

Bulldog Bulletin

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Vol 4 Number 3

June, 2022

Congratulations Halsey Class of 2022

It was a year of transitions. In the fall, we came back to school with our masks on. We had to learn how to be students again in class. In January, Omicron forced us all back to virtual learning for two weeks. But then spring arrived. Masks became optional. We could see smiles on other people's faces. Seniors found their stride in school and made up for what they lost during the pandemic. Now, they're making plans for life after Halsey, whether that's going to college, trade school, or jumping into the workforce. But before their graduation day, the Class of 2022 got dressed up, celebrated, and danced with their friends and classmates. Here are pictures from prom night on June 1st at the Westmount Country Club in West Paterson. *Let's congratulate the Halsey Class of 2022!*



Seniors On The “Rise”

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“Prom Night” for the Halsey Class of 2022



Seniors On The “Rise”

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“Prom Night” for the Halsey Class of 2022



Seniors On The "Rise"

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English teacher Dr. Nicole Riggans asked students in her senior classes to tell us their Halsey memories and what they're thinking about as they finish their last few days of high school.

Demoni Gause

"I was not always in school mentally, but I made the best of it because I know it could have went another way."

Diane Gil

"Time passed by so fast. I feel like I was just a freshman. Throughout these years, I made many amazing memories that I wish I could relive. I want to say to the juniors and sophomores to focus on their studies and to enjoy each moment while they can but don't take it too far and mess up."

John Adams

"Do the things you might be scared of doing."

Jasmin Castanon

"Don't let anyone ever make you feel like you don't deserve what you want."

Jaden Martinez

"As a student who struggled for the first three years of Halsey, I can say that I am extremely proud of how I managed to finally catch up to my comrades. I also learned that when things get rough it's okay to feel down, but never give up hope because anything is possible. Creating bonds with classmates helps you get through tough times. I will forever be thankful for their help in getting me through this one crazy roller coaster ride of an experience."

Clarissa Castro Rivera

"Take care of yourselves never doubt yourselves before trying, enjoy the process, and take risks because they can lead you to incredible pathways."

Jaylin Harrison

"For upcoming seniors, I just want to let you guys know don't be the last to do anything. Try to be the first at everything that gets thrown at you."

Sanah Parvez

"Don't wait till the last minute to get work done. It'll only set you back from graduating."

Ryan Black-Nealis

"Forever grateful towards my teachers but even more grateful towards some of my classmates as they all allowed my Senior experience to be as fun as it was, serious, but fun."

Joya-Ventura

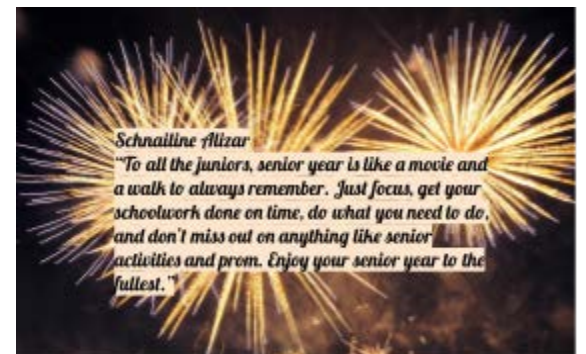
"Graduating in less than two weeks feels like a big accomplishment. Knowing that the 4 years went by so quickly is crazy to me. At the start of freshman year I said to myself, man, it's gonna be the longest 4 years ever. But look, I am already getting ready to graduate now. That's how you know time flies. To those youngsters coming up, here's a piece of advice. Always do what you have to do now because when the end comes it will be a whole lot easier."

Karen Pauta

"Being a senior is a big responsibility because you have to apply to colleges and keep your grades up. But you also get to experience the fun and work hard to get to your dreams."

Schnalline Alizar

"To all the juniors, senior year is like a movie and a walk to always remember. Just focus, get your schoolwork done on time, do what you need to do, and don't miss out on anything like senior activities and prom. Enjoy your senior year to the fullest."



Seniors On The "Rise"

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Where are Halsey seniors heading next? Some are heading to four-year colleges, while others are starting a career in the military or joining the workforce. Here's a list of some of the schools and institutions that our Halsey graduates will be attending in the fall. [According to a recent survey of 51 seniors, 75% plan on going to college, the rest are heading to trade school, or starting jobs in the work place.](#) We also asked how Halsey helped prepare them for the next step. Here are some of their responses. "Halsey improved my work ethic," "It helped me deal with people professionally," "The school showed me how to socialize with different people," "The nursing and ROTC programs prepared me a lot," and "Halsey prepared me emotionally and mentally to go to college."



Senior Stories

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Class of 2022 Leaves Their Mark with Senior Mural

By Leyanis Vazquez Diaz

How would you picture the Class of 2022? My friends and I were tasked to do just that, paint a hall mural for the Class of 2022. Earlier this year, Jasmine Aguilar, Salsabeel Al-Serreya, Schnailine Alizar, Andrea Barragan, Sarah Tizie and I sat down to think about what the picture should look like and what it should say. It took almost a month for us to get a sketch done and another 4 months to complete the mural. There were disagreements within the group at first. But in the end, we all worked hard together on this project and had fun doing it. The title of the mural is ***"All Paths Lead to Success."***



What has it been like this year to be back in school for your senior year?

Alizar: We all went through a lot with COVID-19. It wasn't easy for any of us. But coming back to school in 2022 was a relief. We got to hug our friends, spend time with them again, and go to school, not just stay home in bed, eat all day, and watch TV. We finally had something to do. I would define 2022 as a relief for all of us, especially seniors.

Al-Serreya: At first, I was excited for virtual learning, but then I wanted to come back. In 2022, we started fresh, especially in school. I got a lot of new ideas about school. I would define it as a new beginning.

Vazquez Diaz: I think it's been a new chapter for everyone. I'm just really proud of everyone this year because we're all graduating.

