

“Congrats, Graduates!” Illustration courtesy of junior Linnaea Marks

Who tested positive at SLOHS?

EDITOR TARYN LONSBROUGH

With all that San Luis Obispo High School students, staff, and families have endured during this past year, one might be wondering: so who had it? “It” being the illness with a reputation that hasn’t been comparable for about one hundred years: COVID-19.

Expressions set out to ask a few students and staff what their experience was like with having COVID-19.

Expressions: When did you test positive and how did you contract COVID-19?

English teacher Noelle Eben: I tested positive right after Thanksgiving in early December. My brother and father both contracted COVID from a home health nurse, and I needed to help take care of them over Thanksgiving break. Although I was in full PPE (like gowns, gloves, masks, shields, etc.), I still tested positive about ten days later.

Special Education teacher Cezar Rossel: I had COVID in early August. We never were able to figure out where I got it. They think it was community spread.

Senior Isabella Hoffmann: I tested positive at the end of March. I was directly

exposed by a friend when they didn’t know they had COVID. Once they started developing symptoms, we immediately got tested and my boyfriend and I ended up testing positive, along with some of his roommates. I quarantined in my room for ten days...my parents brought me food and everything.

Sophomore London Eddings: In the middle of January I got COVID-19 from my mom because she works in a grocery store around a lot of exposure.

Expressions: Did you experience any symptoms?

Eben: I had a very, very slight sore throat. Other than that, I had no symptoms.

Rossel: I had mild symptoms that lasted a long time. I had a cough for about six weeks. I also had fatigue for about a month. Breathing was hard for about a month, but I never needed O₂ [oxygen].

Hoffmann: I was asymptomatic the whole time I was positive, but after my ten day quarantine, I noticed my scent and smell had decreased. But it’s definitely coming back.

Eddings: I couldn’t smell for a few days, and one day, everything tasted like the flavor profile, instead of the food

itself; like salty food tasted like salt, and spicy food just hurt my mouth. I got a deep cough and headaches; practically, I just learned to appreciate going outside.

Expressions: Did you spread your illness to anyone?

Eben: I hope I didn’t spread it to anyone! I knew I was exposed, so I quarantined the best I could. I was very scared to pass it to my mother. It made for quite a stressful Thanksgiving break!

Rossel: Maybe. I think I gave it to my son. He might have given it to me. We started to get symptoms about the same time, so we never knew who got it first.

Hoffmann: No, I am extremely grateful that I didn’t spread COVID to anyone.

Eddings: I didn’t spread it, but basically it’s just a pain; it’s a flu-like sickness (for me and my health) essentially with way different regulations than if we were to get the flu.

Expressions: Explain your experience with COVID-19.

Eben: In general, it was an extremely scary experience for my whole family. My father is very high risk, so we were all afraid that it might be fatal. Luckily, he ended up being just fine. With COVID, it feels

like one of those things you think won’t happen to you or your family, and then it does. It was a good reminder to stay safe and be more vigilant, especially when quarantining starts to feel so tiring. I’m just hoping the worst is over!

Rossel: Overall, my experience was like I had a really bad flu. It was like having a really bad flu that lasted for almost 2 months. I know I would not want to do that again. I learned that I am not invincible. I need to take care of myself and listen to the warnings from the health care professionals.

Hoffmann: I didn’t really learn anything from having COVID, it was just a lowkey ten days of hanging out in my room.

Eddings: I had to spend ten days in my house; with a mask on every time I left my room, and disinfect everything I used. I got like rashes for wearing a mask most of the day.... it’s better to just wash your hands.

Even with more recent opportunities to get vaccinated, as well as the number of COVID-19 cases in SLO county gradually decreasing, remember to do your part in keeping our SLOHS community a safe place. ■

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OPINION

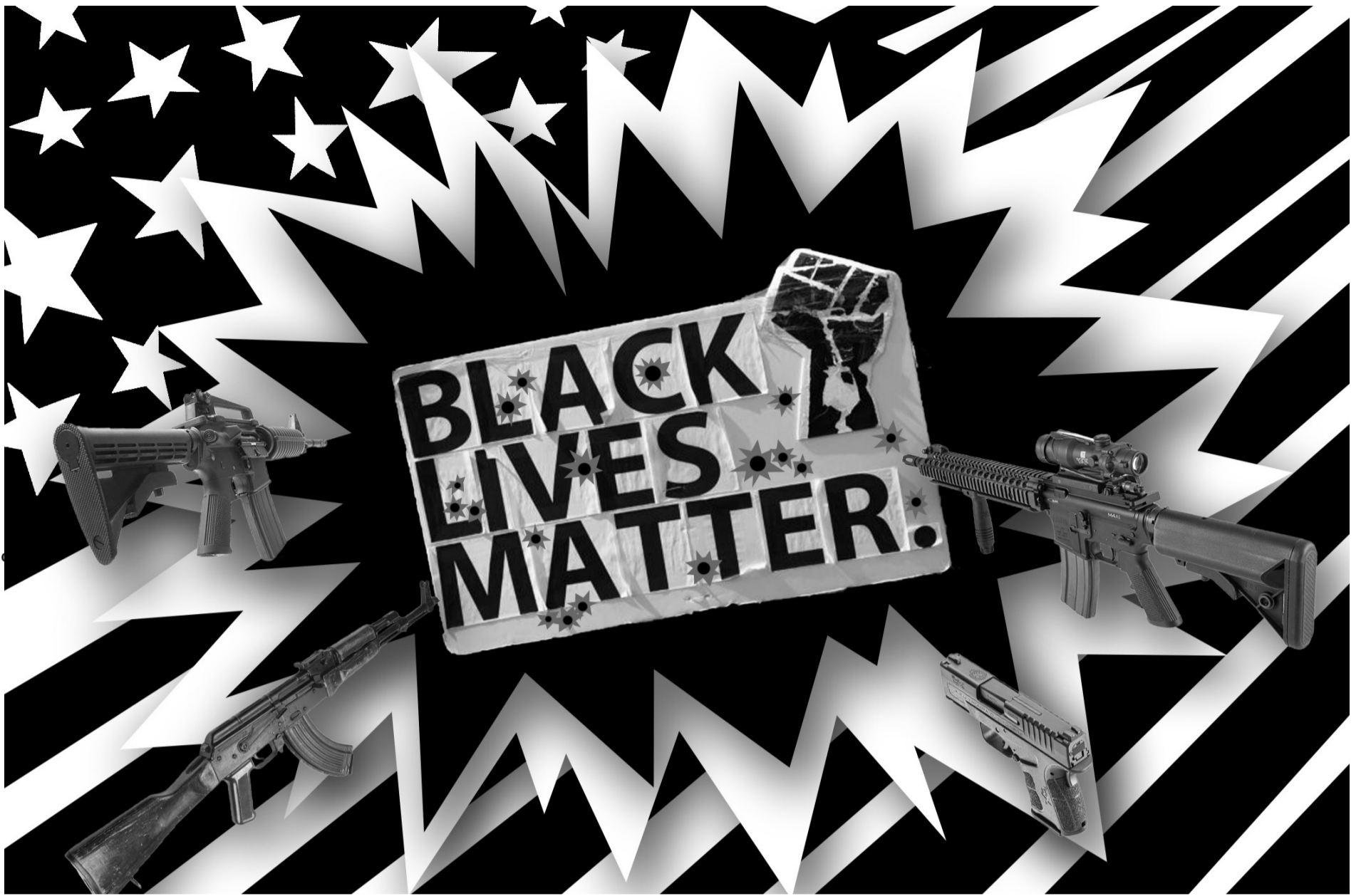


Photo illustration courtesy of junior Linnaea Marks

Will this always be America?

