

# Bulldog Bulletin

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Vol 4 Number 2

April, 2022

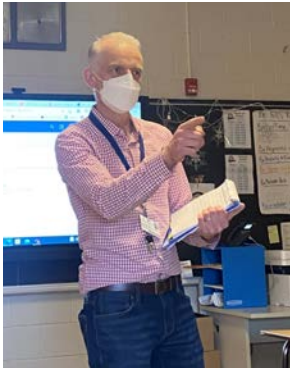
## Mask Optional Policy Brings Smiles To Faces, But Concerns Remain

By Shelsy Zapata

On March 7th it became official. Elizabeth Public Schools announced that mask wearing in school buildings was now optional. After 2 years of wearing masks and being cautious about getting exposed to Covid-19, students and staff were now able to walk the halls and go to class without a mask.

In a [recent poll](#) conducted by The Bulldog Bulletin, we asked 20 Halsey students and staff about the new mask policy. Eighty percent agreed it made sense to make mask-wearing optional. Many also felt if you are vaccinated you shouldn't have to wear a mask. But some said you should still wear one even if you are vaccinated because you still catch Omicron despite having a shot.

Halsey Biology Teacher Courtney Burke felt it was time to make masks optional. She no longer wears one in school. She said the policy makes sense because it is based on science and data. "If the state decides to lift the mask mandate, it is because numbers are down, and it is safe to do so. People can still choose to wear masks if they are uncomfortable without one. Plus, I am vaccinated, and it is difficult to teach and project my voice while wearing the mask," Burke said.



However, concerns do remain about people not wearing masks in school. "I feel like students should wear them either way because even if they are vaccinated or immune to Covid, they could still carry it and accidentally pass it to others who aren't vaccinated or immune," said Steven Pachas Pena, a sophomore in Halsey. English teacher Sebastian Hill keeps his mask on while teaching, out of respect for his students who might have safety concerns.

Halsey Nurse Johnna Hamilton has decided to keep wearing her mask, especially when kids come into her office with a fever. She had Covid about 2 years ago and does not want to go through it again. She also wears a mask out of respect for other people's safety. "I do wear my mask outside of school if I go to places where there's going to be a lot of people, like the supermarket or church."

And what about students and staff who are vaccinated, should they still wear a mask? "I still think that they should wear a mask because it is possible to still get Covid-19."

Even so, Hamilton still supports the mask-option policy. "It is about time that people are allowed to make their own choice and able to not wear a mask if they want to and wear a mask if they do want to," said Hamilton. "I don't think that anyone should be bullied or made fun of if they do decide to wear a mask."



Halsey Nurse Johnna Hamilton

How Did the Pandemic Affect Halsey's School Climate and Culture?

Halsey Celebrates Black History Month and Women's History Month

ROTC Rifle and PT Teams Rack Up Wins and High Scores in Stellar Season

Nursing Students Are Back in the Hospital Getting Valuable Hands-On Experience

Underdogs to State Champs: Highlights from Minutemen's Basketball Season

# News From the Principal

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 2

## Van Vliet on Masks, Academics, and Why Our Diversity Will Help Us All “RISE”

The surge in COVID-19 cases caused by the Omicron variant forced Halsey to go virtual for the first two weeks of January. Students and staff felt like they were going back in time to the dark days of the pandemic. But then cases started to drop and school went back to in-person learning. Then in the beginning of March, news came that mask wearing was now optional in school buildings. Finally, staff and students felt this was the start of getting back to normal. We asked **Halsey Principal Christopher Van Vliet** about his thoughts on the new mask policy, the school's academic achievements, his priorities for the rest of the year, and about the school's biggest assets, our diversity.

**What do you think about the new mask-optional policy at Halsey?** Is it the right time to go mask-optional, or too early to make this change? I think it's another big step in the right direction. As the District stated, based on the data and the recommendations of local and State health officials, we were able to offer this option to our school community. It is nice that everyone has the option and can make their own choice.



**In this issue, we're talking about the diversity at Halsey. How do you think diversity helps make the school a better place for everyone?** Diversity has always been a large component of our school community. We are fortunate to have students and staff from so many different backgrounds. I'm happy to see that this theme will be the focus of this issue of *The Bulldog Bulletin*. One of the things I'm most proud of about Halsey Academy is our high level of tolerance. As respect is the backbone of our school philosophy, our students learn to accept our differences in a positive way, learn about them and gain a greater appreciation, and celebrate our diversity.

**At the beginning of the year, staff and students completed a survey on Halsey's school climate and culture. How would you describe the school culture at Halsey?** We were very encouraged by these survey results. We are definitely trending upward in this area and continue to improve year after year. One of my primary areas of focus when I began as Principal of Halsey was our school's culture and climate. I love our school, staff and students. And I always feel it is important to make our environment a place that we are all happy to be at each day, a place that we all look forward to going to each morning, and a place that we can all be proud of. **Our Climate and Culture Coach, Ms. Cardona, works tirelessly on this very subject, and has done so much to help us improve. When I walk the halls of Halsey and visit classrooms, it gives me a special sense of joy to see smiles on people's faces, to view the level of respect being displayed on a regular basis, and to witness our school community in action, performing acts of integrity, safety, and empathy (RISE).** We have come a long way together. It is because of the hard work of our Staff and students that our school has so much to celebrate. I am very grateful to be part of an Academy that values a positive climate and culture.

**What parts of the school climate and culture are working? What parts do we need to work on?**

Based on our survey results, we do see positive trends in many areas. Our feedback from Staff and students on a regular basis has also been generally pleasing. I really believe that our school philosophy of RISE has helped us to remain focused on our core principles of respect, integrity, safety, and empathy. The level of respect that I have seen is truly inspiring. Whether it is a student in the hallway who has a pass, students who are reminded to remove a hood and comply immediately, or a student who may slip and say something inappropriate in a school setting, but quickly apologizes. These are the steps we have taken as a school community and our growth has been so impressive to witness. I believe we have created an environment together where people are happy to be here, want to be here, and are proud to be here. That being said, there is always room for improvement. And, we keep striving to make things even better. We would like to have more school functions and fun events for our students. Obviously, these things have been very limited over the last couple years due to the pandemic. However, this Spring we will be having a school dance in April and a students vs. staff basketball game. April is also Spirit Month at Halsey. As we move forward and restrictions continue to be lifted, we hope to provide many more enjoyable moments for our school.



*Continued on the next page.*

# News From the Principal

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 3

## Van Vliet on Masks, Academics, and Why Our Diversity Will Help Us All “RISE”

*(Our conversation continues with Halsey Principal Van Vliet)*

**Do you think the pandemic has affected the school culture here at Halsey?** I think the pandemic affected us all on a certain level, and of course every school has been impacted in some way. One thing I am very proud of is how resilient our school was during the pandemic. We faced challenges never seen before, but we all pulled together and supported each other. We lost a lot of in person instruction time, but we were able to remain connected virtually in so many ways, including videos from staff to students and virtual events. The true spirit of Halsey was shown throughout the pandemic, and it was so exciting to be able to return in person. It put life in perspective for many people and helped us realize how fortunate we are to have each other and to be able to share this special community at Halsey. I for one have an even greater appreciation for our staff and students, and to be able to lead this fine Academy each day.



**Ideally, what would you like to see more of at Halsey as part of the school climate and culture?** I always like to see students involved. Whether it is a club, a sport, or just staying after school for tutoring. When you interact with other students and staff outside of school hours, that is when another level of growth occurs. I would also like to see the return of fun in person events that, as mentioned, have been so limited over the past couple years. Additionally, we will continue to celebrate our diversity. We had a terrific Black History Month door decoration contest. We also had a lovely Women's History Month display up outside of the Media Center. Halsey continues to RISE!