The mural is called "All Paths Lead To Success." What do you mean by that?

Alizar: It represents all the words that you see here like independence, time management, mental health, college respect, friendships, relationships. These can help everyone become successful and get to where they need to be in life. The mural shows that after graduating high school, it doesn't mean you're no longer going back to school and there's no more learning or education.

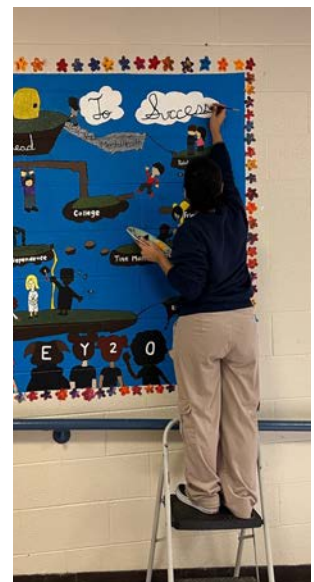
Al-Serreya: The mural shows we can go do other things. For example, you can go to trade school or go find a job. These will also lead to success. You don't have to just go to college. There are many ways and paths that lead to success.

What was it like to create the mural?

Vazquez Diaz: At first, I doubted myself. I didn't think it was going to look great. But it actually looks nice. I'm glad it was a team effort with my friends.

Alizar: We all got together, sat down, discussed this, and came up with the idea. We painted it together. It was a team effort. When I come back 10 years from now, I'll be like, yes, I did that and I'm proud of it.

Al-Serreya: It feels really nice. I'm leaving my touch in school and it's going to stay for years and years. Each person in my class will understand what the mural is about. It feels really good to leave a mark.



Senior Stories

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Seniors Look Back on Memorable Halsey Moments

By Lesly Hernandez

They are ready to graduate but that doesn't mean they leave their memories from their high school years behind. There were good times and bad, some mistakes to learn from, and some incredible memories.

As a senior at Halsey, my golden years at Halsey are about to end. Now is the time to do some reminiscing. I asked a few of my friends who are also seniors, about their most memorable moments from high school. Here are their recollections. [You can hear them on this podcast that I created.](#)

The first person I interviewed was **Zophia Gonzalez**. I wanted to speak with her because I've known her the longest and I thought she should get more recognition for her arduous work. Her favorite memory consisted of many of her well-deserved successes and all of her awards and certificates. Looking back on high school, she admits it did not go as expected. **"I didn't expect to get involved in the school community, in ROTC, or wrestling, or have the friends that I have till this day. But, I'm very thankful."**

Next, I spoke with **Kevin Hernandez**. No, we are not married, but he is the boy I am closest to. His favorite memory was from freshman year during a 3-day camp he attended for ROTC. He gave the four years of high school a rating of 6 out of 10. **"The first year was great but then quarantine hit, and I didn't do anything but be in my room."** I bet if I asked others this question they would have answered similarly.



Heidy Amador, who is a close friend of mine, said she will remember all of senior year with all the exciting commotion on prom and graduation. I asked her which year matured her the most and she said, **"I think Sophomore year because that is the age where I had to grow up fast.** We were fresh out of the Annex and wanted to grow up but we were still young."

Jahsim Williams also shared his high school highlights. His favorite memory was meeting with his friends. He will also remember his favorite teacher, English teacher Dr. Riggans. He said **she enlightened him with her wise words and helped him out with difficult assignments.** "She also got me out of detention."

Halsey's Class of 2022 has been through a lot these past four years. In a few days we will graduate. We're excited to move on to bigger and better things and start building brighter futures.



Halsey Happenings

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Halsey Senior Trip

Halsey seniors piled into buses and headed to Six Flags for some rollercoaster fun on Friday, June 10th. The senior trip gave everyone a chance to bond and connect one last time before graduation. Thanks to Ms. Cardona, Ms. Elrakaybie, Ms. Ferrao, Ms. Maher, Ms. Makras and Mr. Lopez for chaperoning.



Honoring Halsey Scholars

Halsey students made strides in their studies in MP 3. Over 400 students achieved Honor Roll. In a ceremony on May 6th, Principal Van Vliet presented students with Superintendent and Principal Scholar awards in a ceremony in the school auditorium. He said he was proud of the students' accomplishments.

"Congratulations and thank you all for your tremendous efforts!" Van Vliet said.



Ms. Lopez Is Expecting



Halsey English teacher Marisa Lopez is expecting her second child. Her due date is in the middle of September. How does she feel about being a mom to two kids? **"I'm excited, but I'm also anxious and nervous,"** Lopez said. "I'll have a nearly three-year-old. So I'm a little nervous about how that's going to throw him off, but I'm sure it will all work out." As for names, Lopez is keeping a lid on that until he's born.

Teacher Appreciation Week



Halsey celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week in May by recognizing all the contributions teachers have made this year. Ms. Cardona organized events during the week including teacher Rise Shoutout nominations by students, a staff breakfast, and a raffle. Ms. Maher,

Ms. Stuart, Mr. Lopez, Ms. Ferrao, Mr. Nieves, and our Security Guard La'Chelle Smith also helped make the week special for teachers.



Female PT Team Places 2nd in Nation

On Saturday May 7th 2022. The Halsey Health and Public Safety Academy MCJROTC Physical Fitness Teams participated in the 2022 National Marine Corps Physical Fitness Championship at Catholic High School Little Rock, AR. The Female Team of Fabiana Fazio, Ivanna Sanchez, Concepcian Avila, Alicia Flechas, Zophia Gonzalez, Yeimi Flores, placed 2nd in the Nation out of 252 MCJROTC Schools. Fabiana Fazio scored a 337 out of 500, and was named the 2022 MCJROTC Female National Individual champion.