EDITOR DREW VANDER WEELE

It's been three years since recording artist Childish Gambino released the viral video for his hit song "This Is America," and it seems nothing has changed.

The video is brutal and fascinating, focusing on the epidemic of gun violence and racism in America. There have still been countless acts of gun violence in America along with countless black people losing their lives to police brutality and hate. The only reason why there was a slight calm in the storm was because of a deadly pandemic.

Why do we still let this preventable violence continue?

Expressions has decided to use the groundbreaking video of "This is America" as a lens to look at the current social climate for America today.

The video opens with a man with a bag over his head, strumming chords on a guitar, with Gambino dancing behind him. The video then takes a violent turn with Gambino shooting the man in the head. When the beat drops chaos breaks out with images of people running being gunned down, cars burning, and other brutal moments. In the front of all of the chaos, Gambino dances with school children in a fun, lighthearted way, reflecting the blind ignorance of America.

The video also includes a reen-

actment of the Charleston church shooting where Dylann Roof killed nine congregation members. This is stunning even without the lyrics, which reference how black people are just barcodes in the eyes of America and how Americans value guns and patriotism over peace, justice, and others' lives.

However, the big question still remains: after three years and a worldwide pandemic, has America changed at all?

Did the country come to grips with its deep rooted issues, or did we become more vicious and hateful?

In some ways the country went both directions: Americans saw some justice prevail when it came to the aftermath of the death of George Floyd, but that didn't solve the countless other deaths and systemic racism that remains in this country. Additionally, we've elected people like Lauren Boebert and Marjorie Taylor Greene who fiercely fought against gun reform alongside their Republican counterparts. So how do we move towards change? Gun laws passed through Congress? Protests? We need to make sure that a pandemic doesn't silence the important conversations and movements that are intent on change. As of now, in 2021, there have been almost 15,000 reported gun violence related deaths in this country, and the year isn't over. We need to decide what America can be. ■

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Photo illustration courtesy of senior Celia Lober

SLOHS teachers sum up the 2021 school year

EDITOR EDEN LERNER

Throughout this troublesome year of high school, San Luis Obispo High School students and teachers have had a whirlwind of new experiences. In class and online, many students at SLOHS have been able to share and explain their personal journeys during the Pandemic. However, what about teachers' experiences?

Expressions and many students at SLOHS are inclined to listen and understand what our beloved teachers have experienced while enduring the new reality of being an educator during COVID-19. Here are some teachers voicing their opinions, thoughts, and words of the English language.

Sign Language teacher Kristen Nusbaum: You might not ever know who you are because who you are changes constantly. That's okay. This school year has taught us the importance of health, safety, patience, flexibility, resilience, and true grit. We learned about the politicization of health initiatives, the importance of community, and the need to support each other through a global pandemic. Now, we must keep the forward momentum of remembering that we endure together, just a few feet apart apiece.

English teacher Ivan Simon: Oy!

Resource teacher and coach Adam Basch: Slow mornings with the family were nice during the virtual Fridays. Constantly changing and reorganizing events, rules, and procedures became difficult.

Health science teacher and coach Dan Monroe: Most of us choose education because we cherish building and maintaining relationships with students. This was very challenging and hard to accomplish during the past year.

Computer science teacher Steve Crow: Major ups— new school, great students and friendly staff!

Government teacher and ASB adviser Jim Johnson: I felt very lucky that I still had a job and continued to receive a paycheck. Many Americans did not have that, so I feel lucky. My life was not tossed upside down, it remained pretty much the same, only small things changed for me, like going out to eat, live music, some parks etc. None of my family got sick and my grown sons managed the pandemic fine, too.

For me, I learned a lot of technology; stuff that I can use in the future when we are not in distance learning...that is good.

On the downside, it has not been as rewarding of a year; I do not like working on a computer, I love teaching in person and seeing students, interacting with them, and on Zoom it is just a different energy. I hate Friday Zoom days now.

English teacher Victoria Acton: Major ups: Students being resilient, participating, reading, and otherwise working in class despite distance learning and frequent changes. I was impressed many times when I checked on how ss were doing and was pleasantly surprised to see students working away. SPIRIT ACTIVITIES! Wearing a jersey on campus was really fun and started many conversations. I am anxiously awaiting pajama day so I can return to distance-learning-time comfortable clothes! Sweatpants and otherwise comfy clothes while distance learning were awesome. Having the kitchen and mute button were definitely high points as well. Seeing what students would bring to the camera or choose to share about their home was fun and interesting too. We rarely get a glimpse of home life and when the camera was on we did for once!

Major downs: Activities were sorely missed. Not only do they provide an incentive and something to look forward to, but allow for relationships to be developed further than in the classroom.

Economics teacher and coach Greg Ross: The 2020-2021 school year seriously had me considering retirement. But then when we returned to in person learning, it made me realize how valuable this process is. There is something very special about students working with each other, solving problems, asking good questions, and challenging ideas. In the face of an ever changing world, the pursuit of learning will always be a constant. However, I realized something else that is really important, COVID-19 took away our ability to be around other people, and in the process I realized how much we needed that. I think I may be able to make it a few more years before retiring for good.

Math teacher Ryan Perez: The biggest UP for me was the first week of school back in person, and being able to see students/teachers for the first time in a year! After a year of teaching from home and not interacting with people nearby, I felt like something was missing from my daily routine. I hadn't felt that excitement in such a long time that I forgot how big a part of my day my students and coworkers are.

Career Center guru Colleen Martin: Ups: Resilience; students learned new things like cooking, staying safe, taking caution with their loved ones— especially their grandparents— kids learned to rely on themselves. Some read, some grew tomatoes, some learned to cook dinner for their family. Some (NOT ALL!) learned to stop the procrastination. Baseball and Bridgerton! Downs: Exhausting in every way. The rules kept changing and we were building the plane while flying. Thank God for Zach Roper!

English teacher Brian Moss: This was without a doubt the most difficult yet simultaneously rewarding year of my teaching career.

Band advisor Sharon Jeskey: The Downs: Not being able to connect in person to my students and not being able to play together as a band.

The Ups: Getting to come back to school and hear students playing music together again (even though we had to do it outside). I especially liked the moment on May 7th, when one of my students said it was the first time they had played music with others since March 2020 and the rest of the band cheered for the achievement.

Science teacher and FFA adviser Jodi Evans: Major ups...The number of emails in my inbox! Though I think that is actually a major down!

Automotive technology teacher Jeff Lehmkuhl: My major challenge for the pandemic year was connecting my students to what I was teaching. It was very difficult to present such a hands on subject in a remote setting. It saddens me that my students seem to be those who have lost the most from the pandemic.

Resource teacher Cesar Rossell: One thing that kept me going was the happiness I saw every time we brought more students back to campus. ■

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COVID CULTURE

Do SLOHS students now care more about fashion?