**Let's talk about academic accomplishments at Halsey. List some of the successes so far this year?** We are very happy to be back in person, and the results have been excellent! In MPs 1 and 2, we met or exceeded our annual school plan's academic goals in all areas: English, ESL, and Math! We have had a record number of Honor Roll students in both MPs1 and 2 so far, and our passing rate for all subjects continues to improve from year to year. Less failures, means more students passing, which leads to credits earned, which leads to on time

graduation. And, that is what we ultimately want for all of our students. We project another increase in our graduation rate this year with our Class of '22! Our Staff deserves so much credit for working so hard to help ensure our students Academic success. Our Counselors as well, do so much to help put our students in a position to succeed. Lastly, we have seen another big jump in our daily attendance rate percentage. This not only helps our students to graduate, but it shows that our students are happy to be back in school every day.



**As part of Women's History Month, we're asking students and staff to name a woman in history they admire and look upto. Who would you pick and why?** That's a wonderful exercise! I would probably have to go with Toni Stone, the first female professional baseball player. She overcame so much adversity and broke barriers in professional sports for women.

**Looking ahead to the rest of the year, what are your goals for the school?** I would like to see us continue to emerge from the pandemic, return to normal, and finish this school year strong. I think it's important to build on for next year. We have all been through so much together, so being able to see our Class of '22 graduate in the traditional manner, have our undergraduate students complete their year in good standing and advance to the next grade level, and put ourselves in a position to have a normal and successful school year next year, would be a fantastic ending to 2021-22.

**What message would you give to our senior class?** You have had 3 school years impacted by a once in a century occurrence. And, you didn't let it stop you. You deserve a lot of credit for that, and it will undoubtedly help you in your future. Now here you are, a couple months away from graduation. Things are finally returning to normal, so I hope you all enjoy your Senior Spring, finish strong, and continue to make Halsey proud!



# Halsey Happenings

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 4



## New Addition to the Halsey Family

We have a new member of our Halsey family. Math Teacher Gabriela Terlemezian is the proud mother of a baby girl. Isabela Rose Keller was born on February 11th. Both mom and baby are doing well.



## "Cav" is Back

Class is back in session for English teacher Sean "Cav" Cavanagh. In early April, he returned to Halsey after taking some time off to be at home with his wife and newborn son. Thanks to ELA Coach Maria Litos for taking over and teaching all of his students while he was out.

## Halsey Senior Prom Date Announced



The moment seniors have been waiting for is finally here. And now it's official. It has been confirmed that Halsey seniors are having a 2022 prom, and it's a masquerade theme! Despite last year's prom being canceled due to the pandemic, seniors are excited that this year's event is moving ahead as planned. **Senior Class Advisor Deborah Ferro just made the announcement that the prom will be June 1st, 2022.**

## Honoring Halsey Scholars

They worked hard all marking period. And on February 17th, Principal Van Vliet awarded these MP 2 Halsey scholars for their academic achievements. **There were a total of 338 Honor Roll recipients.** 104 were Superintendent Scholars and 234 were Principal Scholars. Van Vliet congratulated everyone for all their hard work and effort.



## National Honor Society

Halsey Academy formally announced 4 students would be inducted into the National Honor Society. The induction ceremony was on March 31st in the school auditorium. These distinguished students were selected by the faculty for successfully upholding a moral, and ethical character, maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher in honor of scholarship, demonstrating resourcefulness, problem solving skills, and transformative leadership, and contributing their service to our community with a positive, courteous, and enthusiastic spirit. National Honor Society Advisor Dr. Nicole Riggins announced the names at the event: These new NHS members include: **Lenny Cepeda, Jazmyn Cole, Christine Morocho, and Clarissa Castro Rivera.**



Jazmyn Cole, Christine Morocho, Clarissa Castro Rivera, and Lenny Cepeda (not in this picture).

"I hope the ceremony serves as a reminder to us all to uphold standards of excellence regardless of any calamity that may come our way," Riggins said.



# Celebrating Our *Diversity*

## The Pandemic's Effect on School Climate and Culture



What do students think about Halsey? Opinions may vary. But there's one thing that staff and students can all agree on. The pandemic has had a big impact on how students think about themselves, their teachers, and their school.

**"Even though we're moving forward by making masks optional, and we're in the building and not virtual anymore, the pandemic is still affecting us,"** said Halsey School Climate and Culture Coach Norma Cardona.



Halsey School Climate and Culture Coach  
Norma Cardona

"The pandemic affected a lot of our students academically because it was very hard to stay motivated at home," Cardona said. "A lot of them fell behind in terms of attendance and grades. And now that they're back in the building, they have had to take Apex and after school classes. A lot of them are playing catch up."

Cardona, who's in her fourth year as the school's climate and culture coach, conducted a survey of students and staff at the beginning of this year. She wanted to find out how everyone was feeling about school after almost two years of remote instruction. The results showed three areas that needed to be addressed.

The first was **cultural awareness**. How do students feel about their peers and their teachers? The second was **emotional regulation**. Do students know how to keep calm even when they feel upset or angry? And the third was **student support and environment**. What do students think about their relationships with their teachers?

Cardona, who has a background in social work and a Master of Social Work, believes the connection students have with their teachers and classmates is key to being successful in school. But during the pandemic that connection was hard to maintain. "I think it's something that the kids were really missing and then now coming back it's almost like you have to learn how to re-socialize and build up from the ground up."



School Social Worker  
Christopher Lopez

"Our goal with guidance, social workers and our supervisor is to come up with different activities and different interventions to try to work on strategies to address these issues," she said. Up until now, the pandemic has prevented Cardona and other support staff like School Social Worker Christopher Lopez, from organizing activities to help improve the school climate and culture. "The problem this year has been the pandemic. We weren't allowed to have speakers, get-togethers, or organize cultural events where we share different foods from different cultures," said Cardona. "Now that the mask mandate has been lifted maybe we can go forward with different activities."

This year Cardona has been providing teachers with topics, lesson plans, and classroom activities to address these three areas of concern and make up for what was lost during the pandemic. In one "Do Now" activity students were asked to give advice to a new student from another country about the school. In another lesson on controlling emotions, students had to describe situations that bring out the worst in them, and then come up with strategies that produce positive outcomes.

Cardona has also organized activities to help support cultural awareness among students and staff including the recent Black History Month door decorating contest and a Women's History Month poster display by the main office. She also runs a Saturday program where students learn social and emotional skills while updating hallway bulletin boards and beautifying the school.

"I think especially now with the pandemic and all the stress that we've been through for the last two years and even with school and whatever is going on at home, it's just kind of like an outlet for our students. It's also a way of improving the school culture." Cardona hopes all this will help improve how students view themselves and their school. **"A lot of our students are going through a lot at home in their own personal lives. I would like to see students maybe being a little bit more empathetic with one another, being a little bit more respectful, being a little bit more respectful with their teachers."**

## Creative Door Designs for Black History Month

By Hazbel Payano



Ms. Litos in front of her winning door decoration that her students created.

This year's winner had a lot of hair, big red lips and beautiful brown eyes. And no, we're not talking about a person. We're talking about this year's Black History Month door contest winner.

First place went to Maria Litos, Halsey English teacher and ELA coach for her door with the fabulous hair. **"We were very excited about winning the contest," said Litos. "All my students came together to do this."**

Litos relied on her students to come up with ideas for her winning door decoration design. "My students wanted to represent Black History Month with different ideas. They modeled it together and came up with a design that featured important figures in history that were black."

Second place went to chemistry teacher Belkis Campos Leyva. Third place winners were social studies teacher Gregory Sampson and ethics and careers teacher Michael Cerrato.