Halsey News

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Van Vliet Praises Class of '22 For Enduring Challenging Times

With graduation of the Class of 2022 in just a few days, Halsey Principal Christopher Van Vliet looks back on the pandemic challenges we've endured as a school and how our seniors have persevered to reach their goals. He reflects on the school's achievements this year and the teamwork that makes Halsey stronger. We also asked him about his goals for next year and what we should do this summer to recharge and refocus for school in the fall.

This issue is all about the seniors of the Class of 2022. What are you thinking as this class gets ready to graduate Halsey and start the next stage in their lives?

We are so proud of our Halsey Class of '22! They have overcome so much over the past 3 school years, and they are ready for their post-secondary careers. Whether that is college, a trade school, the military, or the workforce, we are confident that we are prepared to succeed, and we look forward to seeing all the wonderful things they will accomplish. Congratulations to our graduates!



What makes the Class of 2022 special?

I think their ability to endure challenging times as well as their resiliency. This class spent 3 years at Halsey Main under very abnormal circumstances. They remained focused on their long-term goals through it all, overcame obstacles, and found a way to successfully complete their high school career. They deserve all the credit for what they have achieved, and we are all hopeful that better and normal times lie ahead for them.

As you look back on this year, what accomplishments as a school and principal are you most proud of?

I am most proud of our unity and perseverance as a school community during these 3 school years impacted by the pandemic. There were dark days and challenging times, but we managed to remain together and never lose sight of our priorities. We did our very best to keep our school community healthy and safe, and everyone contributed. Additionally, we are proud to once again be able to report that we have demonstrated significant growth by meeting or exceeding all of our goals in our Annual School Plan, as well as an increase in our student daily attendance rate, and Benchmark proficiency. Moreover, our suspensions continue to decrease, and our school surveys report an improvement in school safety. As a team, we remain focused on doing everything possible to help our students to graduate, and we once again anticipate an increase in our graduation rate. Together, Halsey will continue to RISE!



What were the challenges we faced this year as a school community and how did we overcome them?

I think the return of all of our students to in-person learning at the start of this year presented the greatest challenge. There were difficult stretches of the school year, especially right around the holidays, where we witnessed a dramatic increase in positive cases for both staff and students, which led to a shortage in staff. Our school community remained unified, and we were able to overcome these rough patches together. Additionally, due to the absences of state testing during the pandemic, we were tasked with a large amount of testing this year, even more than usual. Once again, our team responded.

(Interview continues on the next page)

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Van Vliet's Goals for Fall and Why a Summer Recharge is a Must

(Our interview with Mr. Van Vliet Continues)

Lastly, we had set out this year to not only welcome our students back in person but to help rebuild the strong habits we had worked so hard to instill in them pre-pandemic. The empathy shown from our staff in this effort made all the difference, and we are so proud of our students for continually displaying the elements of RISE (especially Respect). Our staff and students deserve all the credit for this, and I am grateful for their efforts.



Looking ahead to the fall, what are your goals for the school and Halsey community?

I think everyone is ready for a full return to normal. This year paved the way for that to hopefully happen. As always, we want our students to continue to improve in important academic areas such as grades, benchmarks, and state testing proficiency. We would like for our graduation rate to continue to grow. We also want to build on the SEL successes we were able to achieve this year. The social and emotional wellness of our school community is very important, especially coming out of a pandemic. We want our students to know that we are here for them, always supportive, and doing everything possible to help prepare them for a successful future.

What would you recommend students do over the summer to stay busy and keep their minds sharp?

I think a summer break is well deserved for all, and everyone should get some R&R. However, it is important to have goals and to have a plan to achieve them. Students should take some time to reflect on where they have been and prioritize what it is that is important to them in their future. Whether that is college, a trade school, the military, or the workforce, all students should set goals for their future and know that we are here to help them attain them. Reading and fun physical activity are also terrific summer pastimes. Don't forget to put the phone down and grab a book or head outside.



What is your summer reading book recommendation?

I'm a big fan of biographies. I think we all have something to learn from others, especially those we admire and aspire to be like. As you think about your future goals and make your plans, reading about the life of someone who has already done it is always a powerful motivator. An example I would offer is for our students interested in Nursing: the biography of **Florence Nightingale**. Have a great summer Halsey!



ROTC UPDATE

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Col Golden Leaving Halsey After 7 Years As JROTC Senior Instructor

By Zophia Gonzales 

He's more than a commanding officer, he's a mentor, role model, and symbol of Halsey's finest. For seven years, Senior Marine Instructor Colonel Robert Golden has led Halsey's JROTC program. This month he will be leaving to pursue opportunities in Georgia. Master Sergeant Robert Geraldts will be taking over as Senior Marine Instructor.



During his tenure at Halsey, Golden helped shape the JROTC into a well organized and disciplined program that has enabled students to thrive and graduate. Under his leadership, the PT, Color Guard, Drill, Inspection, and Rifle Teams have all won national competitions and are recognized for their high standards, skill, and physical fitness. Golden, originally from New Jersey, came to Halsey after he retired from a career in the US Marines. He could have taken a job as a contractor, but he chose to come back to his home state. He wanted to give back and help students be successful.

I spoke to him about his goals for the JROTC program, what the program means to Halsey, and how his past military service helped him become a better teacher. [Click here to listen to my interview.](#)

How do you feel about leaving Halsey? It's definitely sad to be leaving all the people I've met over the past seven years. The students we have in ROTC have been the best students in Halsey. You really do come to love the kids as though they're your own. You build that bond with them and I'll miss that.

What changes will we see in the ROTC program when you leave? I hope it just gets better. The new MSgt that's coming in to replace MSgt Geraldts is very young and energetic. It's been rocking and rolling, especially after the pandemic. I think the cadets really stepped up and I think we have a good plan too, to rebuild the program. We're heading in the right direction.

When you first got to Halsey, what was your initial goal for the program? My goal was to ensure that the cadets that were in the program remained in the program through their senior year, graduate, and go on to either college, the workforce, and do something productive in society, not necessarily the military.