EDITOR ELLA MENDOZA

After a year of Zoom classes and wearing pajamas to log onto a computer everyday, San Luis Obispo High School students are back in person. How has their style evolved over the past year of being under quarantine, and what are the newest trends that Expressions needs to keep up with?

“Since quarantine, I’ve had a lot more time to sew and thrift, so my wardrobe has definitely expanded a lot along with my sense of style. I feel like I gained a lot more confidence to wear what I want to wear and be more unique. It definitely makes life a lot easier to just dress for myself,” said junior Miley Rosecrans.

Confidence and sense of self has a lot to do with the way you express yourself, and a large part of that comes

with personal style.

“I started saying ‘YOLO’ a lot more over quarantine not only literally (and regarding life choices), but with my style, and so I just wear whatever I want because nothing matters and I hate everyone so I don’t care about their opinions,” said senior Jayda Monreal.

“I started saying ‘YOLO’ a lot more during quarantine.”

Sometimes caring and not caring go hand-in-hand when it comes to your outward expression. You can care about what you wear because it im-



Photos courtesy of senior Ella Mendoza

proves your own confidence while also not caring about what other people are going to think about what you’re wearing or the way you look.

“I care so much more about what I wear to school, especially compared to last year. Last year I would wear a lot of leggings and hoodies, and wearing clothes like that just make me feel kinda gross. I like putting on a fit or just like actual clothes and I feel so much better about myself. Putting on a cute fit helps with confidence and my body image, which is something I really ended up working on over quarantine,” said junior Talia Doane.

Social media apps like Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest are places that many SLOHS students go to for fashion inspiration regarding the latest trends; some of the most popular influencers include Emma Chamberlain and Victoria Paris.

“My style has changed so much since last March. I don’t even really know what brought it on but I guess Pinterest was a huge influence, and since we were stuck inside, I was really able to look at inspo and at things I like. Last year I used to wear a lot of clothes that were new and from brands that were fast fashion, which I really try not to buy from anymore. I got even more into buying second hand and from places that are ethical,” said Doane.

Many trends are recycled from past years, and some fashion pieces or trends are making a huge comeback. Crochet tops, denim, animal print, scarves, and more are becoming staple pieces.

“I’ve been really into layering lately. I think layering different pieces on top of each other can add a lot of interest to an outfit, and it can be really fun to experiment with,” said Rosecrans. ■

SLOHS seniors flee across the nation

EDITOR NAYAH HOLMES

As the 2020-2021 school year at San Luis Obispo High School comes to an end, many SLOHS seniors ponder over what there is to do next.

As some grasp one to the last few weeks, others have mentally checked out months ago. College is a pivotal time in one’s life, and although we know all SLOHS Tigers will do great, it doesn’t hurt to prepare.

“I’m going to tour my college again down in San Diego and explore the city! It’s best to get acquainted with new surroundings before you make the final move,” said senior Courtney Bloomstine, who will be attending San Diego State University this next year.

For seniors who are moving across the country for college, they may not be afforded the luxury to visit their new home, especially with all the restrictions put in place, but if able, checking out the campus and areas around will be beneficial.

“I’ll be taking some college courses over the summer and spending time with some friends before I move away,” said senior Dana Carlson, an incoming freshman at Seattle University.

And although it seems like the summer in between senior year and going off to college is shorter than average, it will have a lasting impact. Full of memories, genuine friendships and family

time that will make all the difference when you are sitting in your dorm room one lonely night.

“I am going camping! We have four graduating seniors in our family this year and it’s gonna be our last time all together! I am also going to Mexico this summer with my mom and sister to spend quality time with them before I head off to college,” said senior Reece Candaele who is attending Colorado State University in the fall.

Though still preparing for college, many seniors are working hard to earn some extra money.

“I’m probably gonna be working a lot over summer so that I can make money to spend when I go to college. Also I’ll hopefully be travelling and hanging out with friends before we go our separate ways,” said senior Ella Mendoza, who will be attending the University of Oregon beginning this Fall.

As a class collectively, we have come a long way and have pushed past barriers that were new to us all. So, before we all start our new journey, let’s remember this summer to have a good time because it will be a long time before anyone sees each other again.

“Let’s turn the [frick] up,” said senior Lilah May, another incoming freshman at San Diego State University, and a genius in giving SLOHS seniors words to live by. ■



Photo courtesy of senior Courtney Bloomstine

What were the wackiest pandemic food trends?

EDITOR TALIA DOANE

Over the span of this very chaotic year, TikTok and other social media platforms have created many weird pandemic foods.

San Luis Obispo High School students have probably either heard of these foods, or even experienced them themselves. Whether it was the hyped up whipped coffee or the most recent feta tomato pasta, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought new food creations to light.

“Honestly, I feel like TikTok food trends, and their trends in general, are very hit or miss. TikTok is based on visual aspects of things, so all of their food trends have to be somewhat aesthetically pleasing, which can either lead to them being somewhat good, or actually very gross. I only tried like one or two of the TikTok trends, and wasn’t that impressed. They didn’t really live up to the hype that they have

on the app,” said junior Fiona Stevens.

The most popular TikTok pandemic food trend is the Dalgona whipped coffee. This

“TikTok food trends, and their trends in general, are very hit or miss.”

consists of mixing equal parts instant coffee, sugar, and hot water, then mixing them with a whisk until all fluffy.

“I tried the whipped coffee trend and honestly didn’t like it much. It was a lot of work, having to whip the coffee. It was overall really time consuming and I could’ve used the instant coffee to make normal coffee instead, which would’ve been so much faster and tasted the exact same,” said Stevens.

As the pandemic has con-

tinued through the year, one very recent TikTok dish has become very popular. The ‘Feta Pasta’ is a quite simple pasta dish that consists of baking a block of feta with cherry tomatoes and garlic, plus whatever seasonings, in an oven. This specific pasta recipe took control of TikTok and led to food influencers even trying it with things such as strawberries and cream cheese for a ‘sweet’ pasta.

“I tried the feta pasta and it’s really good. I was a little skeptical at first, but it ended up surprising me a lot. I would give it an 11/10 and recommend it to others out there. I’ve heard of people doing this same concept with chocolate noodles and they use strawberries, but that kind of freaks me out a little bit,” said sophomore Gia Anselmo.

Pandemic food trends have ranged from weird to good, and savory to sweet. Many haven’t tried these weird food trends, have you? ■



Dalgona coffee photo courtesy of junior Talia Doane



Photo illustration courtesy of junior Linnaea Marks

Students face ‘maskne’ at SLOHS

EDITOR TALIA DOANE

As the horrid COVID-19 pandemic has been going on for over a year, the usage of masks has become mandatory. Since mask wearing has become a daily occurrence for San Luis Obispo High School students, mask acne, or ‘maskne’, has become more prevalent and a struggle many students are forced to deal with.

When wearing a mask, substances such as oil, bacteria, and dead skin cells can build up on your skin and block your pores. Masks also trap humidity from breathing and sweating. These two reasons are huge factors in the increase of acne with masks.

“I am 16 years old and a teenager, so naturally I have some acne. With lots of trial and error with products and regiments, I finally had my skin under control. This was before the pandemic. Because of COVID-19 and mask wearing, my skin has once again responded with anger. Wearing masks for long periods of time, at school and work, have significantly worsened my skin. Of course, this is something that’s happening to everyone but nonetheless, it’s not fun. I’ve been having to wash my face more frequently and even find better masks for my skin, just to try to resolve it. With time, your skin adapts and the irritation to

my skin has subsided, but still it’s a harsh reality. Different things work for everyone, but just know you’re not alone,” said sophomore Mana Kiaha.