Halsey Climate and Culture Coach Norma Cardona and Guidance Counselor Yasmin Maher organized the contest. They wanted teachers and students to get creative with their door designs as they honored memorable members of the Black Community.

## What Do Teachers Think About Black History Month?

By Harvey Cuevas, Stephanie Sanchez and Kerline Stavien

The US first started celebrating Black History Month in 1926, as part of Negro History Week. This week-long event was held every year in February to coincide with the birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and Social Reformer Frederick Douglass. Both men played important roles in helping to end slavery. Later, in 1976, the celebration was expanded to a month. Since then, Black History Month has provided us all an opportunity to recognize the importance of the contribution of Black history in American Culture.

During Black History Month, many teachers included the contributions of Black Americans into their lessons. We asked teachers why they felt it was important to include a Black perspective in the curriculum.

**"I feel students need to know more about Black History Month and its origin," said English teacher Dr. Nicole Riggins.**

**"Many of the most prominent figures in history were black, whether in sports, politics, and science. They did much for our history," said English teacher Maria Litos.**

**"Black Americans have made very significant contributions to the prosperity of our country, not only in politics but also in science, medicine, engineering and all the major disciplines. This celebration of black people and their accomplishments should not be confined to just a month," said learning language disabilities teacher Steeve Caesar.**

**"I think it's important to celebrate Black History Month, just as it is important to celebrate all types of history, like women's history, LGBTQ history, Italian history, Irish history. All history is important," said social studies teacher Paul De Pascale.**



Carter Godwin Woodson was known as the "father of black history". He started the celebration of "Negro History Week" in 1926.



# Speaking Up About Diversity

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

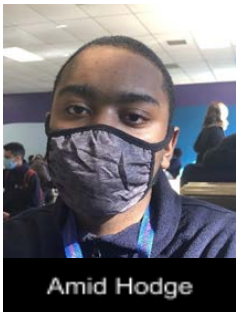
PAGE 7

## Students Reflect on Race and Importance of Diversity at Halsey

By Demoni Gause

Black History shouldn't be just confined to February. That month was fought for by the ancestors of the many black and brown people we know today. February was the month chosen because it covers the birthdays of Fredrick Douglas and Abraham Lincoln. Both men were abolitionists in the mid 1800's and wanted to stop the cruel treatment of Black people. During those very dark times there was separation and segregation in this country. The nation was divided and needed to come together and fight for peace. Because of them, **we are now closer to the finish line.** We asked students at Halsey Academy to share their thoughts about this month when we all recognize the achievements of African Americans and their contribution to our society.

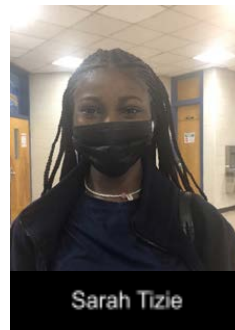
For sophomore Gaemlie Baptiste, recognizing diversity in our school is important. **"Black History Month is a month when all people of color are able to find themselves and see what our past ancestors have done for us. In school, people of color stand up for who they are and show that they are not just objects but people like everyone else.** Black students used to not stand for themselves and had no way of knowing who they were and did not like themselves, but now they understand and have found themselves. They can now express and show off the natural beauty of being Black. This is what makes Black History Month special."



Amid Hodge

This special month has allowed black and brown students to come together and express themselves unapologetically, no matter where they come from or what experiences or hardships they have faced. Everyone's trauma is different. "At times it can be hard especially when it comes to police brutality and injustice," said senior Amid Hodge, who identifies as African American. **"It's hard to walk in our shoes. We are seen as naïve kids who do not understand. The sad reality is we understand all too well. I am Black! I**

**own it. The diversity here helps me fit in. In this world we are all pieces just trying to fit in."**



Sarah Tizie

"Being Black means a lot," said senior Sarah Tizie. **"Even though we fight for acceptance all the time, we are strong and resilient. I feel comfortable here in America because I have friends from diverse backgrounds. In school I feel like it is great being around other people that are unapologetically themselves."**

Tizie is from the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, but she has lived in New Jersey for most of her life. Knowing English has allowed her to find her place in the school community. "I mostly speak French, but I still communicate with all my friends in English, which is a beautiful experience. Language is only a barrier if you allow it to be."

"To me Black is beauty and power and all the strength that comes with it," said senior Alexandra Gresseau. As she looks ahead to graduation, she hopes college will be as diverse as Halsey. **"Being Black is not something I allow people to stigmatize. I am from Haiti, and I still show my love to all my other colorful friends from other backgrounds and countries. I view my skin with great honor. It is an honor to wake up and be me. Who we all are is something special. I just wish everyone could see it."**



Having dark skin does not mean division. Everyone has a different shade of skin, but it does not mean people have to cut away from everyone. People come from all over the world and that is what makes getting to know them worth it. **People should share the beauty of their culture rather than keeping it bunched up.**

"I'm proud to be an Afro-Latina. It feels good," said senior Jillian Tavarez Suarez. **"Living life is exciting. Diversity means a bunch of humans doing different things while being themselves.** I do not think about the negative stuff. I choose to not let that get me down. We choose our paths, and we get to choose to be happy."

## Page 8

By Chelsea Blandon

Norma Cardona, Halsey's School Climate and Culture Coach, put students' creativity to work by having them make a giant Women's History month poster outside the media center.

"I asked them to come up with a quote or look up a quote that they felt was important to them in terms of women in history," said Cardona. "Some had to do with women in the workplace. Some had to do with women in race. Some of the quotes were from famous women activists. It was very interesting to see how they decorated the poster and got engaged in this fun activity."

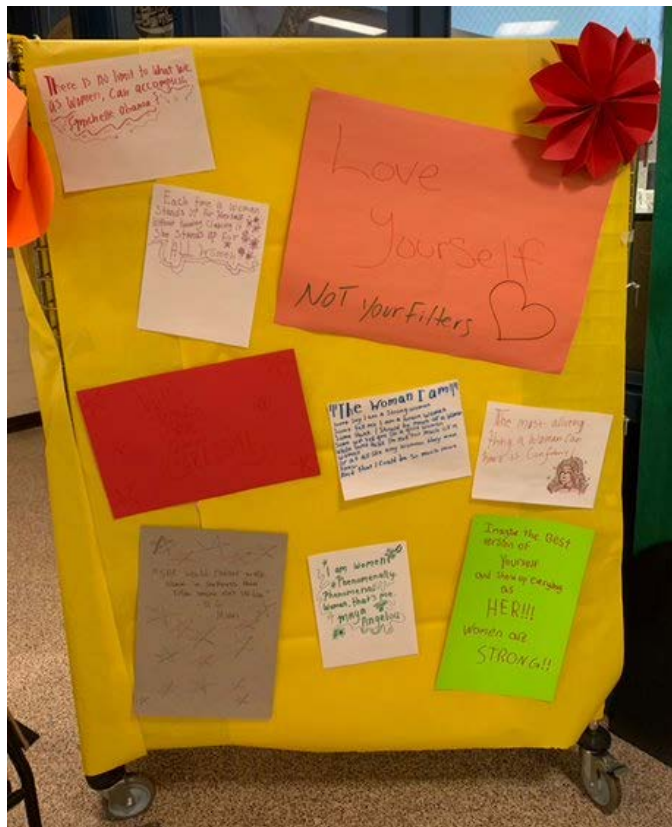
Why does Cardona think it's important to celebrate Women's History month at Halsey? "Women's History Month is dedicated to acknowledging and honoring the accomplishments of brave

women, whose actions have contributed to the arc of gender equality. It is important because it highlights lady heroes' significant historical and contemporary contributions."