What accomplishment are you most proud of achieving during your time at Halsey? If you're in the ROTC for at least three years, you have a 97% chance of graduating. I think I'm most proud of that. Our kids do so many different things. We ask a lot of them and they still have a higher graduation rate than the average student at Halsey.

What do you think the ROTC program brings to Halsey? It brings a level of respect to Halsey. We're at all the board meetings with the color guard and all the mayor's events like Veterans Day, Memorial Day, and Pearl Harbor Day. I think we're the crown jewel of the school. We're probably the best of what Halsey can be with the way our cadets conduct themselves, how they present themselves, and how they're respectful to other teachers. The whole aspect of applying leadership traits and principles that they learn over the years, just has our kids stand out.

How do you think your experience in the marines helped make you a better teacher? When you're in the Marines, the number one thing you do as a leader is take care of your marines. All I did was take what I learned and applied that to Halsey. My focus has been how do we best take care of our cadets? How do we make them better? Sometimes there's a lot of pressure there, but I think it pays off in the long run to have standards, to have goals, and make sure you reach the goals.

What is one message that you want everyone to hear before you go? The one thing is never lose the ROTC program here at Halsey. Whatever the district needs to do to maintain the program here, retain it. They need to pull out all the stops to keep it here. You get some of the best and brightest of Halsey enrolling in the ROTC program. They come here and really, really have an impact not only on the school, other students, but also on the community.

If you're interest in joining the ROTC contact your guidance counselor for more information.

Nursing News

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Training the Next Generation of EMT Professionals

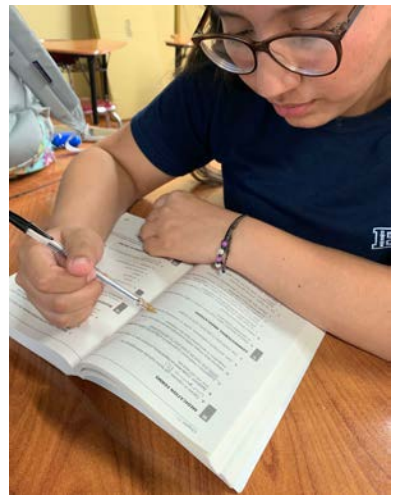


The next time you call 9-1-1 for an ambulance, chances are you might see a graduate of Halsey's EMT program on the medical team.

That's what Halsey teacher Michael Cerrato is hoping for with his next set of ten students who are on their way to earning their Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training certification. Once they pass the exam, complete the course, and turn 18, they can get a job at any hospital, transport facility, or any place where EMT's or the transport of patients is needed.

Cerrato enjoys teaching the course because it provides practical work experience and job opportunities right out of high school. "It gives most of our students who aren't going to college that entry level position into the healthcare industry. That's really why it's a great class for this."

"It makes me happy as can be, to see these kids get out of here and actually move on to something else," he said. "It makes me really proud to know that they can actually get through this. It's not an easy thing to do. It's a tough course to get through and they all did it. They all did very well."



Teachers in the Spotlight

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Teacher Balances Dad Duties and Teaching During Pandemic



By Jerrick Portillo

Being a teacher may not be as easy as it seems. Now imagine being a teacher and having a newborn baby during virtual school. That's what happened to English teacher Sean Cavanagh.

In early April he returned to school after taking time off to be with his baby son. I asked him about what it was like to teach during the pandemic and the challenges of having a newborn baby son at home at the same time. "As any mom and dad will tell you, being a parent is the toughest job in the world," said Cavanagh.

He also said teaching online was tough too. He had to create online lessons, keep students focused on their work and not let them get discouraged. **"As things kind of went on, it obviously got harder for students to pay attention and be engaged,"** he said.

What got him through the pandemic and virtual school was time management. He had to balance being a father and a teacher. "I tried my best to make sure I was there for my students, whether on email or Remind," he said. **At one point, Cavanagh remembers emailing with his students even while his wife was in labor.** Despite the stress and strain of being a new dad and teaching online, he said having a baby helped him through the pandemic and online classes. [Click here to listen to the full interview.](#)

2 Halsey Teachers Recognized For Going Above and Beyond

Two Halsey teachers were honored at the 29th Annual Elizabeth Public School's Academic Excellence Awards ceremony on May 26th.

Resource teacher **Ms. Sheri Norville** was awarded the 2022 *Governor's Teacher of the Year* for Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Health and Public Safety Academy. She was recognized for her exemplary teaching and dedication. Her work in the classroom has been key to helping her students reach their full potential.

"I am responsible for ensuring that all of my students receive services according to their Individual Education Plans," said Norville. **"Moreover, I am entrusted to educate all of my students in various learning environments so that they achieve academic success."**



Educational Service Professional of the Year for Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Health and Public Safety Academy was awarded to Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant **Ms. Anabela Carter**. She's been a member of Elizabeth Public Schools since 2000. Congratulations to both of our representatives this year.

HALSEY CELEBRATES DIVERSITY

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Multicultural Week Activities Expand Halsey's Horizons

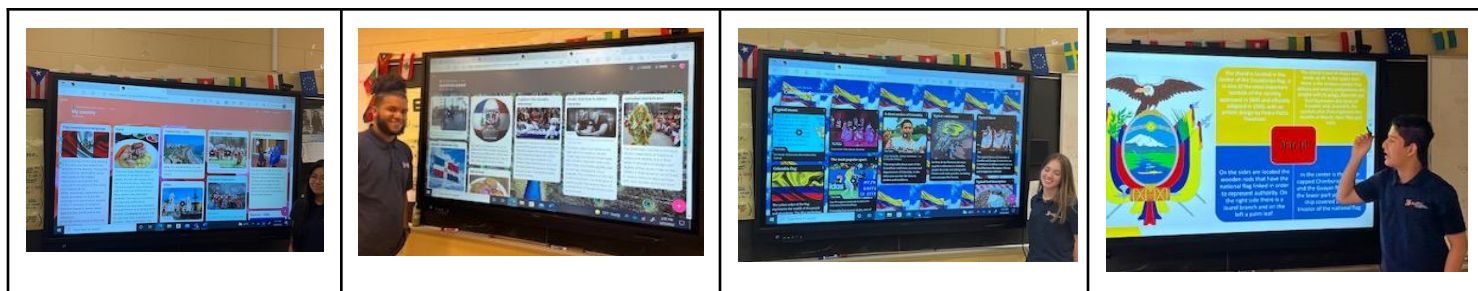
Do you know your geography? To expand our horizons and knowledge about other countries and cultures, Halsey teachers and students participated in a week of multicultural activities as part of Halsey's Bilingual and ESL Multicultural Month.