Acne from masks can also be majorly increased in athletes. In SLOHS athletics, it is mandatory to wear masks for most sports, excluding water sports. While wearing masks while playing, sweat becomes a huge issue and affects many.

“When I’m at soccer, for practice, we have to wear our mask the entire time and sweating in a mask is really gross. It’s made my acne worse on my chin and around my mouth. It’s funny because masks are causing people more acne, but then we can also use them to cover up the acne. I don’t notice it affecting my acne as much when I’m at school because I don’t wear makeup so it’s less bacteria on my face,” said senior Ella Mendoza.

When wearing a mask, it’s important to either wash it often or to use disposable ones and switch them out everyday or every other day. If you’re like a lot of people and don’t want to use disposable masks because of the environment, then investing in a satin or silk mask, which is able to be washed at least two to three times a week.

So, when it comes to wearing a mask, make sure to be safe, while also being clean and healthy. ■

SENIOR FEATURE

Hey, Class of 2021! Any advice for the fools who aren't graduating this year?

Gianna Lucchesi



“This might be controversial, but I’d recommend taking notes in pen (or, honestly, just writing things in pen more often). If you use pencil, then when the pages rub together it’ll all smudge like there’s no tomorrow and you won’t be able to read anything. Plus, erasing things is slightly less satisfying than scribbling them out. When you think about it, this could also be interpreted as a metaphor about owning up to your mistakes. Would also 10/10 recommend investing in a four-color pen because then you’ve got the power of four pens but it’s all contained into one sleek vessel.”

Maddy Baird



“High School is filled with people comparing themselves to every single person around them. We are looking at others to measure our own worth while ignoring our own talents, physical features, and voice. Try spending as much of your energy as you can towards discovering all your gifts, building your strengths, and fine tuning weaknesses. Honor yourself for who you were made to be. Spend time celebrating your beautiful life on this earth. Be the best you—that’s enough. Also, please remember you are always loved. Even if you feel like no one cares, that’s never the case. You are forever loved for the person that you are. Don’t change for anyone.”

Madison Montoya



“Join clubs and try to just go to meetings. Being in them helps with college applications. Also, do community service!”

Ian McKay



“Get involved in something! High school is ten times more fun after you find your niche.”

Olivia Cisneros



“Don’t take other people’s parking spots.”

Grace Rubio



“Don’t spend every day of high school worrying about what everyone else thinks about you. Wear what you want, do what you want. Anything else is a disservice to yourself.”

Cypris Hogan



“Get involved with the school. Join a club, go support the athletic teams at games, and go to a dance or two!”

Claire Notley



“Get out there and make new friends; most people get nicer and more understanding as they get older.”

Nayah Holmes



“Don’t talk back to your teachers. And if you do, wear a jacket, ‘cause you’re going to be outside. For a while.”

Owen Moseley



“I’m starting an interactive business selling U.S. paraphernalia so students can show that they still support our great country. I will recruit members—“Patriots”—who I’ll sell my products to who can then recruit other Patriots under them to sell THEIR stuff for a profit. Show your support for America TODAY!”

Will SLOHS grads suffer for money or live out their dreams?

CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF CELIA LOBER

As the end of the school year approaches, many San Luis Obispo High School seniors are beginning to prepare for their college careers. Whether it be taking advantage of the Cuesta Promise or heading straight to a 4-year university, beginning college often means starting to consider what kind of job and lifestyle students want once they graduate from school, and whether or not they want that life to be driven by something they are passionate about or something that will guarantee success and stability.

“For some reason I can’t imagine doing something with my life that isn’t fighting for people and ‘going against the system’ or whatever...There’s not much money to be made in the clergy and social work, but then again there doesn’t seem to be much money to be made anywhere these days. No matter what job I choose, I still won’t be able to afford a house!” said senior Owen Moseley.

Like Moseley, some students feel an obligation to pursue something they know will make a difference, often disregarding future finances altogether. Next year, he plans to begin his general education degree at Cuesta College and later become an Episcopalian priest.

However, the philosophy of choosing passion over guaranteed success doesn’t always stem from ignorance towards monetary security, but a feeling of hopelessness that life will become unaffordable no matter what you choose to pursue.

“No matter what job I choose, I still won’t be able to afford a house!”

“It seems that we lean more towards successful majors these days than our parents’ generation, though. The whole system of going to college, then being a home-owning fully-fledged adult has so thoroughly fallen apart that the idea of “following your dreams” seems naïve to kids today. Certainly, all the adults in our lives have only ever encouraged us to choose very practical jobs and dissuaded us from following our passions...For me, I feel like the ‘system’ won’t support me no matter what job I choose, so I might as well choose a fun and interesting one!” said Moseley.

As for passion or success, passions played a major role in senior Bella Osgood’s decision to study Political Science and Global Affairs at Yale University, but the prospect of success is not lost on her either.

“I am a big believer that people will succeed in areas they truly enjoy. While factors like average salary and parental expecta-

tions can affect a student’s intended major, and by extension, career, I think most people do (or at the very least, should) study things they are genuinely interested in,” said Osgood.

That philosophy of studying something enjoyable is also what prompted senior Kaylie Hall to pursue a career in Film Production at Chapman University in the fall.

“I chose my major because I want to work in the film industry, but don’t particularly have the skills for directing, so I want to be a producer instead. Producers can be really successful, but it’s also difficult to become that successful, so I didn’t do it just for the success because it’s not guaranteed,” said Hall.

“I chose to pursue [theatre] because I want to further my skills in my biggest hobby and passion.”

Similarly to Hall, senior Rory Svetich is pursuing a theatre major at San Diego State University.

“I chose my major because I feel it’s the best way to further my skills since I’ll be working on it constantly,” said Svetich

Svetich isn’t the only SLOHS senior looking to go into theatre: Evan Clausen also plans to study acting at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts.

“I chose to pursue theatre because it has been a huge part of my high school experience. I started to really get involved with theatre freshman year and I auditioned for every SLOHS Drama show I could. I ended up participating in 10 or 11 I think, and it helped me just really know that theatre was what I wanted to do. I plan to double major in English too later on in college since I’ve liked my English classes throughout middle school and high school. Theatre is one of those pathways that doesn’t always guarantee success, but I chose to pursue it because I want to further my skills in my biggest hobby and passion and see where it takes me,” said Clausen.

Though SLOHS seniors might not be completely optimistic about what the future holds for their generation, at least they are being driven to thrive off of their passions rather than profit from a career and life they despise. ■



Photo courtesy of seniors Celia Lober and Hayden Ventrella

Fall 2021 UC admissions more selective than ever?

EDITOR DREW VANDER WEELE

College applications are probably one of the most stressful periods for seniors at San Luis Obispo High. It’s that next step into becoming an adult and entering a career path, and while COVID-19 has provided seniors with more opportunity on their applications, it has also turned the admission world upside down. Among the more difficult schools to be admitted into is the University of California system or the UC system, which has its own course and grade requirement to even apply. Expressions decided to interview SLOHS seniors on their experiences and feelings applying to this already selective program.