"It's also important to acknowledge women in general," she said. "We've come far from not being able to vote and not being able to work. The role of women in society is also changing. We're no longer judged just by what we're supposed to do. Now, we're celebrating what women are capable of doing."



Norma Cardona, Halsey's School Climate and Culture Coach, stands next to the Women's History Month poster display by the school media center.



Cardona had students add quotations from famous women in history, politics, culture, and science to the poster to highlight their significant contributions.



# Women's History Month

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Page 9

## Famous Women of Elizabeth

By Leyanis Vazquez Diaz

In honor of Women's History Month, we thought we'd shine a light on some famous women from **Elizabeth, New Jersey**. It turns out this town was home to very talented leaders in the world of writing, TV and movies.



**Judy "Blume" Sussman** is an American writer of children's, young adult, and adult fiction. Originally from Elizabeth, NJ, Blume studied at NYU where she took up a writing course. She struggled to get her articles out there following years of rejection. Eventually, she became a first-time author when her illustrated children's book, 'The One in the Middle Is the Green Kangaroo' was published in 1969. But Blume wasn't really praised until her following book, 'Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret' which established her as a prime voice for younger readers. **Blume tapped into her experiences from her teens to deliver an endearing coming-of-age story for her younger audience.** She has sold more than 85 million books and they have been translated into roughly three dozen different languages.



**Malinda Williams** is an American actress and producer. She was born in Elizabeth, NJ and began her career in television as a child artist, in 1987 where she starred in 'The Cosby Show.' She also guest starred in other big shows like 'Miami Vice' and 'Sister, Sister', although she is best recognized for her role in 'Soul Food'. **The performance earned her three "NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Actress in a Drama Series" nominations.** Her role as Tracy Van Adams in 'Soul Food' is what really gave her a chance to bathe in the spotlight and later appeared as a series regular in the tv drama 'Windfall'. Besides acting, Malinda also owns a lingerie line called 'Modern Goddess.'



**Elizabeth Maria Peña** was a Cuban-American film, TV, and stage actor from Elizabeth, NJ. She was best known for her performances in films such as 'La Bamba,' 'Jacob's Ladder,' and 'Lone Star'. She was inclined toward a career in acting since childhood and was trained in the performing arts. **She worked in numerous films, such as 'Down and Out in Beverly Hills,' 'Rush Hour,' 'Tortilla Soup,' and 'Nothing Like Holidays.'** Peña was also a voice actor and a stage performer and had **toured with the play 'Romeo & Juliet.'** She won many awards such as the 'Independent Spirit Award,' the 'Bravo Award' and the 'ALMA Award.' Aside from acting, she co-founded the 'Hispanic Organization of Latin Actors.'

# Honoring Female Role Models

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

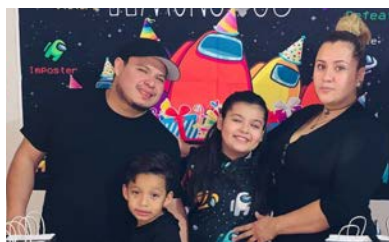
PAGE 10

## The Women In My Life

By Erika Martinez



Here I am with my sister Liliana and her son Jordan.



My oldest sister Lidia, with her daughter Angie, son Yeshua, and partner.

**I was born into a family where women are the pillars.** My mom had six daughters (including me) and with the help of her sister, she raised us all. My mom and aunt have seen us grow from babies to women. Before my mom had two of my sisters and I, she immigrated to the United States. She left three daughters in El Salvador. My oldest sister Lidia, is 28 years old. Then comes Irma, 26, Wendy, 24, Santos, 21, and Liliana, 19 years. At 17-year-old, I am the youngest.

Our fathers were not present in our lives much and did not really put in effort to be part of it. Most people would say that each child needs both their mother and father in their lives. However, my life felt complete as my mom is both my mom and dad to me. **She is an inspiration to me.** She works hard, takes care of us, pays the bills, and with our help, keeps the house tidy. My sisters and I share my mom's work ethic and desire to keep our homes clean and orderly.

Four of my sisters have moved out to live their lives and start families of their own. Only one sister and her baby remain at home with my mom and me. Even though my sisters all live different lives they have one thing in common. They are all mothers.

Not only are they mothers, but they also juggle jobs and family responsibilities. Lidia works as a waiter and secretary at her partner's business. She also takes care of her kids, cleans the house, and works two jobs every day. Wendy lives in El Salvador where she takes care of her 8-year-old son as well as animals on a farm. Liliana lives with her husband and has a 4-month-old baby. She works hard, cleans the house, and takes care of her baby. Santos has two children and lives with us at home. She recently dealt with tragedy when her baby girl passed away at 2 weeks old.

This was a tough time for our entire family. However, God blessed her with a baby boy. Nowadays, she works two jobs, day and night, takes care of her son, and goes to school. She does all this without the help of the baby's father.

I don't have any kids as I am still young. However, I am an "essential worker" for my family. When my sisters either go to work, have appointments, or go shopping, they leave their kids with me. These women inspire me each day to become a better version of myself. They teach me that no matter what obstacles I will face in life, I can still make it. **Many say having kids will stop you from living your life, but my mom and sisters prove me otherwise everyday.**



My sister Wendy and her son Gabriel.



My sister Santos with her son Santiago.



Santo's daughter Mariana's feet and hand prints.



# Women Who Inspire

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 11

## Honoring Women Who Make a Difference

By Cindy Reyes

For many of us, we focus on female role models to help shape who we are as women and where we want to be in life. Their stories serve as not only an inspiration, but as a lesson when it comes to reaching our goals. As students, we can also learn valuable lessons from these females about how to confront life's challenges, continue to push forward, and fight for a more just and equal world.

In honor of Women's History Month, we asked students and teachers to name their female role models and why they look up to them for inspiration.

Halsey junior **Victoria Reyes'** choice was **Rihanna**. "I picked **Rihanna** because she creates her own brands and holds her own. She supports women's rights."

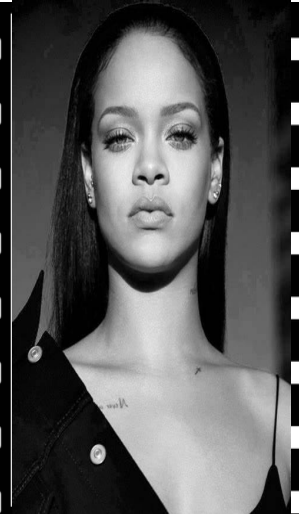
**Pheona Galano**, Halsey junior, picked **Selena Gomez**. "It would be Selena because she taught me to be more confident through a song."

Famous females are also an inspiration to men. Hamilton junior **Mathew Hernadez** said he likes **Taylor Swift** "because she's an activist and speaks out about issues."

We also asked Halsey teachers to weigh-in on their choice. Social studies teacher **Paul DePascale** said **Madonna** is his pick. "There are very few people who have worked as hard as she has to achieve such great success. Her life is a powerful lesson. It shows if you really want something and you're willing to give it your all, you're gonna be successful."

Halsey English teacher **Haley Venezia** said, "I really look up to **Dr. Jill Biden**. I know she is the first lady, but she has so many accomplishments separate from that. She was a professor of English and has her doctorate degree. I aspire to be as well-educated and established as her one day. I think she perfectly balances her career, her public persona, and her family."

These female role models are well known for being activists, inspirational leaders, and singers. But there are many other female role models who are not as famous. They can be mothers, friends, nurses, or teachers. Famous or not, these women show us all that anything is possible if you put your mind to it. These ladies inspire us all to become better in life.