During the week of May 16th, doors were decorated, class presentations were created, and t-shirts were worn by students and staff supporting their country of origin. The activities were organized by Halsey ESL teacher and multicultural advisor Jacqueline Dixon. Her goal was to increase student awareness of other cultures and customs from around the world.



Students worked in groups to help teachers design and decorate classroom doors with an assigned country.

Dixon's students created mini-heritage documentaries using Padlet profiling their home countries. "The students worked very hard developing their mini documentary about their heritage and presenting it to the class," said Dixon.



The week of activities wrapped up with a teachers luncheon. Teachers brought traditional dishes that represent their heritage. On the table were dishes and flavors from Israel, Italy, Puerto Rico, Portugal, Cuba, Brazil, and Greece.

"Food represents love," said Halsey resource teacher Sheri Norville, who helped organize the luncheon. "In African American communities and Caribbean cultures, people put a lot of love into preparing food. When we share food we can connect with people and their culture."



World Cup Preview



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World Cup Preview: Teams Top Watch

Soccer fans around the world are looking forward to the start of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. Teams from around the world will face off in what promises to be an exciting set of games. We asked Halsey students to tell us which teams they'll be rooting for and why. Here's the latest list of team groups.



GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D
QATAR	ENGLAND	ARGENTINA	FRANCE
ECUADOR	IRAN	SAUDI ARABIA	BELGIUM
SENEGAL	USA	MEXICO	POLAND
NETHERLANDS	WALES	DENMARK	UKRAINE
SPAIN	BELGIUM	BRAZIL	PORTUGAL
GERMANY	CANADA	SERBIA	CHAD
JAPAN	MOROCCO	SWITZERLAND	URUGUAY
	CROATIA	CAMEROON	SOUTH KOREA

Neymar Seen As Key to Bringing Victory to Brazil

 By Pyetro Tolentino

Who is going to win the World Cup? There's lots of hype and many are making predictions about which team is the best.

I asked Gabriel Machado, a mid-field for a top-rated Elizabeth club team and a junior at Halsey, who he thinks will come out on top. He believes Brazil will pull it off. [I talked to him about his predictions on my podcast.](#)



"I think **Brazil is going to win**," he said. "They have a good team, and they have Neymar. Neymar is a really good player. I like him a lot. They also have a good defender, Marquinhos. He's insane. He plays for PSG. I like a lot of PSG. So I like Marquinhos."

He also said France is a strong team, but their wins are not consistent. Teams like Brazil, Argentina, and Spain may not be as strong as France, but they have a better record. Find out who else Machado will be watching for in the World Cup by listening to my podcast.



Portugal and Ecuador Have Fans At Halsey

 By Marvin Reyes

All eyes will be on Cristiano Ronaldo and Portugal at the World Cup, especially William Valladares, a senior at Halsey. He believes this team has the best soccer player in the world, or as he likes to say, "**Apoyo a la selección nacional de Portugal, tiene al mejor jugador del mundo.**"

Junior Alan Morocho will be rooting for his home country's team. "I'll **support my country Ecuador** during The World Cup," he said. [Hear what both of them had to say about each of these teams on my podcast.](#)




Student Voices

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My Sister Tells Her Story of Being Pregnant as a Teen

 By Erika Martinez

Do you ever think about how a pregnancy affects the life of a teen? There are many factors that come into play when we talk about teen pregnancies.

In the US approximately 3 in 10 teen females get pregnant before the age of 20. According to NJ.gov, New Jersey ranks 5th place out of 50 states in the decline of teen birth rates.

My older sister Santos Martinez was a teen mom. I asked her to tell her story about her first pregnancy at the age of 17. [I recorded our conversation for a podcast I produced on the topic. You can listen to it by clicking on this link.](#)


We talked about how being pregnant at a young age affected her mental health. **“There were people making comments and everything. It’s hurtful because you feel like you’re alone,”** Santos said. She said in her school it was rare to see young teenagers pregnant. She went to Frank Cicarell Academy in Elizabeth. It has a good reputation and is seen as a prestigious school.

I also asked her that million-dollar question, do you regret becoming a mom at an early age? She responded, **“Even though the outcome wasn’t great, it’s an experience that helps you mature. It impacted me both in a good and bad way. If it wasn’t for that experience, I wouldn’t have opened my eyes and viewed other situations more seriously and be able to continue.”**

Many may think being pregnant at a young age is the worst thing that could happen to teenagers. But there is always a way to view it as a positive. Teenagers should be informed on how to prepare for or prevent pregnancies. Some plan their pregnancies, some don’t and have to either abort or put a baby up for adoption. Some decide to take on the responsibility. **My sister embraced her pregnancy as a blessing that wasn’t planned, and now she is a great mother.**



HS Female Wrestling Officially Sanctioned But Changes Still Needed

 By Zophia Gonzalez

It’s official. Women’s wrestling is now a sanctioned high school sport in New Jersey. This means, female wrestlers can compete solely against girls or also against boys in the regular season and up until the district championships. All female wrestlers will also have their first state championships.