Senior Sadie LaChapelle applied to UC Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, San Diego, Davis, L.A, and Berkeley. She was admitted to Davis and Berkeley, waitlisted for Santa Cruz, and rejected from San Diego and Santa Barbara.

“I would say that the UCs were definitely more selective and it also seemed more random and inconsistent with who was being admitted and rejected. I felt like I wasn’t going to get into and being rejected from the ones I felt like I had a better chance at. Ultimately, I feel extremely fortunate to have gotten into two UCs because I know many people who were more qualified than me yet were not given the same opportunity,” said LaChapelle.

Many students have experienced the same thing as LaChapelle, and some haven’t had as optimistic of an outcome. College admissions process can already be extremely stressful and disheartening, but it seems that this year has become even more difficult.

“As a result of the pandemic, I think many people took gap years rather than going directly to college. This created a much bigger pool of applicants this year, which increased the competitiveness of the admissions process. I personally wasn’t accepted to any UCs (which was fine by me since I got into the school I really wanted), and I think that the heightened competition was partially responsible. In addition, I think the test blind/optional policies played another big role in who got admitted and who got rejected. People who are good at taking tests but who fall behind on their grades would have been hurt by this, whereas those who were able to keep up grades but aren’t the best test takers would be helped,” said senior Anthony Man.

The UCs have seen an extreme uptick of applicants, mostly likely due to the new provision of this COVID-19 era that colleges don’t need SAT or ACT scores. The UCs as of now have seen a total of around 203,700 applicants which is around 31,601 more than last year. Out of the almost 172,300 applicants of last year only 118,242 were admitted. Here at SLOHS there have been students fortunate enough to be accepted, but more students were left completely surprised by their less fortunate outcomes. ■

PRINCIPAL FEATURE



Principal Leslie O'Connor (left) and future-principal Rollin Dickinson (right). Photo courtesy of Scott Nairne

'Oh Leslie Boy, The District, The District!' O'Connor moves to District office

TRANSCRIBED BY CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF IZZY NINO DE RIVERA-KRIEGER

With changes comes a little bit of sadness but also joy and that is certainly the case in San Luis Obispo High School's principal Leslie O'Connor.

On April 14th, 2021, O'Connor announced through ParentSquare that he was moving up to a new position at the district office, similar to counselor Shelley Benson. With ten years as principal of SLOHS, Expressions asked O'Connor for a last, very emotional interview recalling his memories here and his vision looking forward to his new position.

Expressions: How did the discussion of you moving up to the district office come about? What are your goals?

Principal Leslie O'Connor: When [Superintendent] Eric Prater asked me if I'd be interested in doing this job, there was a challenge that came about. There's a challenge in everyone's life career-wise, and the challenge here is could we do what we've done here on a larger scale. And I say that in all due respect to what's going on in other secondary schools, it's not like we've figured everything out. But could we help build more of a culture at Morro Bay High School? Could we do the same in Los Osos Middle School? The same for Laguna Middle School? We do some things here that are pretty neat and special. You guys have all benefited from those things and so that's a challenge, but I also think there's a professional challenge just to balance out, like what's next? Don't get me wrong when I say that I have a job that I enjoy but after a period of time, there's repetition in any job. You figure the puzzle pieces out really quickly and then you're left wondering: "Well, what's the next piece?" Okay, well, the global pandemic is like the icing on the cake to figure out the last 18 months, but honestly I think we've done a good job. Prater asked me right before spring break and I thought about it for a long period of time. Actually, he stopped after 5 minutes and asked me if I'd take the job. ...He is that guy who talks for 45 minutes where you don't even speak and then asks you what you think. But I told him I'll go home and think about what you're asking. So yeah, my job will be director of secondary schools. I'm going to be overseeing the five secondary schools in the district and overseeing all of our adult school education... There's so much more we could be doing in our community for post-high school education, and I'm not talking about those that are pursuing a college degree. I'm talking about connectivity with adults in our community for education opportunities. I've had a real strong background and passion for that. I don't think learning ends whenever you get dropped off at school. I've said for years that this campus should be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. I think it should be open on weekends. I think our facilities should be available to be



Photo courtesy of junior Eden Lerner

used by our community. I know that's going to rustle some people's feathers but think about it: we're spending 100 million dollars on this campus. It shouldn't be closed at 3:30 p.m. Our resources should be utilized. I mean, it should be an epicenter of learning that people come and want to see and they want to enjoy. It's built for you, the students, but it's built for you as a student after you graduate. Imagine [newspaper advisor and English teacher Scott] Nairne sitting here on Tuesday and Thursday nights teaching creative writing or journalism for people to choose to be here and they're maybe aged - from 19 through 65. They want to continue their learning! That'd be a pretty cool opportunity. We should recalibrate schools. They don't have to run from 7:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., but honestly, school should be available in different sets. You should have high school opportunities maybe from 8 a.m. to noon. Maybe it's 12:30 to 3:30. Maybe 4 p.m. to 7 at night. It doesn't have to be this single rigid schedule. So just some of those thought processes are good to bring to the table. Those are things that I think about, even with the new challenges of that job. It's supposed to be about you guys.

Expressions: Who's your replacement?

O'Connor: His name is Rollin Dickinson. He's the current principal of Lake Oswego High School in Portland, Oregon and he's actually a SLOHS graduate. He graduated in 1997. He's a great guy, he has three kids - a kindergartner, fourth grader, and sixth grader. I think we have a very similar passion for students but we're probably very different in our approach. He's going to bring a different level of skill set that perhaps I haven't, maybe that I don't even possess, only time will tell...

For the full, unedited interview, visit www.slohsexpressions.com ■

Tigers welcome Rollin Dickinson as new SLOHS principal

TRANSCRIBED BY EDITOR TALIA DOANE

Expressions: What are your worst expectations going back to school and coming in as principal again?

Incoming principal Rollin Dickinson: That's a great opening question. Okay, my worst expectation...I think I'm someone who, in general, has high expectations for things, so I don't often dwell on my worst expectations. I think I'm someone who loves adventure in life, and there's always something odd about circular adventures that bring us back to where we started. Still, I think it can be a very powerful thing to have those circular moments in life and to come back in slightly different, more enlightened ways, hopefully. But I think anytime you take on a different job or you move, there's always risk involved in that, and I'm someone who thinks it is good to take those kinds of risks in life. But it also invites some kind of crisis into your life, and one of my thoughts about that is that self-realization is a destructive process as well as a constructive process. So I guess those worst expectations are more just being willing to experience those destructive parts that are hard to change into something positive, and to continue to grow.

Expressions: This is something that comes up—at least in our newsroom—quite often, but our administration kind of got in some flack from some of our artsy students about not paying enough attention to the arts at SLOHS. What is your stance on that?

Dickinson: So I absolutely love the arts. I mean I was an English teacher and much of my life has been about poetry, novels, language, poetry slams, collaboration with painters, and playing music. I think one of the great gifts we have as humans is the ability to express ourselves in creative, diverse ways, that both get closer to truth, beauty, and goodness, but that also explode those ideas in cool ways. If you think about it in a school environment, I think we want them to be alive and culturally rich, and the arts are essential to that. I think one of the gifts we have in a school is we can create community, for one, but we can also create a space of different order and we can create our own world. It's fun to imagine a world and to create a world where the arts are at the heart. This is just something I'm really passionate about, and when possible too I love finding my way over to the art room and being involved in people's creative projects too. Can I ask a follow up question of like how did it feel dismissed? Like during distance learning how did it feel that way?

