfielder Gabriel Calderon from the Jaguars boys' soccer team.

This event brought stars from high schools across Broward County to play together one last time. These schools include Cypress Bay, Cooper City, Flanagan, St. Thomas, Chaminade-Madonna, Cardinal Gibbons, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, and Western. For both games, the teams were named the same: the stars and the stripes.

The girls took the field at 5:00 pm and were on the stars. Casanova was chosen as she accounted for 102 saves the whole season; Castro for having nine goals and 18 assists; and Ayum for 11 shutouts throughout the season.

Many of the players on the field are friends outside of high school soccer or even teammates on their travel teams.

"It was so much fun playing with my high school and club teammates all together. It was the most entertaining soccer game I've ever played," notes Casanova.

The final score was 9-3, with a goal scored by Casanova in the final minutes of the game, yet the stars fell short and lost.

The next game was the boys' game, which started at 7:00pm and they were on the stripes. Lewis was chosen for having 7 shutouts; Iodice accounted for seven goals and four assists; and Calderon for scoring 11 goals and making four assists during the season.

The stripes lost to the stars in the boys game.

"Being chosen to play was truly an honor. It felt like the goodbye I needed from high school soccer that I wasn't able to get after state finals," states Lewis.

During the halftime of both games, the "Rising Stars," which consist of sophomores and juniors that were selected based on their season statistics, went onto the field.

Two juniors from Charter were chosen, including forward Madison Connacher, who had 25 goals and four assists this season, and midfielder Emerson Toledo, who scored one goal and contributed four assists.

The "Rising Stars" walked onto the field and received a medal, certificate, and shirt while showing off their juggling and shooting skills. After the halftime moment, they stayed to cheer on their teammates as they continued to play.

This game was more than just a final tally on a scoreboard; it was a celebration of years of late-night practices and bus rides. As the stadium lights dimmed, the seniors left the field not just as rivals from different teams but as a united community of athletes passing down their torches to the younger generation.



Donated by Lady Jags soccer

Seniors Madison Cassanova and Catalina Castro standing alongside their coaches, Lemmers Lyndon and Lemmers Lukas for their final high school soccer photo.

Key Club Blood Drive: Small donation, big impact

Gianna Jaric, Celebrations Specialist

Someone, somewhere, just woke up in a hospital bed. Whether recovering from a car accident, a surgery, or facing an illness out of the blue, there is often one key thing that contributed to saving this person's life: a stranger's blood donation.

On Friday, Mar. 6, the Pembroke Pines Charter Key Club put together their annual blood drive in the school's famed River of Grass (ROG).

Senior Brianna Mendez, an experienced donor, notes, "I have done this 10 times already. Even though you might not see it happen or know the people, it's really just a great feeling to know you're helping people out."

Like Mendez, many students have similar motivations to join the blood drive. While the fear of fainting or headaches can be discouraging, for many, it is the concept of knowing that lives are being saved because of their donation. With the pure variety of blood types and authenticity of each drop, hospitals heavily depend on these volunteers.

For some students, however, there might be specific personal reasons for choosing to participate in the drive.

"Well, it really entices me because they say it saves lives, but me, personally, a lot of older people in my family do have health complications," senior Lealia Taylor comments.

"Recently, my grandpa had a really big surgery, and he did need a blood transfusion, so I was like, 'Why not?' I knew I wanted someone to help my grandpa, so why not do that for other people?"

Taylor has participated in these blood drives over 10 times as well. In her case especially, it is not seen as a chore or something to dread, instead as a small action that can serve an incredibly meaningful purpose.



Donated by Key Club

The volunteers of the Key Club Blood Drive stand in front of the ROG, outside the drive.

With trained medical staff on campus, assigned students to help guide donors back to class, and an overall safe and comfortable environment, what seems like a nightmare can turn into a very personal and beautiful thing.

Mendez mentions, "I already donate outside of school, and I feel like the blood donation buses are always so easy to access, so for me to continue would definitely not be a problem."

Experiences like these do not only show courage for high school students but also shape how they view the importance of helping others. Some students can turn one donation into a lifetime of giving back.

Someone, somewhere, is in a hospital bed, waking up to the news that a last-minute blood transfusion saved their life. They will likely never know the name of the person who contributed, but either way, someone, somewhere, just got a second chance at life.



Senior Lealia Taylor next to the Blood Drive poster. (Donated by Key Club)

Leaving a legacy in leadership: SGA brings Charter silver FASC medallion

Janeyliz Baez, Multimedia Editor-In-Chief

In the world of the Student Government Association (SGA) lies not only an array of schedules for pep rallies and homecoming, but cabinets of hundreds of binders that align the shelf with vibrant spines that list all kinds of SGA events.

On Feb. 20 to Feb. 22, nine of these binders would be taken to Dr. Joaquin Garcia High School for the annual Florida Association of Student Councils (FASC) convention where these project books would be graded in hopes of winning a medallion.

All the events SGA plans and puts on for the student body lead up this one weekend. After every event, SGA members create a detailed project report that gets placed into a big medallion book. This binder holds every event that every committee has ever completed in the course of one year. Falling in numerous categories including state project, fundraising, faculty and staff, community and school service, environmental, and health and safety.

In these same categories, smaller binders are created that hold a more detailed report of standout events such as new school dances and dodgeball tournaments with a twist.

Once the medallion book and projects books are complete, SGA advisors from all across the state of Florida come together at FASC to score these binders. The more points accumulated, the better the chances for the school to be awarded a medallion and trophies for the best projects in each category.

Each of the three days at the convention was packed with different events and keynote speakers. Students were sent back and forth across campus to the gymnasium, auditorium, or classrooms to work on team bonding activities and numerous leadership workshops held throughout the day.