# Nursing News

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 12

## Nursing Students Back in the Hospital For Hands-On Training

By Alyzae Rivera



Halsey nursing students prepare to leave on their first course training trip to Trinitas Hospital, the first in two years.

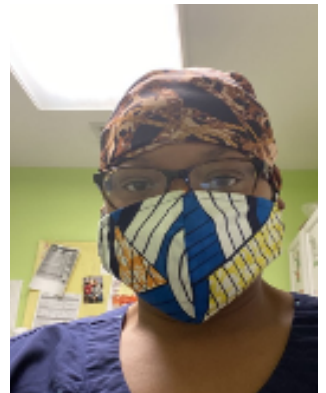
After a two-year wait, Halsey nursing students made their first training trip to Trinitas Hospital last month. No one was more happy than Halsey Health and Occupation Teacher Faheemah Walton.

"It's absolutely great. I'm excited for the students. The hospital staff is also excited to see the students again," said Walton. "It's good to have a sense of normalcy, go back into the hospital environment, and get that hands-on experience which is really beneficial to the students."

The purpose of the trip was to give students a tour of the hospital and get familiar with the different parts of the facility. Walton wanted them to meet the secretaries at the front desks of the units, and get familiar with where supplies are located and the different communications devices used in the hospital. **"The whole purpose and goal was to orient them to the hospital environment. This is the time that they get their hands-on training and carry out the job responsibilities of a health unit coordinator."**

This hand-on experience, which is so important for Nursing students to experience, was missing during the pandemic. COVID-19 safety protocols forced Walton to teach her courses online or strictly in the classroom. "It was sad not to be able to go into the hospital for two years and have that opportunity to connect with staff and patients."

Now her students are back on the hospital floor shadowing nurses, secretaries, doctors, and technicians. **"Students are able to really make that connection with staff and patients," said Walton.**



Halsey Health and Occupation Teacher Faheemah Walton



Nursing students Naiomy Mezu, Noelia Vasquez and Jasslyn Escolero.

For Halsey junior Naiomy Mezu, being in the hospital was exciting. **"There was just a lot of stuff going on. There's a lot of responsibility that we have when we actually start working there,"** she said. **"It's the real deal."**

For Jasslyn Escolero, junior, going in-person made all the difference. "It is different being actually in the hospital rather than just learning about it in the classroom," said Escolero. "As a visual learner, you get to see how things are supposed to be working in real life." She is eyeing a career as an ultrasound technician.

Walton hopes this hand-on experience and work-based learning in the hospital will shape her students' plans for the future. "We hope our students will be more prepared when they leave here for whatever job that we're training them for."



# ROTC UPDATE

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 13

## Pandemic Pushes JROTC Students To Step Up and Lead

A look at this year's commanders who are inspiring and challenging their cadets

By Zophia Gonzalez

The JROTC program at Halsey took a major hit at the start of the pandemic. Program leaders and staff were not able to teach in their normal way. Slowly but surely, as the school got back to in person learning, the program saw a major increase in what it could accomplish. With two years being taken away from the program, **the challenges of the pandemic pushed people into leadership positions in a rush and forced them to "figure it out" for themselves how to engage and inspire their cadets.**



Christopher De Los Santos, senior, is the Color Guard Commander.

I sat down with several commanders from our drill team to see where their heads were at. First to be interviewed was senior **Christopher De Los Santos**. When asked if he thought he was going to end up with such a leadership position he responded, "Yes, I believed that I was going to get this far because I was dedicated and motivated." Christopher has been on the drill team since sophomore year and is currently the color guard commander.

Next to be interviewed was **Ashley Cuevas**. She has been on the drill team since her sophomore year and has shown resilience and promise by winning multiple trophies for unarmed regulation. To get more of an insight into her thought process, I asked her to tell me what helps her adjust to commanding and putting herself in a challenging situation. "I've always been someone who was able to take a high position. So, being a commander was just something that came naturally to me. **Being in charge is something that I've been used to for a long time.**"



Ashley Cuevas, senior, is the Unarmed Regulation Commander.



Barthelemy Bozieux, sophomore, is New Cadet Commander

**Barthelemy Bozieux** is one of the program's most promising students. As a sophomore, he's already taken on a leadership role as the program's new cadet commander. He leads a squad of new cadets and recites multiple commands within a small drill deck. I asked him what qualities have helped him adapt to this position at such a young age. "I would say my determination to get things done has helped me become a better leader and my passion for drill. Also, the other commanders have helped me with their guidance."



Senior Marine Instructor Colonel Robert Golden

The program wouldn't be possible without **Colonel Robert Golden** and **Master Sergeant Robert Gerald**s who shape each and every cadet into the best leaders they can be. This year is Colonel Golden's last year teaching at Halsey. What does he plan to do next? "I'm not retiring, I'm transitioning. I will be going to teach Junior ROTC in Georgia."



Senior Marine Instructor Master Sergeant Robert Gerald

With Colonel Golden leaving, Master Sergeant Gerald will step up and become the Senior Marine Instructor of Halsey. How does he feel about taking over the position next year? "I've been the Senior Marine Instructor on three different occasions. I'm turning my job into someone else, I will retire in about 6 years so it's almost my time. I'll just have more phone calls." Both of these instructors show what it takes to give up a part of yourself for a bigger picture and the program will forever be in their debt.

# ROTC UPDATE

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 14

## Muscle Power Fuels Big Wins for Female PT Team

By Zophia Gonzalez

Can you do 100 crunches in 2 minutes? How about 60 pushups in that same time frame? If you answered yes to any of these questions, this is what it's like to be on Halsey's PT team.

Consisting of a male and female team with 6 members in each, the PT, or Physical Training, team has shown where hard work and dedication can take you. Starting their year off with a competition at Redding High School, in Redding, MA, the female team took first place overall, while the boys followed closely behind placing second in their division.

**Senior Fabiana Fazio** is the captain of the female team. "Serving as the PT captain has taught me how to be a better leader. It is a significant responsibility. I am responsible for leading, supporting, and inspiring the team on both good and bad days."

This year the females have shown that it doesn't matter about gender, it only matters about how dedicated you are to the team. They've won first place left and right and just qualified for Nationals in Little Rock, AR, on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

What's important about this achievement is that Fabiana and her team qualified for Nationals without the help of the boys' PT team. "I am significantly proud of all the hard work and effort we have put in since the beginning of the school year. We qualified for the nationals due to the team's motivation and direction. **We are eager to win and create a beautiful memory for ourselves.**"

Fabiana, who joined JROTC as a freshman, credits the program with developing her leadership skills. "This organization, its mentors, and cadets members transformed me into the person I am today." She wrote about her JROTC experience for this year's Sons of the American Revolution Jr. ROTC essay contest. **She won second place in the state.**



Seniors of the PT team: Zophia Gonzalez, Fabiana Fazio, Ivanna Sanches, Alicia Flechas, Conception Avila, Wilvner Exalus, Dominic Castro, Christian Carcomo, Nicolas Montanez, Michael Benavedez.



## Female Shooters Earn Big Wins for Halsey Gunslingers

By Zophia Gonzalez



Cadet Maria A. Garcia-Cabana

With the season now done, Halsey's JRTOC Rifle Team now sports an unprecedented record, culminating in a **first-place finish at this year's First State Invitational Air Rifle competition in Dover Delaware**. They beat out 13 other teams and 60 shooters. **Halsey junior Maria Garcia-Cabana** had the best record overall, with 254 out of 300 possible points.