Expressions: [Linnaea's] sister also went here and she was kind of a model student, but she felt like no one in the administration was going to even know her name because the only people they remember are the basketball players and the soccer players. She played softball and was an artist, but she felt like her being an artist wasn't valued as much or publicized as much, and Linnaea agrees with her there. Basically, she concurs with the fact that the administration pays a lot of attention to athletics, which is fair, but she just thinks there needs to be more attention drawn to the arts.

Dickinson: And I tried to do little things too, this just occurred to me while listening to you talk, I'm sure a weekly newsletter exists that the principal sends that goes to all students and staff and the community, and I tried to include as much student art as possible. Just little things like that matter for creating community but for also lifting up students who are doing these really cool things in our community.

Expressions: With much of the population focused on Black Lives Matter, Stop Asian Hate, LGBTQ rights, and women's rights, what are your goals and focuses when supporting and representing minorities on campus with regards to these movements?

Dickinson: I think this takes on a lot of forms: It's at the heart of the work that we do as a community and I think again—just to think about this year that we've had—a big defining part of the year we've had is about the pandemic, of course, but another big part of that is about really important conversations about racial justice and how to be a society that really does lift people up and works through differences and divisions and finds a way forward that affirms identity, builds community, and cultivates leadership and activism. All those things are super positive, and I think there is a way forward that does all of those things. So when I think about curriculum, I think it's really important for the curriculum in our school to use 'windows and mirrors.' It's this term by Dr. Bishop, but she talks about the importance of having experiences that give windows into other experiences and other peoples' stories, and also mirrors that reflect and affirm your own experiences too. So curriculum is a big part of it, events are a big part of it, the conversations that we have with people—who we pay attention to—all of that's part of it. And when things go wrong, and things do go wrong, we want to ask how we can react in a way that not only heals and builds the community, but feels like an appropriate response to things that happen. Those are just some of my thoughts, but all of that is absolutely important.

Expressions: What is your favorite film? This can be in an entertainment sense or in an artistic sense.

Dickinson: My favorite movie that I just watched recently was "Soul." I watched that with my kids, that was really fun. And, this is not going to make me seem impressive or anything, but it's "Back to the Future." I just love the movie "Back to the Future."



Photo courtesy of Rollin Dickinson

Expressions: Are you bringing any aspects of your vision of the school you're currently principal at to SLOHS?

Dickinson: Yeah, I'm sure I will. When I think about all of my experiences throughout my life, they very much influenced who I am. I feel lucky that as a teacher I got to teach in this little farming town in California, and I got to teach in Durham, North Carolina; and I got to teach in Oregon, and then I got my experiences as principal and assistant principal in the Portland area. All those things gave more texture to my way of interacting with people and doing things and doing what I think is possible. Portland is a really amazing place where there isn't much sunshine, so we've had to create our own sunshine. There's a lot required everyday to bring creativity and joy to life, so I'm surrounded by a lot of really amazing students and educators and friends and family, and so all of that will definitely influence what I bring with me. And then of course I'll get to be influenced by everything in all the different aspects and diverse community at SLOHS.

Expression: Based on the fact that many people harbor resentments from high school and paired with the fact that you're returning to your high school, do you hope to exact any retribution on SLOHS? Example: you have a new found power over your enemies, how will you use it?

Dickinson: I love the question, it's hilarious. I don't harbor any resentments from high school, or have any enemies from high school. So, I don't have an exciting answer to that. And I think one of the things that I've enjoyed as I've lived more is that I have more of a sense of why high schools are problematic places, and I am embarrassed to say that I was not fully aware of that in high school. I think that awareness is helpful as a principal of not only what can be great and fun and positive, but also what is often problematic and even completely wrong in our school system.

Expressions: How recognizable is San Luis Obispo after some of the gentrification that has happened since you've left?

Dickinson: Yeah, so it definitely does look different because when I left, the wine industry didn't exist and downtown looked different and there were whole neighborhoods that didn't exist when I was there. I have gone back to visit throughout, so it's not like I'll be seeing it totally new, and I've been watching the evolution overtime. There are a lot of parts that are the same, but the house that I grew up in looks entirely different, and I drove by and then had to stop and go in reverse to go back to see that house that I had lived in for 18 years. It's interesting how those changes do happen.

Expressions: Would you mind just talking a little bit about you and your family? They don't have any questions about you personally, so I take it your family and you are moving down here. So could you publicly tell us a little bit about yourself from that.

Dickinson: Yeah, so yeah they'll be five of us and a really big dog coming down. Catherine is the person who married me and Catherine is totally amazing and we met in high school, actually. And we didn't date the whole time or anything but we ended up after college.

Expressions: How many years have you guys been married?

Dickinson: 17 years, and she is amazing, she's funny, she's smart, creative, and a really really good person. And then we have three kids and our kids are going to be 7th grade, 5th grade, and 1st grade, and their names are Hollis, Pippa, and Bea. They're super cool young people...

For the full, unedited interview, visit www.slohsexpressions.com ■

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Expressions reporter Sofi Shaw's 2020 music recommendations



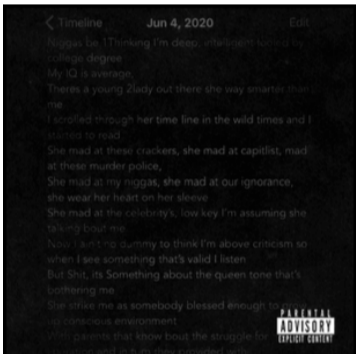
"Fetch the Bolt Cutters" by singer-songwriter Fiona Apple

Fiona Apple's comeback album of 2020 is easily one of the best albums of the past year. The initial release date was April 17, 2020. It's unique and alternative sound is something that hasn't been seen yet. It's very different from the rest of Apple's discography, and was her first release in eight years. The major theme of the whole album is freedom and liberation, hence the title "Fetch the Bolt Cutters". Apple has an incredibly raw and vulnerable voice, making her lyrics just that much more impactful. Most of the instrumentation is percussion which is another very notable aspect of this album. Apple's voice and the drums seem to intertwine with each other to create a completely unique sound.



"Future Nostalgia" by recording artist Dua Lipa

"Future Nostalgia" is full of undeniably catchy songs. Dua Lipa completely outdoes herself on this LP, which is completely different from her debut album. The sound seems to have heavy influence from disco and funk. The bass lines are a notable aspect of this album, which is unique from a lot of pop albums. This album keeps the energy high through the whole 37 minute run-time. It would be surprising if someone didn't recognize at least one of the lyrics of this album, as they've dominated social media platforms such as Tik Tok. Dua Lipa has incredible vocal talent and uniquely has a very strong lower range. This album creates a lot of excitement for the future of the pop genre.



"Song 33" by recording artist Noname

The concept of using song as a form of protest is not a new one, but recording artist Noname is one of the most notable rappers to use their platform for their political ideology. She has never been quiet about her thoughts, and this track is no exception. It was produced in response to recording artist J.Cole's song "Snow on Tha Bluff" but the rest of the song is what's notable about it. The song was released at the height of protests during the summer of 2020. Lyrics like "He really 'bout to write about me when the world is in smokes?/When it's people in trees?/When George was beggin' for his mother, saying he couldn't breathe/You thought to write about me?" emphasize the poignant message that J.Cole was conveying through his song. This song has an incredibly impactful message in under two minutes, and is a song that anyone could benefit from listening to.