Three of those workshops were led by five of Charter's SGA officers. One dedicated to how to leave a legacy in leadership, another on how to properly use finances in student government, and one about the importance of mental health among growing teenagers.

For many, leading these workshops was the highlight of their trip. "We were in the room just cleaning up and we had an emotional moment after the workshops. We were really proud to represent our school at the state level and to have hopefully made an impact," wholeheartedly expresses Sophomore Senator Shriya Sardesai.

A large part of the convention also consisted of dozens of campaigns made by schools across all six districts in hopes of being elected as the new state board. Skits, speeches, and campaign materials that ranged from pins to flags and bracelets were distributed among the 1,500 student attendees.

Once the final closing session was taking place in the gymnasium, SGA councils from across Florida sat close to their team awaiting the final award announcements in hopes their school placed.

Knees bounced up and down in anxiety, hands clasped together, and eyes stayed glued to the glowing screen in the front of the gym. After a few minutes, Pembroke Pines Charter High School appeared three times in bolded letters.

The first time for placing second place in the Fundraising category for the annual Snowball Dodgeball tournament. A second time for placing second place in community service for the Lotus House event where food distributions were done at the largest women's shelter in the country. Finally, the most awaited one, Charter's SGA placed a silver medallion for their large medallion binder.

"Hearing our names get called for awards was the most surreal feeling. Piecing together our hard work throughout the school year into one tedious binder felt so worthwhile as I shared many hugs and tears with my classmates," expresses senior corresponding secretary Madison Jules.

From not being involved in the state level at all, to winning bronze last year, and now holding a silver medallion along with two trophies, this SGA is back on the map.

Along with these recognitions, two sophomore leadership students, Armani Hernandez and Sasmit Gonthi, got two resolutions passed. Hernandez in hopes of establishing gun control in Florida and Gonthi with the goal of improving school lunches. This is a huge step in creating real change through Florida legislation.

After hours of research and preparation to present this proposal to the FASC vice president, parliamentarian, and hundreds of other delegates, this proved hard work pays off. Sophomore Armani Hernandez describes the moment as, "A realization. Everybody who agreed with my claims genuinely helped my confidence and built me to become a better leader. I am hoping the resolution truly does go somewhere because it is a real-world issue."

These awards and recognitions wouldn't have been possible without the unwavering support from the SGA advisor, Mrs. Altimore, administration, and the 37 students who have made up the leadership class of 2025-2026. Seeing the "underclassmen fall in love with FASC," as SGA 2nd Vice President Giana Marte states, made it all worth it.

It all comes down to one word: *legacy*. Pines Charter's Student Government is back on all levels: county level, district level as the newly elected district six secretary, and on the state level. SGA is bringing home a medallion and is prepared to bring many more in the years to come.

"I hope our continuous accomplishments encourage those to never give up on what you're passionate about and continue to grow SGA's legacy at Charter," proclaims Jules.

Leaving it all on the track: Jaguars' track and field BCAA Championship push

Madison Connacher, Social Media Editor

Under the bright stadium lights and the pressure of postseason competition, four athletes from the Jaguars track and field team turned months of preparation into defining performances, earning their places at the Broward County Athletic Association (BCAA) Championship.

For juniors Adam Stewart, Gian Carlo De Bastos, Alexander Steszewski, and Alayah Samuel, the journey to the BCAA championship was not just about the results- it was about perseverance, growth, and making a name for themselves.

From distance races to field events, each athlete reached the championship differently, yet they all shared the same thought: dominate.

Adam Stewart delivered, in his opinion, one of his “most dominant performances” for this season. Becoming the BCAA champion in the 1,600 meters while also earning second place in the two-mile run.

Controlling the pace from the start, Stewart showed both strategy and endurance as he separated himself from the others in the final laps.

“The BCAA Championship was a really rewarding day for me, as I was able to see all of my hard work pay off, and I am so proud of myself for pushing past my limits. I am so excited to keep improving and building on this for the rest of the season,” says Stewart.

Distance runner De Bastos emphasizes that persistence pays off, finishing in fifth place in the two-mile against some of the county’s strongest runners. Staying composed through the grueling race, he pushed through the fatigue to secure his spot and a medal to take home.



Donated by Jaguars Track and Field

Juniors Adam Stewart (left) standing alongside Gian Carlo De Bastos (right) with their medals from the BCAA championship posing for the camera.



Junior Alexander Steszewski preparing to throw in the shot-put competition using power and determination. (Juliette Othon)

While the distance runners battled on the track, Steszewski made his statement in the field events, becoming the shot-put champion. With powerful throws and consistent technique, he secured first place and established himself as one of the top throwers in the competition.

Samuels, qualifying for the BCAA Championship, believes that this marks a major personal achievement. After a season filled with steady progress, she earned her place among the county's top athletes.

"Alayah is one of the hardest workers I have ever seen. You can always depend on her to give 100%, whether it's practice or competition. Her work ethic raises the whole team," explains junior track athlete Chloe Shuch.

With the BCAA Championship complete, Stewart, De Bastos, Steszewski, and Samuel have left their mark on the field and track. Their performance reflected the continual growth of Charter's track and field program, bringing home mid-season medals.

Lorraine's Art Corner: Flow of color

Grace Castro, PPCHS Student

Grade: 12

Medium: Water color, marker

Artistic statement: This piece comes from my love and passion for where I come from. I used a variety of colors and shapes to show the unique look of my culture. My Puerto Rican roots have inspired me to create different pieces that flourish with several patterns and styles.