As a former female wrestler on the Elizabeth Wrestling Team, this is great to hear. But the sport still needs to make changes for females on the college level. I’ll be attending Penn State in the fall. I would love to continue wrestling in college, but Penn State does not have a female wrestling team.

[I asked my fellow wrestlers and coach about female wrestling for a podcast I produced.](#) Sanyah Queen comes from a wrestling family and her dad owns a wrestling club. She’s been wrestling officially for two years. “They tell me I’m not supposed to be wrestling,” she said. Even so, she admits she’s not afraid to go up against a male wrestler. “It feels better to beat a boy,” she admits.

Coach Mike who coached our team this year has always been hugely supportive. Whenever I won a match he said, “I just went crazy.” He thinks the sport has made progress but it still needs to be more inclusive. “Female wrestling is growing but things still need to change to allow for more female athletes to participate.”

Halsey Celebrates Pride

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Out and Proud

By Vielka Fernandez, Cindy Reyes, and Victoria Reyes

It's June! Halsey celebrated pride month with an alternative dress day on June 13th. Students wore tie-dye shirts and rainbow colored makeup to school to show support, and draw attention to greater unity, visibility and equality for members of the LGBTQ+ community.



We asked Halsey students and staff to share their stories and experiences of being a part of this community. **Many discussed how difficult it can be to “come out” to their friends and family, and how much easier it is now compared to 15 years ago** to be who they want to be. We captured their stories in a podcast called [“Out and Proud.”](#)

One issue we focused on was the unique challenge of being LGBTQ+ in the Latino community and how it affects your mental health. According to a new study conducted by the Trevor Project, a non-profit focused on suicide prevention for LGBTQ+ youth, Latino LGBTQ+ youth are 30% more likely to attempt suicide than non-Latino LGBTQ+ youth.

Being a part of the LGBTQ+, while living in a religious and Hispanic household, can be difficult. Many families do not understand or accept when a family member identifies as LGBTQ+. It can cause problems with family relationships, change friendships at school, and make people feel isolated and alone. Many feel judged by what they say and do.

Alessandra Salzedas Teodoro, a Halsey junior, came out during her freshman year. It's been a challenge both socially and mentally. **“I distanced myself from my friends and tend to show less affection to them since coming out,”** she said. But she has found support from others in the LGBTQ+ community here at Halsey.



For Halsey junior Jonuel Vazquez, it was a challenge coming out to his Hispanic parents and discussing his mental health with them. “It’s difficult going to your parents and saying ‘I’m kinda bi...’” he said. At school Vazquez said his friends have been supportive. **“I usually hang out with people I choose to hang out with who accept me for who I am.”**

Halsey ELA teacher Edwin Torres, who was raised in a religious Puerto Rican family, remembers being outed when he was 21 years old. **“My family struggled with it. They thought they had failed as parents. It took them many years to get to a point, not to accept it, but to tolerate it.”**

Despite the pressures and stigmas of being LGBTQ+ in the Latino community, Torres sees hope in today's generation. “There’s still a stigma but it’s nowhere near as bad as it was when I was a teenager. Now, I see my students and they are open with their sexuality and feelings. I find that very reassuring as a society because people can be themselves.”



The Podcast Page



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Students in Mr. Hill's journalism class planned, recorded, and edited podcasts on a range of stories and ideas that they felt needed to be told. Read the summaries and click on the links to hear their podcasts for yourself.



For Female Player, Soccer Is Game Changer

By Alan Moroch



For some people soccer might be just a sport, but for my cousin, Pineda, the game has changed her life. She plays for the U15 Union Girls Soccer League. Ever since she started playing, soccer has been a

game-changer, especially as a female player. She's met lots of new people and made friends. [In my podcast](#), I asked her who introduced her to soccer and how it has impacted her life. **"I always look forward to practices and games,"** she said. **"The other players introduce me to so many different talents and techniques."** She also talks about how women's soccer doesn't get enough recognition.



Students Reveal Surprising Secrets

By Gaemlie Baptiste and Demoni Gause

What secrets are you keeping? We ask students to confess and then offer advice to help out. [The podcast covers truth and acceptance while promoting self-love.](#) You'll hear from one student who prefers to use the name "Puppy Lover" because he loves his adorable puppy called Dog Blue. He drops all the dirt on his obsession for sleep that has **his family calling him "a vampire" because he "only comes out at night."** He also reveals his scary eating habits. We dive deep and discuss our own confessions and help each other out with solutions to help ease the guilt and find a way towards a positive outcome.



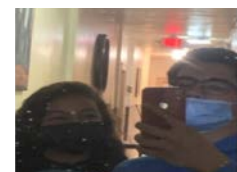
Puppy Lover's Adorable Dog Blue! She is a cross breed between a Yorkie and a Shiatzu.



Must Watch TV: Attack on Titan

By Leyanis Vazquez Diaz

What should you be watching this summer? [In this podcast, I talk to Sara Perez, a Sophomore at Halsey Academy about her favorite TV show, Attack on Titan.](#) We spoke about the message in the show and why more people should be watching. "I enjoy the show's plot twists and how it promotes the fight for your freedom and human rights," she said. You would think animated shows do not cover these serious topics, but I have seen this show too and I have to say it is done in such a fantastic way.



Love In High School

By Genesis Guzman and Jose Chevres

[This podcast is about our relationship](#) and how we make things work despite all the drama that goes on in high school. We talk about why communication, trust, and honesty are so important when it comes to keeping things strong between a couple.

Is Social Media Bad For Your Mental Health?