"Dynamite" by recording artist BTS

This song is a very fun, clearly 1980s inspired, banger. It was released during the peak of summer in the pandemic and provided positivity that a lot of people were lacking. "Basically they released it because they saw how sad and hopeless the world was feeling during the pandemic and they wanted to create something sunny and fun that would inspire creativity and love that was accessible to everyone all around the world" said senior Maggie Zuniga. The song is BTS's first song that is completely in English, for the sake of accessibility. The intention is clearly conveyed solely by the sound of the song, it's incredibly upbeat and positive sounding, and quite frankly it's difficult to listen to without smiling and swaying along to it.

...and for the seniors: Sofi Shaw's "Best songs to Cry and/or Dance to After Graduation"

"Ribs" by singer-songwriter Lorde

"And I've never felt more alone/It feels so scary getting old"

This song may be a cliché at this point, but it truly is a great coming-of-age song, encapsulating the fear many SLOHS students have of growing up and becoming adults. Lorde was a teenager herself when she wrote "Pure Heroine": the album on which this track appears. Therefore, this song is perfectly representative of what it feels like to grow up in a small town.

"Immune" by singer-songwriter Jensen McRae

"What will we say to each other/When the needle goes in?What will we be to each other/If the world doesn't end?"

As more and more SLOHS students get vaccinated it seems a little surreal to see people hanging out in ways they only did pre-pandemic. Singer-songwriter Jensen McRae wrote this song, hoping to illustrate how it feels to finally get vaccinated, and what that means for relationships that were sustained throughout the pandemic and what we've learned to tolerate because of it.

"Olivia" by recording artist The Backseat Lovers

"Leaves for college in about a month, she's got / Bags to pack, and numbers to crunch"

"Olivia" is a superb song to sob to, especially while thinking about your friends or significant other leaving to go off to college. The storytelling of this song is utterly heartbreaking and the characterization of the girl in the song could fit any number of people in San Luis Obispo.

"Pressure to Party" by singer-songwriter Julia Jacklin

"Pressure to go strike out on your own/Pressure to learn from being alone"

This upbeat song, by singer-songwriter Julia Jacklin perfectly captures the bittersweet feeling of coming to terms with yourself, and the ability to exist alone. After graduation there will be pressure to go out into the world and celebrate, but sometimes it's better to stay in and take a moment to reflect on memories and the time spent at SLOHS.

SLOHS filmmakers discuss the industry and careers in film

EDITOR LINNAEA MARKS

San Luis Obispo High School's class of 2021 has an especially gifted group of passionate filmmakers.

"I'm super proud of my Film students this year! They have done so much work on their own at home to learn about film history and incorporate that knowledge into their projects, resulting in some seriously cool short films," said Digital Media and Film Production teacher Zach Roper.

On the effects of COVID-19, Roper said that he thinks some of the limitations of pandemic learning actually helped make students more creative in their approaches to film, such as having their actors send performances over Zoom and using outdoor locations for their films. Roper added that artists are always looking for creative solutions, and this year they had to find many ways to keep being inspired and produce quality work they could be proud of.

Among these film students are seniors Ian McKay and Syllas Grove, two talented creators with very different artistic visions. Expressions reached out to McKay and Grove to explore their creative processes, inspiration and style, and thoughts about the film industry they plan to enter.

Expressions: What made you first decide you wanted to go into film?

Senior Ian McKay: My fourth grade teacher introduced me to filmmaking and I've been pursuing it independently ever since.

Senior Syllas Grove: I don't know; I have absolutely no idea. It's just something I've been wanting to do for a really long time. In fact, when I was like 8 my mom got me an electric typewriter from the '70s so I could write little scripts on it. Ever since then it's been the only thing I've really wanted to do and I genuinely enjoy the most.

Expressions: Who are some of your influences/favorite movies and genres?

McKay: My greatest influences are Wes Anderson and Baz Luhrmann. Both have very distinct visual styles and rich color palettes, which really go a long way in conveying emotion and connecting with audiences.

Directors can take a few different approaches to storytelling, the most prominent being realism, a very grounded, documentary-like style which seeks to capture life as it truly is (think *Nomadland*) and formalism, which uses light, color, sound, and cinematography that are more unrealistic or less lifelike (think *Star Wars*). Anderson and Luhrmann both fall into the latter, and that's also what I aim for in my work. I think film should be an escape from reality, insight into

our shared humanity expressed in a different way than we know, rather than a reflection to a tee of the lives we already live.

Grove: Christ, dude... You watch movies to become a better filmmaker; that's what you do. Like Mr. Roper says, the number one way to become a better filmmaker is to watch movies, so I have a lot of influences. I guess the ones that kinda roll off the top of my head, unfortunately, are like Gaspar Noe, Tarantino (I feel like I rip a little off of him), and a lot of new wave horror directors like Robert Eggers. My favorite movies are the ones that make you uncomfortable. It's something that music can achieve sometimes, and reading a book can make you uncomfortable, but not in the way that seeing something can. So I guess just movies that make you uncomfortable.

Expressions: How has Covid affected your creative process/ability to create? Has it hindered you or helped you in any ways?

McKay: The pandemic, as you can imagine, has rained hard on my parade. But if there's one thing the distance and the isolation showed us, it's that we're united by art. Since the dawn of mankind, we've turned to art when we're lonely or lacking love and support. In the past, it could have been art or literature or music – and of course these are still huge parts of the modern creative world – but right now, we're living in the era of cinema and television. Think about it – could you have gotten through quarantine without Netflix? Of course COVID-19 makes film production difficult considering how collaborative it is, but now more than ever we need new stories. I've actually surprised myself with how much I can pull off even with quarantine restrictions - I've already put out four short films and a virtual play since March 2020.

Grove: Covid has made working on scripts a lot harder; it's like it feels more tedious, and like you're getting a lot less done, but then again I got more done during this time than I ever had before, so I can't really speak for that one.

Expressions: Are there any flaws or lack of representation in the film industry you hope to see change or plan to change through your work?

McKay: There are definitely some holes in cinematic representation. We've made some huge strides in the past few years – Bong Joon Ho and Chloé Zhao are testaments to that – but we still have a long way to go. It's awesome to see the Academy honoring a female director this year, but it's also upsetting that she's only the second woman ever to win. It's 2021, for goodness sake. Females behind the



Photo illustration courtesy of junior Linnaea Marks

camera should be the norm; at this point in history, it shouldn't be some sort of feminist milestone to see a woman win a category like Best Director. Hollywood also does a terrible job of depicting disability; on the rare occasion it's addressed, it's treated like an obscure minority group, when in reality it's about a fourth of Americans. And disabled representation doesn't necessarily mean movies like *Wonder*, where the disability is a narrative obstacle, an antagonist of the story. Many people don't understand that disability is just one part of disabled people's identities – their lives don't revolve around "fixing" or "curing" it. Disabled people are still people, living regular lives, so representation means putting disabled people in regular stories.