Grace Castro

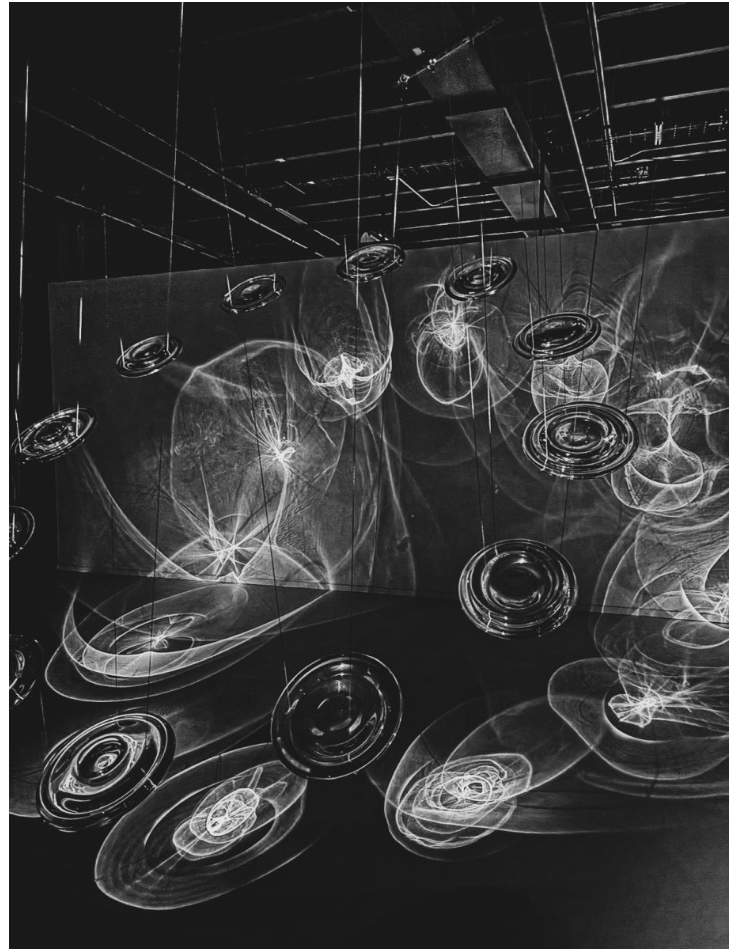
Lorraine's Art Corner: Gravity of Light

Ziara Bryant, PPCHS Student

Grade: 12

Medium: Photography

Artist Statement: Gravity of Light explores how light moves and gathers like an invisible force, pulling shapes and forms together in space. The glowing lines and suspended circular elements create a sense of motion, showing how light can feel weightless yet powerful at the same time. Through contrast and movement, the piece captures the energy and flow of light as if it has its own gravity.



Ziara Bryant

More than a game: The Women fight for respect

Caroline Curl, Staff Writer

When Megan Keller scored the golden goal in the 2026 Winter Olympics, she didn't just win a game; she proved women's hockey belongs on the big stage. The women's hockey team recently took home gold in the 2026 Winter Olympics, the third time in the franchise's history.

As the women's hockey team was able to capture their gold medal back in February of 2026, there was an inappropriate statement given during a celebration of their victory with the men's hockey team. This was a big controversy for them and is described as a "distasteful joke." This was, however, one of the biggest issues that women's hockey players face.

Three days after the women took home gold, the men did the same. When the men's hockey team was celebrating their win, a phone call came. President Donald Trump called the USA men's hockey team to congratulate them on their win and to invite them to his State of the Union address at the Capitol.

This phone call is where contention arose, with Trump saying in a condescending tone, "We're going to have to bring the women's team, you do know that?" This one sentence stirred up several disputes in the media.

Although the comment was made in a joking manner, many consider it to be proof that Trump and the boys' team have a lack of respect for the women's hockey team. The moment became the talk of the day, especially regarding the way female athletes are treated in comparison with male athletes.

"When I saw this, I was shocked," mentions sophomore Olivia Gonzalez. "I don't know how someone could even joke around like that."

Since the 1998 Olympics, the USA Women's National Hockey Team has been a dominant force in international women's hockey. It was this event where the team won its first-ever gold medal.

After another win in 2018, the tide changed in 2022 when the USA lost in the finals against Canada. The USA-Canada rivalry is not taken lightly. Losing that game gave the team motivation to get back to Canada.

"Watching these girls play is amazing. I love the teamwork they have and the chemistry you can see through the screen," comments sophomore Luciana Garcia.

Ultimately, the legacy of women's hockey is not about this controversy, but about the fact that women have to fight to be equal. As the US celebrates Women's History Month, this is a reminder that women in sports are not just making history; they are making it with their victories.



Joshua Goetz

A male (left) and a female (right) professional hockey player in full gear battling for the goal.

Needing to feel wanted: Finding yourself before others

Loraine Sanchez-Figueroa, Columns Editor

It's okay to be alone; it took me 17 years to really realize that. Ever since middle school, I was obsessed with finding someone to rely on, whether it was a relationship, a friendship, or even an acquaintance. As time passes and I continue to grow, I've realized something: I can live a full life as my own best friend.

Don't misunderstand me—being with others is one of the greatest feelings. When you feel valued and cared for, it creates a sense of belonging. However, I believe that once people experience this feeling, they can become addicted to it and begin to rely on it as if it were essential to their lives.

Being alone with just my mind used to sadden me, so I spent years relying on other people so I wouldn't have to sit alone with myself in silence. This never gave me time to embrace my own qualities, but now I realize I was just afraid of a world where I had to depend on myself.

I grew to be a really sensitive person, and it was years of dealing with overthinking, anxiety, and insecurity that made it impossible to hold on to friendships. After I lost some people and gained others, **I realized that the reason I can't hold on to anything is that I can't hold on to myself.** Finally, in my junior year, I decided it was time to stop focusing so much on making other people happy and to prioritize my own.