The newly rebuilt "Gunslingers" began their season as a rookie team back in December, scoring 1st place in their very first competition at Reading, PA. Cabana and the other female sharpshooters helped the team score some other top placements and wins this season, including second place out of 33 teams in March at the "Fighting Rams" postal match in Florida, first place in December's Keystone Classic Marksmanship Competition, and 2nd place in the annual Halsey Top Guns Competition. **The team is also known to be distinguished from other teams by one defining characteristic. For the first time, females made up the majority of shooters.** We talked to Cabana about her time on the team, what it takes to succeed, and her thoughts on being on a mostly-female team.



Gunslingers win 2nd place in Top Guns Competition and 1st place in First State Competition.

**Describe what it is like to be on the Halsey Rifle Team.** The Rifle Team is sort of like a second home. We spend close to five hours each practice after school surrounded by each other, which has helped build bonds between the team members, this is not to say that it is an easy spot to hold. During a busy month on average, we will have 2 virtual matches per week and additional travel competitions. There are days when some of our shooters are having a bad score day and it is incredibly painful to see them be frustrated with something that they love so much.

have accuracy and precision when shooting, along with traits such as responsibility and commitment. Given that we spend close to 50 minutes of shooting during competitions and some practices, **The Gunslingers must always remain in control of their rifle, which can be a little difficult due to the weapon's weight.** Being a member of the team takes a toll on the shooters both physically and mentally. The key is to leave all thoughts at the door once you enter the range. The only thought crossing your mind once you are on the firing line should be to hit the bullseye.

**How did it feel to have a team that was mostly women?** Being in a team mostly made up of females has certainly been empowering. It provides a sense of comfort knowing that they are being recognized for their skills and not their genders. It's even greater to know that our top three shooters are all females.

**What skill do you need to succeed on the team?** The Halsey Rifle Team demands shooters to be in excellent physical and mental condition. You must



# Student Voices

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 16

## ***How is Halsey Reacting to the Ukraine Invasion?***

By Gaemlie Baptiste

The attack on Ukraine by Russian forces has caused fear and worry worldwide. Already, thousands have lost their lives and over 3.5 million Ukrainians have fled the country to escape the violence. The United States is providing military aid to the Ukrainian army but has made it a point to avoid direct confrontation with Russia.

This war is forcing us all to ask a difficult question. What if we went to war with Russia and had to draft soldiers here at home to fight?

"I think that if you're willing to fight for your country or any country especially Ukraine that is in need, you should fight with pride," said Darelyn Cordero, a junior in the ROTC program at Halsey Academy.

Many believe Russia is wrong for invading Ukraine and admire how the Ukrainians are fighting with pride and dignity for their people and country. But they also hope peace can be reached soon.

"Russia wanted more land to improve the Soviet Union because Ukraine was once part of it. Now Russia wants it back and I do not think it is right for children to die as well as women and soldiers. I pray that Russia and Ukraine end this war without any more bloodshed," said sophomore Malachi Santiago.

It's been over a month since Russia invaded Ukraine, with no peace in sight. In the meantime, the Halsey community has shown we stand for the Ukrainian people by collecting donations for refugees and families. Our thoughts and prayers continue to go out to the soldiers who are defending their country and for people who have lost their lives in this war.



## ***Prices Spikes at Pump and Grocery Store, We're Feeling the Pain***

By Juan-Carlos Moreno

After Russia invaded Ukraine gas prices shot up dramatically. According to the AAA, the average cost for a gallon of gas is now hovering around \$4.09 a gallon. A gallon of diesel is well over \$5. This means Halsey students and staff are paying a lot more than last year to fill up their cars.

"It's terrible because I'm seeing more of my money going into my car and not into my savings. It's making me annoyed," said Zophia Gonzales, senior.

Teachers are also feeling the pinch. "I went from paying \$50 for a fill up to \$65. That's a crazy increase," said English teacher Sebastian Hill.



Prices are also going up at the grocery store. "For bigger families on a budget the food prices can put a strain on anyone's wallet. In times like this I think of all the families barely making it. I'm glad food drives exist," said Demoni Gause, senior.

If you see somebody struggling don't turn a blind eye. Help them out the best you possibly can. You can volunteer at local food drives or even donate food yourself. Every little bit helps.





# Teachers in the Spotlight

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 17

## Jump-Start Your Grades with a Teacher Tutor Session

By Victoria Reyes

During the pandemic, teachers will tell you it was a struggle to keep students engaged during virtual learning. And when Halsey went back to virtual learning during the Omicron surge in January, many students had trouble staying focused and keeping their grades up. To help students get back on track, the school put in place an after-school tutoring program. We asked English teacher Joshua Lay, Biology teacher Courtney Burke, and Math teacher Theresa Adachi about the program and why they think students should attend.

### Was it your choice to begin tutoring? If it was, why did you think it would be a good idea?

Ms. Burke: Yes, I think tutoring is a great intervention for students because it allows for extra instructional time in a small group setting. It can mean the difference between a student failing and passing a class. I want to help my students succeed. If one hour after school can make that difference, I am happy to do it.

Mr. Lay: Yes, it was my choice. I know not all students are able to understand the lessons in class each day and need a time and place for extra help. I'm glad I can provide that needed time and support.

Ms. Adachi: Yes, because some students need one-on-one instruction.



Biology teacher Courtney Burke



English teacher Joshua Lay

### How do you think being virtual last year and then again for 2 weeks this school year affected students?

Ms. Burke: The pandemic has not only taken a toll academically, but mentally and emotionally. I think the struggle in education is only natural because if students did not achieve certain benchmarks during virtual instruction, then it is more difficult to build on those concepts in current courses. Despite the circumstances, I think students at Halsey are doing really well this year!

Mr. Lay: Virtual learning definitely played a role in students struggling with their classes. Students were not able to get the same one-on-one instruction and did not always have a distraction-free study place.

Ms. Adachi: I believe that virtual learning last year had an impact on the struggle of students this year.

### Along with tutoring, what else could be beneficial to the students?

Ms. Burke: For students who have an interest in science, the new STEM Club is something that will look good on college applications. We are at-capacity for the club this year, but it benefits the students by giving them opportunities to build and design engineering projects. It is a hands-on, real-world learning experience.

Mr. Lay: I think book clubs and other general interest clubs would help students be more productive with their free time. Collaborating with other like-minded students on various tasks and activities would be a lot better than going home to nap or watch Netflix.

Ms. Adachi: More studying. Some students don't know how to study or review their notes.

### Do you have any words of advice for students scared to attend tutoring?

Ms. Burke: I have students come for tutoring every day. So, you are not the only person who might need a little extra help. Just because someone comes to tutoring doesn't mean they have a bad grade. I have students with A's in the class who have come to tutoring. It can only help you. There is no reason to be scared to attend. Bring a friend if that makes you feel more comfortable.

Mr. Lay: Don't be scared! The teachers want to help you!

Ms. Adachi: Take advantage of the free resources given to you in school.



Math teacher Theresa Adachi

# BRAINS AND BUSINESSES

## halsey entrepreneurs

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 18

## Halsey Students Turning Passions Into Profits

### “Breakfast by Kayy”



Some students are passionate about their studies. Some students are passionate about their hobbies, and are turning them into businesses. **Kaliyah Arrington**, a senior at Halsey loves to cook and make culinary creations. She started her own breakfast food company called **Breakfast by Kayy**. “I enjoy the idea of me owning my business. I think I can make good money doing something that I love,” said Arrington.

Every weekend she fires up her stove and gets cooking. On Fridays, she delivers her creations to students at school who ordered her food online. On the weekend, breakfast is only available for pick up at her house. “Waking up in the morning and cooking up morning breakfast gets me very excited,” she said. Make sure to support small businesses and check her out at [@breakfastby.kayy on Instagram!](#) *By Quanasia Robinson*



### “Kerline All About Hair”



Another student entrepreneur is **Halsey senior Kerline Stavien**. Her passion is hair styling. During the pandemic she and her sisters were all stuck at home with no access to the hair salon. She took matters into her own hands and started styling her family’s hair.