With my work I hope to share some of these untold stories, and address the gender divide by cultivating an atmosphere of inclusion and equity on my sets.

Grove: Are there any flaws in the film industry? What a question. Wow. That is a really good question, to which the answer is the entire film industry in itself is a flaw. It's horrible. It's seriously one of the worst industries. It's the most plastic, surface level, awful... I really can't explain to you how much I hate the film industry. It's racist, it's homophobic, there's a lot of pedophilia, it's all about who you know, it's not about talent... It's tough really really loving film and wanting to make film while simultaneously hating the one thing you kind of have to suck up to, and I hate it because I want to be able to make my art and not have to deal with that.

I don't necessarily know how I'm going to change it with my work; I don't really think I can. I'm just going

to try to keep fighting upstream and try not to become a pawn in the film industry for entertainment and elites in society.

Expressions: What sets you apart as an artist/filmmaker?

McKay: I differ from other filmmakers because I put the emotions above all else. Maya Angelou taught us that we remember people's emotional impact on us over their specific actions or words, and that's a sentiment I carry over into my work. When you're looking at my films, you're obviously seeing and hearing, but if you're not thinking and feeling, then I have failed as a storyteller. The dialogue I write, the music I choose, the colors I arrange – they all serve to connect you to the story, to help you look at people completely different than yourself and find the small pieces of human nature that you share. I don't want my movies to make the most money, I want my movies to make audiences feel the hardest.

Grove: I don't think anything really sets me apart as an artist because I feel as though when you make a film you're pulling influences from hundreds of movies that you've seen. Obviously there's creative and original thought but usually, even if you watch interviews with big directors, they always end up talking about how they totally ripped off their movies; it's all just an imitation game. You're making a collage of all the movies you've seen and interpreting them as your own thing, and in that way it is original.

As each of these SLOHS seniors sets off to do their own thing in film, fans and current students can't wait to see where they're headed. You can check out some of their work and that of their fellow film students on Zach Roper's YouTube channel! ■

BACKPAGE: A FEW WORDS FROM OUR STAFF...

Editor-in-Chief Celia Lober



“Working in newspaper this year has been so much fun, and I feel like we were able to accomplish so many new things and voice our opinions on so many important issues. Getting to go on the radio with Izzy and being able to work with them in general were definitely the highlights of this year, but above all, working on the new print edition and getting to design the new layout was so much fun. Linnaea’s graphics really made the paper, in my opinion, and im so excited she’s going to stay on and be a graphics editor next year.”

Editor-in-Chief Izzy Nino de Rivera-Krieger



“Working in newspaper has been this sort of thrill almost? I never thought I’d get onto the radio, CNN, or Time Magazine but lo and behold, it happened. This newspaper has always been sentimental to me and it is something that I’m super attached to. To anyone joining next year, we hope we can welcome you into the newspaper family and have fun ultimately! I’m so proud of this year’s staff and to all our seniors: Congrats! It’s been pretty one of the thrills of my life to work next to my best friend and to make new friendships this year with all the new folks I met.”

Reporter Owen Moseley



“For me, working in newspaper has been a lot of fun. Although it has been more stressful during distance learning, I really enjoy having a place where I can display my perspectives and/or creativity—and the most helpful thing I can do for the newspaper is to just be myself.

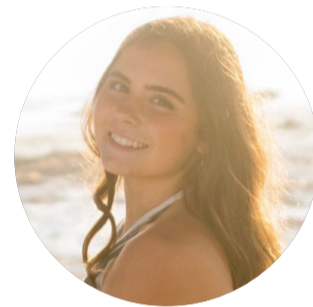
I think the most memorable thing for me this year is all the stuff we did right after January 6. It was such a weird and shocking event that to be covering it in real-time made me feel like I was being part of history (newspaper has also grown my vanity).”

Editor Taryn Lonsbrough



“Having come back to the newspaper class again and again, I find myself experiencing an opportunity to make my voice heard and to value the ideas of other classmates. It inspires and motivates me so much to be able to see all the work that is created in just one class with a few genuine and down to earth individuals. My advice...don’t be too scared. It can be nerve-wracking to have your personal talents be critiqued by others, but I can promise you it will allow you to grow as a person, which is such a valuable thing to experience in high school.”

Editor Ella Mendoza



“Working in newspaper this year has been absolutely insane but really fun. Being able to write for newspaper during quarantine has been almost an escape for me and more of a hobby and also a way to keep up with everything going on in the world. We have been putting out web articles like crazy but it’s really revealed my passion for journalism and I have loved getting to know everyone in this class it made my day on zoom.”

Reporter Sofi Shaw



“Working in newspaper this past semester has been such an incredible and fun experience that I can’t recommend enough. Working on the print issue allowed me to write about my specific interest in the context of the pandemic, which was really cool. My advice to incoming writers is to have fun with it. Write about things people wouldn’t expect to see. I can’t wait to continue writing for *Expressions* next year.”

Editor Nayah Holmes



“I have been in newspaper for three years and a friend recently asked me “Why do I still take that class as an elective?” implying that SLOHS has many more easier and enjoyable electives that do not require the same amount of work. And, for a minute I was really stumped but then I replied saying, “it’s just fun”. And although that is the short answer, newspaper and the people in it, have allowed me to be my true self without judgement but rather all the support, and that trumps an easier class any day.”

Editor Eden Lerner



“This was my first year in SLOHS *Expressions* class. I have always loved expressing opinions, gaining opposing views, and writing stupid silly comments about different subjects. My experience has been a positive and informational one, gaining writing skills, research skills, and interviewing skills.”

Editor Drew Vander Weele



“Working in newspaper this year has definitely been a different experience to the prior years of newspaper I have taken. Not having a continuous print edition changed the process of the class as whole, and sometimes offered more creative opportunities for stories. Switching back to the print edition was strange since many stories had to take a new format to fit a general audience, whereas web articles could be more niche focuses. During my time in newspaper my most memorable moments are writing the Op-Ed on Eve Nobler-Drew, and being interviewed by Time Magazine. My advice for incoming writers and editors is to use the platform of *Expressions* to spread awareness on issues that you care about.”

Editor Talia Doane



“Working in newspaper this year has been probably one of my favorite parts of this school year. Being able to work on articles that I’m passionate about and being able to write about things I like has allowed for me to write more and actually enjoy it. Working on the print issue has been super fun and made the class feel like it was last year. For anyone looking to join newspaper, go for it. I personally love writing and being able to express my thoughts, so newspaper is the perfect combo.”

Editor Linnaea Marks



“Working in newspaper this year has been a super good use of my energy; it’s a great way for me to journal my thoughts productively, stay relevant and informed, and work on my graphic design skills. I’m pumped about the print issue, and even though the illustrations were a lot of work, I’m super proud of what we were able to create. My advice to any incoming reporters would be to try to write about new and different things because you never know what might end up interesting you.”

Editor Isabella Hoffmann



“When I first joined the staff by sophomore year, I wrote my first article about The Beatles and I instantly fell in love with the class. Being on the print cover of *Expressions* in April 2019 was super cool, since it was a split issue with Morro Bay High School. I especially loved this year of newspaper adventures, from covering the presidential election to how Craigslist is the newest pandemic dating app, this class is always memorable. One of the best ways to gain self confidence is to write about what you’re passionate about, and you’re educating others at the same time!”