Nowadays, we all find ourselves in bed scrolling through our phones, or maybe passing the time quickly through napping or studying for our classes, but it's important to remember that you and your mind matter too. I began journaling, reading about self-image and self-improvement, and spending time completely alone so I could learn to embrace silence instead of avoiding it.

We always let our minds overflow with insults towards ourselves, and I found myself doing that. I'd grow all kinds of poor self-image and would never be okay with thinking I was doing well enough. We spend much of our time creating our future through each homework assignment, college test, and daily nerves, thinking: will what I'm doing now truly get me far? Humans often focus on the past and future instead of the present moment.

I've learned that you can't truly love someone else until you're comfortable loving yourself — not in a loud, confident way, but in the quiet moments when no one else is around. Real confidence doesn't come from being wanted; it comes from knowing you are enough, even when no one is there to remind you.

Focusing so much on what *will* happen only drowns you in overthinking, anxiety, and, for me, damages my mental state. When you focus too much on other people and how they're going to think about you, your mind begins to wander toward ways to make them like you rather than learning how to like yourself.

It isn't about how wanted you are. It's about how secure you feel standing on your own, because one of the most important relationships you will ever have is the one you build with yourself.



Justin Betancourt

Graphic highlights how your mind can lead you to often overthink or feel insecure about specific parts of yourself. Additionally, someone who spends time with themselves learns not only how to avoid these moments of overthinking, but also allows you to feel better about yourself, gaining self-image and self-confidence.

Founded in 2000, The *Charter High Academic Times*, commonly known as *The CHAT*, is the student-run, online only newspaper of Pembroke Pines Charter High School, committed to delivering impactful, student-centered journalism. Covering campus life, sports, local news, arts and entertainment, news, and alumni stories, the publication has evolved into a dynamic platform that includes online and multimedia content. The *Charter High Academic Times* was ranked the number one online high school publication in the state of Florida by the Florida Scholastic Press Association (FSPA) in 2024 and is currently a finalist for the award in 2026. The staff's work has received statewide recognition, including All-Florida ratings and Best of the Best honors. Through multimedia, written articles, and their podcast *The Jagwire*, the publication continues to amplify student voices and spotlight our greater community.

Pop culture recap: Secret weddings, World tours, and more

Malia Nortelus, Staff Writer

Manon from Katseye takes an indefinite hiatus

As of Feb. 20th, HYBE and Geffen announced Manon Bannerman from the global girl group 'Katseye' is taking a hiatus to focus on her health and well-being. With Manon as one of the most popular members, this brings significant discourse and backlash.

After Manon released her own statement, ensuring fans that she's healthy, chaos ensued. Fans, or 'EYEKONS,' took to social media to show immense support and create hashtags in solidarity.

As a result, situations from the past come to light that showcase Manon as being treated unfairly, and delve deep into the topic of black members from music groups being treated differently from their peers.

Black female singers who have undergone similar experiences, such as Fifth Harmony's Normani and Little Mix's Leigh-Anne Pinnock, have shown support for Manon.

Tom Holland and Zendaya are officially married, Law Roach confirms

As one of Hollywood's favorite couples, Tom Holland and Zendaya Coleman have created a lot of buzz regarding their recent alleged marriage. Without making any statements, the couple confirmed their engagement in January 2025, when Zendaya arrived at the 2025 Golden Globes wearing an engagement ring.

As an extremely private couple, most intimate news about them comes from Zendaya's trusted stylist since her teens, Law Roach. She revealed the secret wedding at the 2026 Actor Awards by saying, "The wedding happened already. You missed it." This is yet to be confirmed by the couple themselves, but Zendaya has been seen wearing a wedding band in promotional photos for her upcoming movie, *The Drama*, with co-star Robert Pattinson.

Sophomore Brianna Guerra is elated by this sharing, "I know [their marriage] hasn't been confirmed, but I really hope that they're married already."

Tame Impala's 'Deadbeat' tour set to start soon

On Feb. 12th, Tame Impala announced his North American Tour, "Deadbeat," to start in the summer. The psychedelic rock singer and his band are scheduled to perform in 19 cities in the United States and Canada.



Jacob Hladek

Various pop culture icons, such as Zendaya and Tame Impala, pictured on a colorful background. The past few weeks have been filled with various headlines involving them, like Tame Impala's tour and Zendaya's marriage.

The excitement for Impala's tour only seemed to grow when, in his announcement video, it was revealed that pop-rock singers Djo and Dominic Fike will be joining him as openers. Djo will open for the first half of the tour, and Fike will finish off in the second. The tour will start in July in Miami and run through Houston in September.

Sophomore Chloe Chantrelle is excited by the news, "I love all these artists so much, it made me want to go to the tour even more."

New Amazon Prime thriller, '56 Days', releases

56 Days, released Feb. 18th on Amazon Prime Video, has gained much traction. The eight-episode limited series is based on a novel of the same name written by Catherine Ryan Howard.

The show follows Ciara, portrayed by Dove Cameron, and Oliver, played by Avan Jogia, a couple who meet in a supermarket and start an 'intense' relationship. The story takes a deep turn when a viciously murdered body turns up in their apartment, 56 days after the start of their relationship.

The story unravels into a fiery mystery that forces the couple to reconstruct their relationship and reveal secrets and lies that they kept close to their chest.

Racquets are ready: Jaguar tennis team serving into the season

Aniya Williams, Staff Writer

Humid spring weather and the hot sun beams on the court as the first serve of the season for the Jaguars tennis team goes up. The sound of rackets colliding with tennis balls echoes throughout the court until the ball finally drops, scoring the Jaguars their first point of the season.

The Jaguar tennis team competes in several weekly matches against local schools from throughout South Florida. Their season starts in early February with their first match against the Blanch Ely Tigers; the Jaguar tennis team's season has been well underway.