By Stephanie Sanchez and Harvey Cuevas



We're all spending hours a day on social media. What's it doing to our emotional health? [In this podcast, we talked to Halsey students about their relationship with social media and how it's affecting our ability to communicate with one another.](#) Nashaly Guzman, who is a junior said, **"It pulls me away from friends and family."** Social media can be useful in staying connected to friends worldwide, but you have to know how to handle it. There are times when you see something on the screen that can be disturbing or uncomfortable which can have mental health consequences. **"Sometimes what kids see on the Internet they copy it, like monkey see monkey do,"** said junior Harvey Cuevas. If you're worried you're spending too much time on your phone, use the Screen Time app in Settings on your iPhone. It will tell you how many hours you're spending daily on your phone.

Money & Geopolitic\$

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War In Ukraine Causing Food & Fuel Costs to Skyrocket in US

By Ricardo Munoz

How can the war in Ukraine, thousands of miles away, affect us here in Elizabeth? Now in its four month, the invasion of Ukraine by Russian is contributing to sky-rocketing prices everywhere, including at the gas pump and grocery store. And for Halsey students, that means paying more for that slice of pizza on the way home from school.



Small businesses like Tommy's Pizza & Restaurant on Fairmont Avenue are being impacted by rising food costs. **"I have to increase my prices almost every other day,"** said owner Anthony Paternostro. **"The price of chicken, flour and meat is out of control."** Since the start of the pandemic, he's had to double what he charges for pizza to cover his increased costs.

What's causing this spike in food costs? It has to do with the war in Ukraine. "Ukraine is a large grain producer. They sell to a lot of different places in the world," explained Halsey social studies teacher Paul De Pascale. "And now there is concern with the WHO about food shortages in different parts of the world."

That's because a lot of the grain grown by Ukraine is not getting out of the country. As Halsey social studies teacher Jeffrey Koch explains, **"Russia has blocked the export of this valuable grain. Countries are scrambling to find other supplies. All this means there's a scarcity of wheat, which causes costs to go up."**

Russia is also a major exporter of oil on the world market. Sanctions meant to punish Russia for invading Ukraine have now cut off Russian oil exports to most of the world. "It's causing a shortage and that means higher prices," said De Pascale. This is contributing to inflation and higher prices for practically everything, including food. **"You go to the supermarket and buy a gallon of milk and eggs, and you're like, how did I spend a hundred dollars? Things are becoming much more expensive as a result of the war."**

Regular Cash	5.39 ³ / ₁₀
Regular Credit	5.47 ³ / ₁₀
Diesel	7.09 ⁹ / ₁₀

So what can be done? The Federal Reserve is stepping in and raising interest rates to try to get inflation under control. But the effects of the war on the cost of food and fuel will continue as long as fighting keeps raging on.

"The whole world has gotten behind Ukraine and supported them against Russia's aggression. **Unfortunately what's happening right now in Ukraine is that the war is starting to drag on,**" said Koch. "The Ukrainians are starting to get a little concerned that western countries that are supplying them with weapons are going to start to get tired and bored of the war and they may not support them."

As long as the war continues, food shortages and tight oil and gas supplies will keep prices at record high levels, including here in Elizabeth. That means, you'll be spending more of your pocket money on pizza and soda, for months to come.



Arts & Entertainment



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Summer Reading Recommendations

By Maria Garcia Cabana



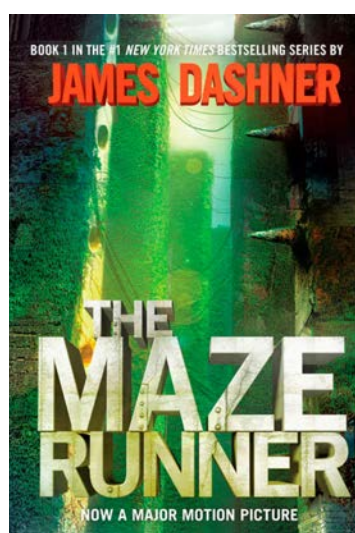
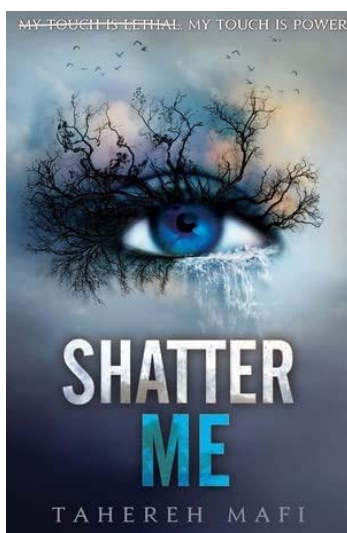
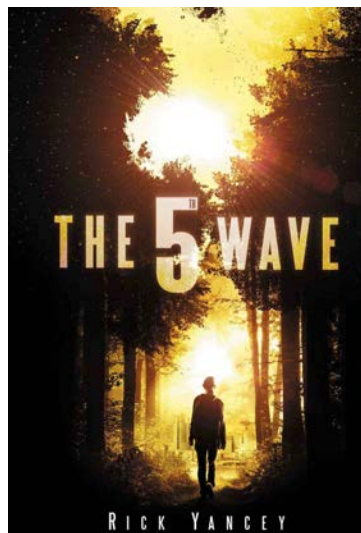
Summer is a time to recharge and regroup. It's also a great time to pick up a book and get lost in a great story. I would recommend you pick up the first book in *The Darkest Minds* series by Alexandra Bracken. These books follow a group of kids and teenagers who are on the run from the government after obtaining superpowers.

The first book describes a dystopian world where a contagious disease kills nearly 90% of all young people, leaving the survivors with unusual abilities. These survivors are imprisoned but manage to escape. They make it their mission to fight back against the government, reclaim control over their future, and help others along the way.

What I like about the series is [there's a movie version as well](#). You can look at how the movie version is different from the book. For example, I thought the book provides a deeper insight into the characters' thoughts and emotions. Meanwhile, the movie does a better job of illustrating the hardships the characters experienced and bringing the characters to life.



If you like this series, you can go on to read these titles including *The 5th Wave*, *Shatter Me*, *The Maze Runner*, and *Divergent*.