“I have a lot of sisters, so everybody here was going crazy. Nobody could get their hair done,” Stavien said. “I had to really sit and practice, and do their hair. That’s how I really started learning how. I also discovered I really could do this.”

She now has a business called **Kerline All About Hair**. She is taking new clients and building a brand. She has around 200 followers on Instagram. “I want to own my own all-girl shop, where people can come and get their nails and eyelashes done.” Students who are interested in getting their hair done can book an appointment with her at [@kerline\\_allabouthair on instagram.](#) - *By Alan Morocho*



### Cashing In with Clippers and Scissors



Along with being a full-time Halsey senior, **Edward Ibarra**, mainly known as “Eddy,” is also a barber. He’s been hustling as a barber for about two years. He credits his two uncles in Ecuador, who are also barbers, for inspiring him to start cutting hair.

Currently, Ibarra is cutting hair from home and has built up quite a group of clients. Seeing his regulars nearly every two weeks he has progressed a lot for being self-taught. He admits his focus right now is on graduating high school and saving money. But after he graduates he has a plan. “I want to pursue my barber career and own my own barbershop.” To book an appointment, you can message Eddy on Instagram [@barbereddy\\_](#). *By Victoria Reyes*







# Arts & Entertainment



FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 19

## Foundation Donates Instruments, Equipment To Music Tech Program

Halsey Music Teacher **Nick Afflitto** received a generous donation from the [Neal Casal Music Foundation](#) for Halsey's new music technology program. The donation included new keyboards, microphones, guitars and headphones. Afflitto plans to use the instruments and equipment when teaching students about music and music production. "It's exciting to see this classroom turn into a real music space where the students can explore all different aspects of music and music production," said Afflitto. **"I can't wait to see what the program will evolve into as we keep growing. There's no reason why students here shouldn't have the same opportunities as their peers throughout the district."** Pictured here is Afflitto, with students from his classes, members of the foundation, and Principal Van Vliet. *By Erika Martinez*



Instruments donated to Mr. Afflitto's music class.

## What's Halsey Watching?

While we were stuck at home during the pandemic, many of us binge-watched a lot of TV and became obsessed with certain shows. [In a recent poll](#), we asked Halsey students to name their favorite streaming service and the shows they like to watch. Out of the major six streaming sites, Netflix is king. These were the five top shows. *By Shania Kolas*



### Vampire Diaries



"Because it's spicyyyyyy." Vielka Fernandez, junior

"I like myths." Mauricio Rivero, junior

"It's entertaining." Erika Martinez, junior

### Good Girls



"It's funny and I relate to it." Joselyn Picon, sophomore

"It's different from most shows and it's really funny." Shelsy Zapata, junior

### Stranger Things



"I love the theme and suspense." Stephanie Sanchez junior

"The show has a lot of suspense which makes it interesting." Alex Rodriguez, sophomore

### Shameless



"It's a good show." Micheal Diaz, junior

"I like the plot, the constant action and the deep traits the characters have as well as the emotions they show." Kaheem Griffin, junior

### Euphoria



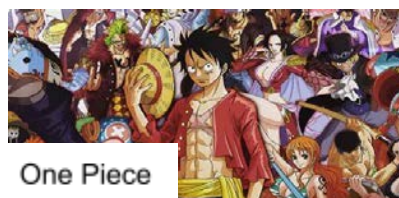
"I really like the drama and story line of the show." Jenies Gomez, freshman

"I like the aesthetic and the outfits from the show." Yariana Torres, freshman

## Nuts About Anime

Do you like animation more than real life action shows and movies? If so, you might be considered a "Weeb." This means you're a super-fan of anime and Japanese culture. And there are quite a few Weebs at Halsey, including Art Teacher Faeli Dussan. He enjoys anime because of its Japanese roots, the way the animation is drawn, and how stories feature real-life problems and hidden messages. **He especially likes [Asto Boy](#) because "it's kind of weird. It's kind of chunky. Imagine like Mickey Mouse, but the Japanese equivalent."**

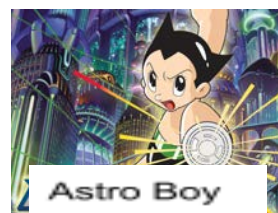
A recent poll asked Halsey students for their top anime picks. My favorite was [Naruto](#), followed by [Attack on Titans](#). Another surprising choice was [One Piece](#), which has a thousand plus episodes. *By Anthony Bustillo*



One Piece



Female Titan



Astro Boy



Naruto

# Halsey Gives Back

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 20

## Haley Shows We Care on Valentine's Day

By Jacob Cardenas



Halsey students donated various supplies to spread love, joy and special care packages on Valentine's Day to homeless women in need. Students packed the bags with hairbrushes, toothbrushes, toothpaste, candy, hair ties, feminine hygiene products, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, and lotion. **Each care package also included a handmade Valentine's Day card.** The care bags were brought to St. Joe's to be handed out.



## Donations for Ukraine Refugees

By Erika Martinez



Students packing donations

On February 24th Russia started an invasion of Ukraine. Cities like Sumy, Enerhodar, and Kyiv had to be evacuated. Millions of mostly women and children fled to nearby countries for shelter. Now people around the world want to show their support and help these people in need. **Here at Halsey, we are doing our**

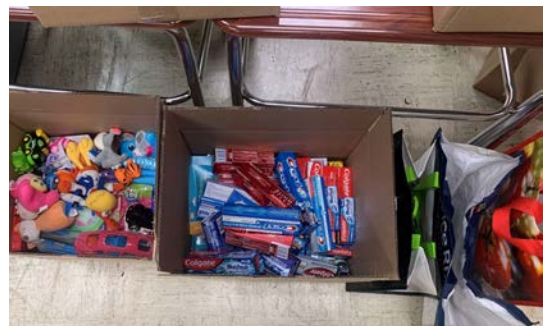
**part by gathering donations.**

Teaching assistant **Hope Billingsley**, English teacher **Brandi Donnelly**, and their student volunteers helped collect and box bandages, feminine products, soap, wipes, shampoo, body wash, diapers and baby toys to send to Ukrainian people suffering from the war. All the donated items were taken to St. Vladimir, a local Ukrainian church.

"The donations will help little kids and their parents get back on their feet. Every little bit counts," said Billingsley.



Staff and students in charge of the donations



Boxes with donated toys and toothpaste



# Style and Fashion

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 21

## Hot Shoe and Clothing Style Trends for Spring

By Genesis Guzman & Jose Chevres



We already know what to wear, and not to wear in school. So what are the hot style trends that Halsey is wearing after school and on the weekend?

We conducted a [recent poll](#) of 24 juniors and seniors to find out what clothing and shoe brands they liked the most and why.

Nike clothing topped the list. Why pick Nike?

"Nike is more into style and looks, and it looks better. And their hoodies are comfortable too," said Jose Chevres, junior.

Other popular brands in the poll include Forever 21 and The North Face.

As for shoes, Nike came out on top, followed by Adidas and Vans. Reebok was also a popular choice. What makes Nike and Adidas shoes a hit? "Because Nikes are durable," said Nicole Read, junior.

"Nike is elite and my favorite brand," said Vielka Fernandez, junior.

"Adidas makes more comfortable shoes," Chevres added.



What's also selling for spring and summer at the stores? Chontay Hall, junior, who works at The Gap said, T-shirts with the Gap logo, dress up T-shirts like tank tops, and jeans, shorts, and overalls.

"Clothes in bright summer colors like green and light pink are popular," Hall adds. "Jeggings and ultra-high rise leggings are also a big hit."