The Jaguars are mainly focusing on their footwork, consistency, and match strategies. Players have been finding new ways to sharpen their game to attempt to come back stronger.

"My game isn't where I want it to be, but it's getting there. I've just been focusing on becoming a stronger all-around player. I worked especially hard on improving my backhand, and it is considerably better, as well as working on my stamina and overall health and endurance," notes junior team captain, Wesley Jones.

While players are improving their game individually, they've also worked on making improvements as a team. With the desire to win eating at each and every athlete, the Jaguars have taken their game to the next level in comparison to last season.

Sophomore Samhita Palle comments, "This season, I feel like our team has made significant improvement overall. Compared to last year, we've stepped up our level of play and become much more competitive in our matches."

However, to many athletes, one of the most important aspects of the team is family and team chemistry. With unity becoming stronger match after match, many players feel like they've built a strong sense of community and even a second family.

"This season differs from the last because I feel like we've improved in a team-bonding aspect. Us becoming closer as a team throughout the season is definitely one of our biggest strengths, allowing us to have a strong sense of family," says sophomore, Yogitha Adusumilli.

The Jaguars are going into this season with high hopes and expectations, mainly focusing on improvement. Jones has high hopes of the team making it to regionals this year after their season ended in districts last season.

"I would love to see my team go to regionals this year. We got stopped at districts last season, but we have improved a lot throughout practice and offseason training, and I think a district title is possible this season."



River Ferguson

Fabiana Alejandra hitting the tennis ball with her racquet under the hot sun during a game.



Nicolas Murillo after hitting the ball to his opponent, waiting on their next move. (River Ferguson)

Rev up the engine with SGA's first car show

Gabriela Godoy, Clubs Editor

A variety of cars began to arrive at the first-ever car show held by Pembroke Pines Charter High School's (PPCHS) Student Government Association (SGA). The cars started their engines and lifted their hoods, all while excitedly waiting for all the car lovers to stop by. Soon, the parking lot had been filled with cars from all over the world, with their very own story to tell.

This was an exciting night for not only the students at Pines Charter but also the families and friends involved. From entertainment like DJing music to varieties of incredible food trucks, the car show turned out to be a complete success. SGA partnered with '*Wheelsnrides* Cruise-in Show' for this event, which had posted several advertisements and posts to help spread recognition for the event.

"I thought the car show was fantastic. It brought the



Various cars beside each other in the PPCHS teacher parking lot. Displaying the uniqueness of each and every car. (Omar Mohsen)

Rivera comments.



Janellie Enriquez

(Read left to right) Dan Capiro, Lila Peterseil, Sophia Peterseil, and Principal Peter Bayer, our principle, all come together for a photo in a red, vintage car while showing their appreciation and excitement for this school's first ever car show.

community together and some of our students as well. I believe the biggest thing was how it collected the car community. And that's what the community is about, bringing everyone together," PPCHS Behavioral Specialist and car fan Dan Capiro states.

The car show had been organized and held on Sunday, March 1st, with the expectation of bringing excitement and community to the school. Which is exactly what was brought, with a whopping number of 150 cars.

"This event was very fun, and it was nice to see all the cool cars and hang out with the people around us. And our SGA members made sure to walk around and make sure people were having a good time," junior and SGA member Alexander

As the night went on, there were several sponsors that showed up to not only represent the community but also their company. Including a big thank you to the following sponsors who made this event possible: SOCAR, AutoPro Detailing, O'Reilly Auto Parts, 954 Mufflers, Highline Styling, and Flamingo Supermarket.

Being the first car show ever held by PPCHS, the event turned out to be an unforgettable experience for everyone involved. Students, staff, and visitors came together to show their school spirit and teamwork towards raising funds for the school.



A family-owned Italian Ice business comes out to sell refreshing desserts to those at the car show, as a way to share their contribution to the community. (Janelle Enriquez)

From the variety of unique cars to the energy brought by SGA and food vendors, the event created a strong sense of community.

Most importantly, the success of this first-ever car show set a strong foundation for the future to come. With the PPCHS car show, this is no longer just a one-time thing. It is the start of a new tradition that will continue to grow and bring others together, creating memories beyond the classroom.

Romcom book adaptations: Sad flop or straight fire?

Gianna Jaric, Celebration Specialist

The pages of a classic Romcom-style novel always have a talent of pulling audiences in, whether through slow-burning tension, an enemies-to-lovers classic, or even the inevitable happily-ever-after. But when those familiar and perfectly imaginative words on paper transform into a new world of lights, cameras, and action, different feelings are brought up.

With each new Romcom book adaptation emerging in today's film industry, many conversations are brought with it, each time raising the question: can these movies ever truly do the stories justice?

To All The Boys I've Loved Before

"Personally, my all-time favorite romcom is *To All The Boys I've Loved Before*. I didn't even know it was a book first until recently," Sophomore Juana Hoyos states. "I still think that the movie is better. It's just so perfect."

In April of 2014, American author and screenwriter Jenny Han published her new book *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*. The novel was quickly well-loved by many teen audiences due to its relatable and heartfelt storyline.

Over time, new books were released in the franchise, completing a fan-favorite trilogy from Han. Years later, in 2018, the stories were brought to life, with Netflix releasing its own film adaptation, *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*. The movie was a complete hit, striking the audiences and helping define the late 2010's romcom culture.

Personally, the movie has been and should continue to be recognized as one of the best romcoms to come out of that era, especially relating to audiences of my generation, with its charming coming-of-age aspect and a classic, slightly fantasized, representation of what a teenage girl's love life is really like.

I even read the books, but, as rare as it is, I can still say I prefer the movies. This is, in my opinion, a perfect example of what a successful romcom movie adaptation is.