HALSEY ATHLETES IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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Pole Vaulting To New Heights

By Erika Martinez

She's fast, strong, and can propel her body nine feet into the air. Halsey senior Ivanna Sanchez is an expert pole vaulter on the Elizabeth Track and Field team.

She currently holds the women's pole vault record for the district by jumping nine feet.

"It's pretty good because nobody else has done this in like 15 years. I've held this record since my freshman year."

Sanchez has a background in gymnastics. This helped her body build strength and flexibility. But after 10 years of doing gymnastics she decided it was time for something new.

"Freshman year, I started pole vaulting. When I met my coach he was so nice and we immediately got to work. Last season, I had a lot of catching up to do since I was out for a bit but I caught up just in time for the indoor season. Now I'm a senior and things couldn't be better."



Pole vaulting is a hard sport and requires training, time and dedication. It also needs a certain type of flexibility and power which makes having a gymnastics background a plus. **"Pole vaulting is not a sport that you can just pick up. You need core and upper body strength to get up and over the bar," said Sanchez.**

To be successful at the sport, pole vaulters need to stay focused not only while training, but also during competition. Sanchez does this by listening to her favorite [Spotify playlist](#) before she competes. It gets her in the right frame of mind to make the jump.

"You know how every athlete has a ritual before they do anything. Mine is just listening to music the whole way to the event. I don't talk to anybody," said Sanchez. "When I get to the runway, I replay those songs in my head. Then, when I plant the pole and go up for the jump my mind goes blank. Then when I land, I'm like, oh, I did it."



Even though she enjoys pole vaulting, she has other goals for the future. **After she graduates from Halsey in June, she plans on becoming a US Marine.**

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Halsey Hurdler Helps Fuel Track Team's Successes

By Vielka Fernandez

The Elizabeth Minutemen track team had a great season and won many awards this year. We talked to a great hurdler Maisha Valme and she told us how the season was for the team and for her.

Describe how the season is going so far for you and the team? The season is great, I couldn't ask for a better team!

What are your team's strengths? Our team strength is our friendship and how we collaborate when it comes to relay races. We know how to work together and get things done.



What's been the highlight this season so far?

Describe a memorable meet, what happened, and what made it stand out for you?

The highlight of this season was going to indoor nationals. Going to nationals was an experience. It was the girls' first time going to nationals for shuttle hurdles and we did REALLY well! We came in second and became all Americans. Mind you, it was our FIRST TIME with little practice. I'm so proud of our hard work and how we came together and pushed through the whole "Elizabeth's track team only carries from the boy's team." We really outdid ourselves and will continue to push harder to prove everyone wrong. The girls team is here to WIN TOO!"

Describe what you do to train for these jumps? As a triple-jumper, I like to practice on my bounds to jump farther. Doing Banana Hurdles and Bleachers help a lot when it comes to being explosive while jumping.

What's it like to sprint in these races? What goes through your mind? Do you breathe? It depends. When I do hurdles, I only think of going over the hurdle quickly. I

forget to breathe, especially when I'm nervous. For a 400, I like to congratulate myself during the race. Like "Good job, you only have 200 meters to go so push!"

How do you prepare for each race mentally? Do you have music you listen to or say something to yourself beforehand? I talk to myself before races. I prepare by telling myself "If I want to be the best, I have to work for it and being lazy and doubtful won't get me anywhere."

I know you had a recent injury, what happened and how did you feel about it? While practicing high jump, I got scared and hesitated, but my legs were in the air already. This caused my right ankle to fly into the metal pole that holds the bar. It was very painful, and I hated it because I had a Meet of Champs in a week. I thought I'd heal by then thinking it was just swollen, but the trainer said it was sprained and I

couldn't jump for a while. I started to beat myself up about it and would practice on it but then realized I won't get better if I don't heal first.

What do you hope to achieve on track next indoor season? Next track season, I'd like to jump 39 feet in triple, 5'6 in high jump, and achieve 8.33 seconds in hurdles by the end of the season.

Are you running again next year? If so, what are your goals for next year? Yes, I am, I'd like to be number one in the state for triple-jump and high-jump since I'm not that far anyways. I just need to jump 3 more feet to achieve that and 4 more inches for high-jump. But it won't be an easy fight knowing everyone will be training for that number 1 spot.



HALSEY ATHLETES IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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Agyare On the NBA Playoff and Time With The Minutemen



By Isaiah Pittman



How much do you know about State Champion Justin Agyare?

First or all, he was the star guard for the Elizabeth Minutemen Varsity Basketball team. He's extremely talented at basketball and knows the game inside and out.

And second, he's a Halsey senior with plans to go to college to continue his passion, playing basketball. I asked him about both topics in my sports podcast. [Click here to listen to podcast](#)

But first, we started with the NBA playoffs. Turns out he's a Celtics fan and loves to watch Jayson Tatum and Ja Morant on the court.

Next, he replayed highlights from his state championship run with the Minutemen and some major moments of key games of the past season. He's proud of his team's accomplishment this past season.

"We won the best group. It's a really big accomplishment for the school. The school hasn't won in over 30 years," he said. "It's good to bring the championship back home."

And winning that final game was priceless. "It's a feeling I'll never forget in my life. Playing on the big stage and then coming out with a victory, it's something you won't really experience much in life," said Agyare.

It took time for the team to gel and come together. Agyare remembers there were some heated discussions and disagreements among his teammates early on, but once they focused on the game, things clicked and they started clocking up wins.

For Justin, it wasn't just about being a great player, but also being a great leader for his team. "I think I did a good job bringing in future leaders for next year's team. We grew together from the start of the season to the end of the season. Everyone took ownership of the team. I feel the team is in good hands."

Agyare's next step is going to college. He's waiting to hear back from a few schools who have expressed interest in him. And if all goes well, his future goal is to play for the NBA. "I want to play pro, no matter where," he said.