Joanna Tupul-Puac, junior, works at Hollister in the Jersey Gardens Mall. "Right now, mom jeans are the latest trend and graphic shirts." And what about for guys? "Skinny jeans that are ripped and flannels," she said.

Let us know which brands you like by [completing this survey](#).



# Celebrating Our *Diversity*

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 22

## Favorite International Sports Teams

By Jerrick Portillo

Students at Halsey come from lots of different places, but most of us have something in common, a passion for sports. With this in mind, we conducted a poll and asked around to see which teams are popular, both here and abroad.

Based on a recent survey, the most popular choices were soccer teams from around the world, like FC Barcelona, Liverpool, Real Madrid, Germany, Mexico, Brazil, Columbia, Peru, Portugal, Italy, and Ecuador. Other teams that students liked were the New York Giants, the USA Women's National Basketball team, the Lakers, the Yankees, Manchester City, the Patriots, Dallas Cowboys, the Jets, the Corinthians, Chivas, and many more.

History teacher Greg Sampson said his favorite international sports team is the Montreal Expos baseball team. They played in Canada and were the first Major League Baseball Team to do so. Later, they moved to Washington to become the Nationals. Sampson said their most memorable moment was when "they lost to my favorite team, The Phillies, in 1980, when Mike Schmidt hit a dramatic home run."

Another sports fanatic is Halsey math teacher Khalid Mujib. He started watching cricket around the 1980s. "My brother and I used to play cricket. Everyone played it. It was like a street game," said Mujib. His favorite player was Imran Khan, a retired cricketer and now former Prime Minister of Pakistan. Imran Khan, alongside his team, defeated England, winning the Cricket World Cup in 1992.



Champions League Game: Barcelona vs PSG  
Round of 16 Second Leg



Montreal Expos vs the Phillies, 1980



Pakistan vs England Cricket World Cup, 1992

## Beats From Around The World

Music helps us connect and unwind, This is true for many of us who have roots in other countries and cultures. We conducted a poll and asked students to name their favorite international music artists. Here are the top choices. *By Peytro Tolentino*

### Colombia

#### Bad Bunny

"Because I like his lyrics and he's a great singer." - Daniela Sarria, sophomore



### United States

#### Sean Paul

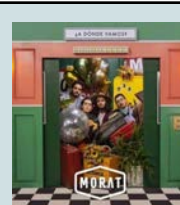
"DanceHall really gets me up and moving." - Demoni Gause, junior



### Costa Rica

#### Morat

"Morat is my favorite because the lyrics of the songs are about situations we all go through at some point." - Valery Borrero, sophomore





# **HALSEY ATHLETES IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 23

## **From Double Leg Take-Downs to Fireman Carries, Minutemen Wrestlers Win Tournaments Left and Right**

By Lesly Hernandez



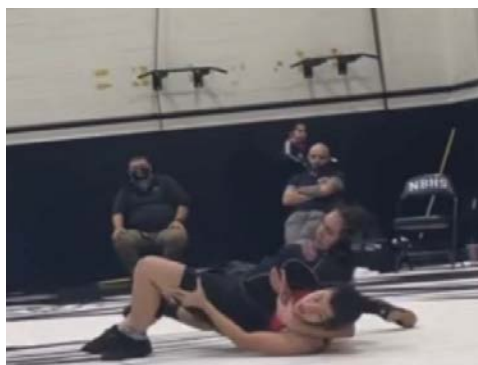
Zophia Gonzalez seconds away from slamming her opponent.

The Elizabeth Minutemen Wrestling Team has had a momentous year of racking up trophies. From the Lady Minutemen Tournament with the girls taking first place overall, Boys Districts, Regions, and States, they had a remarkably successful season. We spoke to some key wrestlers on the team about their wins, losses, and thoughts about the sport in general.

Zophia Gonzalez (see here in the black uniform) is a region qualifier and was selected for the All-Conference Team Watchung Division. She has strong thoughts about the reputation of wrestling as a sport and whether it's appreciated enough. "Definitely not. Wrestling is one of the toughest sports to choose, and with the number of hours we put in and sacrifice, we don't get appreciation. I was selected First Team All-Conference and 4<sup>th</sup> in my weight class for the Lady Minutemen, but somehow no one mentions it."

Gonzalez has been on the team for the past two seasons. Now that she's a senior and about to graduate, she's sad that her high school wrestling experience is over. But, she's glad she had the opportunity to compete on the mat. "My first day was a surreal experience, I never imagined the challenging work and dedication it took. My last day was emotional, and it felt like a part of me was being taken away, but I was grateful for the experience."

Another up-and-coming wrestler is sophomore Varson Siryon. He is going to be Varsity Team Captain next season. Being a four year wrestler, Siryon knows the ins and outs of the sport and the most difficult hardships involved. "The hardest part is being able to perfect your craft whether it's upper body, lower body, or some form of mobility."



Romina Sanchez pinning her opponent.

After years of working hard, Siryon can't wait to be able to pass on some of his knowledge. "Many people start this sport, little people end this sport," he said. "No matter how sore or beat up you feel if you strive to be better and push through, you will never fail."

In wrestling, just like in every other sport, sexism is present and sophomore Romina Sanchez is one of many to notice. "I've experienced sexism in this sport many times. There's been instances where the

girls team would be put last and the boys first. I've been told that I shouldn't be in this sport because no girl can compare to the strength or ability of a guy." Sanchez wants to prove them wrong.



# **HALSEY ATHLETES IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 24



## **Underdogs to State Champs**

By Isaiah Pittman

No one expected the Elizabeth Minutemen Varsity Basketball Team to go as far as they did. But despite what the critics said these ball players had an amazing season. Led by Head Coach Phillip Colicchio and Team Captains Justin Agyare and Sebastian Robinson, the Minutemen finished the season 20-7 and in the final four of the Tournament of Champions.

The first run for the Minutemen had them finish with a record of 13-6. Losing the Union County Championship to Roselle Catholic. When asked about the loss Justin said, "The team needed to be more confident in their players and move the ball more offensively."

Robinson added, "We needed to limit our turnovers and know our plays when the game started to be successful." Both points would prove true when the Minutemen went on to win the Group 4 North 4 Sectional Championship.

The team refined their plays and perfected their passing during their practices, which were always loud and active. When asked who pushed the team the most, Robinson said, it was his fellow captain Agyare. "He got them through exhaustion and worked them harder." After practice, the coaching staff sat the boys down to watch film on the upcoming team for the next game. Robinson said the team's coaching staff does a "great job" at preparing the team.

During their next stretch of games, it was either win or go home. The Minutemen would beat JP Stevens, Watchung Hills, and Newark Eastside to advance to the North 4 Group 4 Sectional Championship against Linden. They would go on to beat Linden 49-47 and take home the title of Sectional Champs. Coach Colicchio said, "The key to our success this year was everyone understanding their roles."

After winning the Sectional Championship for Group 4, the boys only needed to win two games to be [crowned Group 4 State Champs](#) and be eligible for the Tournament of Champions. First, they would need to beat Ridgewood, the North 1 Group 4 State Champs. Then, whoever won between Marlboro and Lenape, would win the Central and South Group 4 State Champs. The Minutemen would go on to beat Ridgewood 72-53 and then top Marlboro 70-63. They were now one of only 6 teams to be in the last Tournament of Champions.

In the first round of the TOC, the Minutemen beat Paterson Charter, 50-41. Unfortunately, this would be the last win for the Minutemen, as they would go on to lose to Camden in the semifinals, 60-50.

Even though they lost, the heavy underdogs, who weren't even expected to win any championships this year, were part of the final four teams in the last Tournament of Champions.