The Summer I turned Pretty

In true Jenny Han fashion, this isn't the only hit to come out of her novels. Early in her career, Han published the first book in her first trilogy, *The Summer I Turned Pretty*. Though the novels were quite successful, it was nothing compared to the widespread attention and obsession that the series adaptation with the same name attracted when it was first released.

A wide-ranging audience, myself included, was quickly enamored by the angsty love triangle, dreamy summer aesthetic, and classic "will they, won't they?" trope that kept viewers on their toes and firmly seated for every episode.



Jacob Hladek

The book "The Summer I Turned Pretty" by Jenny Han is pictured next to a graphic of the show by the same name. This is one of many romcom books that have been adapted into a motion picture.

This series holds a special place in my heart, one that I have watched and rewatched, frankly, an embarrassing number of times. My love for the series encouraged me to read the books, which I also fell in love with. With this, I can confidently state that the series adaptation did the original novels justice and much more.

People We Meet On Vacation

"I'm such a big fan of Emily Henry's books, especially *People We Meet On Vacation*, which is my favorite. I was so excited when I found out a movie was coming out," Freshman Kayleigh Willoughby comments. "Although it was cute, I really thought that a bunch of big points were missed, ones that make the book so good. I wish it was executed a bit better."

One of the first movies of 2026, *People We Meet on Vacation*, had a lot of buzz surrounding it when it was released. Some audiences on the internet shared pure joy and praise for the movie, stating it was one of the best romcoms to come out as of recently, but some others shared contrasting ideas, especially lovers of the original book.

Many online posts, while acknowledging the charming vibe and chemistry between the main actors, struggled to enjoy what seemed to be lacking a lot of emotional depth and extra details that make the book what it is. I share these beliefs, wishing there was more of a slow-burn aspect, and mourning a few critical plot points that didn't seem to translate.

While the movie was still enjoyable for me, it serves as an example of how some adaptations don't always hit the mark when it comes to perfectly representing what the original novels often provide.

On the other hand, the continuing popularity of each romcom adaptation shows just how alive this branch of the film industry really is, always proving that, whether it's a hit or a flop, audiences always come back for a good love story.

Strengthening my faith: My experience through Ramadan

Volga Ozturan, PPCHS Student

When I first started participating in Ramadan as a young teen, it seemed like a great burden that couldn't be described as anything other than pointless and annoying: no water or food from sunrise to sunset for 30 days in a row.

However, as I learned more and more about my religion, it became clear that Ramadan was not some pointless gimmick, but rather a worthwhile sacrifice.

Ramadan creates a pathway for those who commit to strengthening their faith and self-discipline. This sacrifice is believed to display one's devotion to God in Islam.

After the long day of fasting and drinking, that first sip of water with my family gives me a huge sense of accomplishment. It also, in a way, 'forces' a sort of bonding with my family that can sometimes be deprived of during regular days of the year.

For some difficulties I've faced, watching those around me eating through the day would occasionally make me hungrier. What I've done to help my situation is find something else to occupy my time with during lunch in school, such as spending some extra time studying or socializing with friends and teachers. Even this brief moment of lasting through lunch has helped me become more patient.

As the month goes on, the fast becomes more routine rather than a burden. Every night before heading off to sleep, I drink a solid amount of water to prepare for the next day. Then, when I break the fast after starving all day, I eat as much as I can to account for the meals I've missed.

This leads to a major struggle I face during Ramadan, beyond the obvious hunger. As a pretty regular gym-goer, the fast leaves me fatigued, making it very difficult to keep pushing day after day. So, rather than growth during Ramadan, the goal becomes maintaining my body.

Despite the challenges Ramadan puts forth to me and a bunch of others, it's something I've grown to appreciate more and more each year. It's a very great and enjoyable time that helps me grow as a person and spend time with my family, and by the end, the struggle has faded, and the accomplishment remains.

Ramadan did, at some point, seem very pointless to me, but the more I've explored and lived through Islam, those 30 days have become among the most important of the year.



Justin Betancourt

Graphic shows off Ramadan and highlights their prayers, and their growth in faith. It's not just 30 days of fasting, but one of the most important times of the year for everyone who partakes in it.

The Heated Rivalry revolution: how one show changed sports forever

Derek Thompson, Business Manager

Scott looks at Kip and calls him down into the rink; the two whisper amongst themselves before kissing in front of millions of fans in the rink and, by extension, millions of fans in front of the screen.

Shortly after, inspired by the bravery and support *Heated Rivalry* garnered, hockey player Jesse Korteum released an Instagram statement about his sexuality, revealing his journey as a closeted athlete.

Many others have followed suit, releasing statements about being in the closet throughout their lives. With an 8.9-star rating and over 90,000 reviews on IMDb, *Heated Rivalry's* rapid popularity has given many athletes the courage to come out.

After the surge of success, season two has recently been confirmed, and with a larger budget for the show's production.

Junior Arianna Maldonado expresses, "I really like the show itself, and the actors are really good. The story is interesting, and the side characters feel like actual people."

The show follows fictional hockey players Shane Hollander and Iliya Rosanov through a closeted relationship that formed right before their rookie season in the National Hockey League (NHL).

The plot centers on the tensions in their relationship, with a recurring issue being that they must remain closeted.

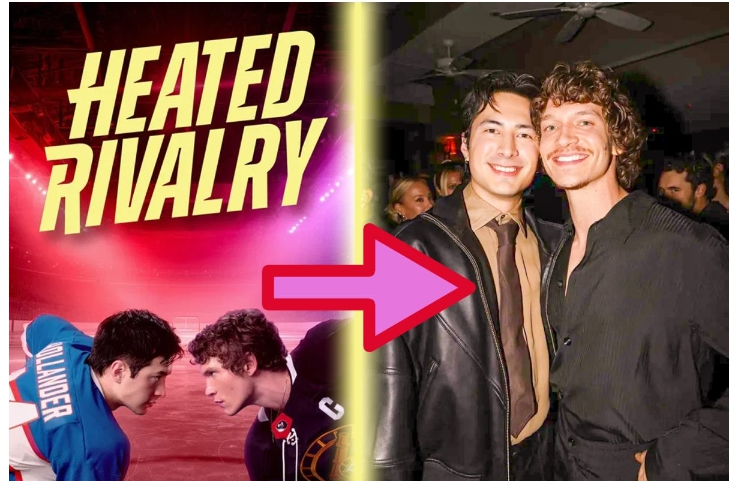
In the season finale, they are forced to come out to Shane's parents, which many fans consider one of their favorite scenes in the show.

"I think the scene where Shane comes out to his parents shows his true self, where he doesn't have to hide," comments junior Kelilah Murrain. "It displays his vulnerability that a lot of real-life athletes face within the sports world."

The relationship between the two has inspired many other athletes to come out and share their experiences as members of the LGBTQIA+ community in the locker room. One example is the previously mentioned player, Jesse Korteum.

Korteum is a hockey player who stepped away from the sport at the age of 17 due to his fear of being shunned. He joined an LGBT+ inclusive team at age 31 and continues to play with them to this day.

Despite playing on an accepting team, he was never really open about his sexuality due to the same fear he had when he was a teen.



Joshua Goetz

Actors Connor Storrie and Hudson Williams pictured next to their hit t.v show poster, *Heated Rivalry*. The contrast of emotions between characters Shane Hollander and Iliya Rosanov, versus their authentic selves is almost ironic in terms of the show: They pretend to be enemies, but behind closed doors, they hold a deep, loving connection.

However, after *Heated Rivalry* was released and started gaining traction, he felt ready to come out and be open with his fans.

For him, it was incredibly scary at first; he was unsure of how the public would react to his message. However, many people have reached out in support of him, feeling inspired to be open with their own sexuality.

This Korteum, he says, gave him a sense of freedom and comfort in his individuality, offering a shocking, yet humbling, experience.

The sports scene has become much more accepting over the past few years, with progressives and activists campaigning for change within athletic spaces.

They, just like Korteum, are hopeful that this positive change will continue to grow and even become normalized.

The IQ Illusion: Why your score is just a snapshot, not the whole picture

Dexter Kraker and Loraine Sanchez-Figueroa

The results are in for the 24-25 Florida high school testing season, and it's sparking concern across the state. Roughly 32% of high school seniors were deemed "below basic" in reading, while the state saw a 3% rise in math scores above a three. This discrepancy in the data has all eyes turning back to the tests themselves, prompting many to question whether these exams truly measure a student's intelligence or just their ability to answer multiple-choice questions.

These assessments typically require speed, process-of-elimination skills, and familiarity with the question formatting. Those who practice for the multiple-choice questions themselves, rather than the material, will often outperform those who studied what was taught in class.

"I don't think tests measure how smart we are. There are other [external] factors, like how students [are waking] up at seven, six, or even five [in the morning] to take the test. This limits them on their full potential, which could affect final scores," argues sophomore Andrea Sanchez.

If students start off their day negatively or grow anxious, it can be harder to truly show their strengths and weaknesses during testing. Oftentimes, students who are easily distracted struggle to focus, and lose the opportunity to prove themselves.

The question is: Why should we allow students to be defined as a number? Nowadays, students are more likely to gain a 1010-1030 on the SAT, and universities have a low chance of admitting these students, no matter what their extracurriculars may be.

Standardized tests rarely measure creativity, curiosity, or the ability to apply classroom knowledge to real-world situations. Instead, these assessments focus more on memorization and the ability to manage time effectively.

"Standardized tests have their place, but they definitely don't capture everything a student knows or can do," expresses Gianna Scott, the Class of 2028 student counselor. "Components like classwork, effort, motivation, grades, participation, and even projects provide a more holistic picture of students' abilities and potential."

Two individuals may both comprehend a concept well, but the individual with effective time management and hours of practicing for multiple-choice questions will most likely earn the higher score, representing how the requirements in these exams test training rather than intelligence.

While some may argue that exams like the SAT demonstrate a student's readiness for college-level material, select colleges themselves have made these scores optional when applying. This shift reflects the acknowledgement that standardized tests don't fully capture a student's full potential.



Jacob Hladek

Graphic highlights the rough patch of taking tests and feeling stressed out when trying to concentrate.

Standardized tests have been found to be invalid measures of comprehension and scholastic acceleration. Likewise, multiple sources report that a majority of teachers believe that state tests don't accurately reflect what students need to know for real-life situations.

It is clear that today's students often struggle with the standardized tests that have remained unchanged for decades. The limitations of these exams obscure vital aspects of students' intelligence in the long run.

"In the counseling profession, I acknowledge that lots of students get nervous and/or experience significant test anxiety," Scott adds. "[They] predict college readiness, and are not necessarily a measure of intelligence or a guarantee of future success. The pressure to perform is real, and it hurts."

The years of unvarying multiple-choice questions have led today's pupils to finally realize that standardized testing only offers a finite perspective on someone's true intelligence. The stress placed on our nation's developing minds has been clinically proven to be unhealthy, especially at such a young age.

The accumulation of data proving that standardized exams are unhealthy, inaccurate, and overall detrimental to the students taking them goes to show why parents, educators, and administrators alike are concerned about the effects these have on the students of today.

The Lady Jags flag football standing on a new foundation

Gabriela Godoy, Clubs Editor

As the new season for the Lady Jags flag football team approaches, they are enthusiastic as to what their upcoming season will look like.

With new players on the field and even a brand-new quarterback following their graduated one, Ava Rivera, this year is being taken as an opportunity to build the team from scratch.



Sophomore Kylee Edwards standing on the line preparing to run the play. (Juliette Othon)



Juliette Othon

The Lady Jags flag football team standing together in a circle listening to their coach's game plan.

With the team's motive standing on growth and improvement rather than perfection, this new season is all about developing skills and building on their accomplishments.

Rather than focusing on performance, the players are committed to getting better each day through conditioning and practice.

The new season brings a new sense of purpose for the team. The purpose of improvement and development is for the team to create a foundation where their growth is acknowledged and further celebrated as a whole.

Freshman Madisyn Covington, a first-year Lady Jag, emphasizes how, "While this is my first season on the team, I believe that not only are we growing stronger as a team but also as individual athletes. I believe that the biggest factor for our team is to end the season better than how you started, not only as an athlete but also as a person."

Change has not only been visible during the games, but it's also been clear on the field along with the sidelines too. This is due to their coach Maria's guidance.

In just her second year of coaching the Lady Jags girls flag football team, she has already helped to shape a new chapter for this team, as she will continue to do so during their upcoming season.

Coach Maria stresses the importance of standing with her athletes through every second of the season. Win or lose, she pushes them through their mistakes and helps them to become the best that they can be.

She knows that this upcoming season will be different than the last; she embraces that fact.

"I am aware of how different this season is. With a new star quarterback and new players being their first time on the field, I know that this team is reshaping itself. This season is about growth and learning to execute, not to be perfect," notes Coach Maria.



Senior Kaylah Josue catching the football and running with it to make a touchdown. (Juliette Othon)

Her message has set the tone from the very beginning. With fresh talent on the field and new athletes adjusting to their competition, the Lady Jags are focused on showing others what this new team has to offer.

The Lady Jags' home opener takes place on Thursday, March 5, and they are ready to showcase their new team to their fans.

As the season kicks off, there is a strong sense of confidence throughout the team. The Lady Jags hope that this season will be filled with encouragement, growth, and surprises for the new players.

More than anything, they are determined to use this as an opportunity to make this season be defined by transformation and growth.

The unforgettable Attack on Titan Beyond The Walls world tour

Alejandra Gomez Velasquez, Staff Writer

The cinematic music fills the atmosphere, sending chills down the fans' spines as the singer sings with all of her might, while the scene displayed above the orchestra increases with intensity.

Everyone is immediately struck by the overwhelming feelings of excitement, shock, and nostalgia that *Attack on Titan* once evoked, due to how accurately these musicians played the show's soundtrack.

The *Attack on Titan Beyond The Walls World Tour* official concert was a crafted masterpiece that let the audience experience the anime as if they were a part of the series itself.

The *Attack on Titan* world tour traveled to a variety of cities such as Hong Kong, Toronto, Paris, and Fort Lauderdale. They first started touring in 2025 and are wrapping up the tour in March 2026.

The team made sure that this opportunity was available to fans globally, so everybody could get a chance to experience this phenomenal event.

Many musicians took part in this project in order to create a replica of the music involved in the anime. The choir added that spine-chilling effect, the guitarists amplified the extreme ambience shown, the violins heightened the suspense, and the piano kept the audience on the edge of their seats. Every single part of the songs was important, and they made sure that it was captured during each scene.

The *Beyond The Walls World Tour* opened with a song titled *Attack on Titan (WMID)*. While the artists played their instruments and sang, the first scenes shown consisted of the main character, Eren Jaegar, and his conflict with the colossal titan.

The television above the musicians displayed scenes to match each piece of music, so it did not display specific episodes; it showed multiple clips of a certain arc that was meant for the current song.

"Just seeing the anime scenes play on the big screen while hearing the soundtrack made me see *Attack on Titan* in a very different way because it felt more intense, emotional, and remarkable," illuminates Lilian Al-Husseini, a junior at Charter.

Attack on Titan is a series with four seasons, so the official concert was formatted into two acts. It is automatically assumed that the first act is seasons one and two, but it contains season three as well. The finale season is what carried the second act, thanks to the intense and mature themes involved.

Therefore, the music that was implemented was composed to show developments within the story, characters, and setting.



Joshua Goetz

The *Attack on Titan* orchestra in the background, with scenes from the show playing on the screen overhead.

The *Beyond The Walls World Tour* did not only bring music, but it also brought in a variety of merch along with a huge backdrop of the three main characters, Eren Jaeger, Mikasa Ackerman, and Armin Arlert, so people could pose and take pictures with them.

An *Attack on Titan*-themed conductor set was being sold along with vinyls, CDs, t-shirts, posters, keychains, and a tour program book, which were offered so that fans could physically remember this monumental occasion.

The conductor, Alexandra Cravero, shone through her work as she made sure every musician got a round of applause at the end, and her cheer spread throughout the entire theater.

As the concert was coming to an end, she teased a surprise song as she revealed that she was wearing the *Attack on Titan Beyond The Walls tour* t-shirt, and she took out the conductor's set to replace her baton. After the song ended, she threw the *Attack on Titan* conductor's set into the audience, ending the concert with joy.

What made this event stand out more than it already did was the audience. Many people dressed up as the characters or had iconic outfits from the anime. This concert brought fans together and gave people who have never seen the show an incredible preview of what *Attack on Titan* will bring.

This was a phenomenal experience that even people who have never watched *Attack on Titan* can enjoy. The *Attack on Titan Beyond The Walls Tour* created many unforgettable days for fans who attended the concert.

Watching the show will never be the same for the audience, knowing that every soundtrack that plays during a scene was heard in person with an incredible group of musicians.

Chloe Chantrelle, a sophomore, highlights, "Being able to experience one of my favorite shows in person with an amazing orchestra and my friends alongside me is an experience I will forever cherish."