

Willowbrook High School
Skyline

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photo of Penelope DelValle
by Rylee Uczen

WB launches Equity and Justice class

LIA GALINDO
STAFF WRITER

Throughout the years at Willowbrook, there have been many courses formed to fuel the passions of students. However, the Equity and Justice in America class would be one of the first dedicated to not only their passions but their equal desire to act against the discrimination that minorities still face to this day. Through a modern approach and different lens, this class gives their students the experience they need to navigate a country still affected by its history.

With a high school as diverse as Willowbrook, students' need for justice and understanding comes with no surprise. But what exactly is this class? Who is involved? What's the curriculum like? And, above all, why should students enroll?

If anyone has ever taken a history class at Willowbrook, there is a chance that they've had the pleasure of having Mr. Clapper as their teacher. As a previous student of his, I was delighted to hear that he has taken it upon himself to be the teacher of this new course. And he does so with great passion and integrity to inform.

"In the last couple of years, in this country, there has been racial reckoning and all these issues that are now coming to the fore," said Clapper. "Awareness about the discrimination and unequal treatment of minorities has burst into the national dialogue. The purpose of this class is to provide students the context they need in order to

understand the issues that are consuming our society today."

I recently observed the class, and, in the short time I was there, it already left an impact. We have all taken a form of history class and learned of the tragedies that have befallen minorities, but rarely do we have the opportunity to go beyond some of the simple facts.

I entered the classroom while they were watching a documentary. Sitting down in the corner, I watched the class remain focused. However, it was beyond simply watching a movie: students added further commentary, provided factual information, asked questions, formed connections, made references, and, above all, showed emotion.

During class, Clapper moved around, lectured, and presented historic papers on the topic of slavery. But what really impacted me were the videos. As a class, we got to hear the distraught past of an abused slave through her own perspective. A real person, with a real voice, and a real story.

This class had achieved what previous history classes haven't--it brought these tragedies to *life*. Although students discussed difficult topics, the reality of the situation is that minorities have *lived* a difficult history that should have been elaborated upon a long time ago.

During the times we live in, activism has become increasingly common within all age groups--including our own.

This is a shared sentiment amongst the students of the class--

the desire to understand and accelerate progress.

"Teenagers crave the ability to understand our country. In many respects, our society feels and looks to be torn apart," Mr. Clapper voices. "Now, more than ever, it is imperative that we have important conversations (even if they are uncomfortable) about how bigotry and prejudice have impacted, and continue to impact, our society."

This class is the result of the growing interest of our peers, along with the Board of Education pushing for the education of the historical context of sensitive topics, including people of color (natives, immigrants, African-Americans), gender inequality, and LGBTQ+.

Clapper notes how the district has included equity and diversity training for staff.

"We have a very diverse population and student body, so this curriculum validates our students' life experiences and reliance," said Clapper. "A class and curriculum that matches the diversity of our students."

Many might know senior Eric Veal, Jr. from his role as an anchor on the WB News Channel or from other activities, but he was also one of the main people behind the addition of this class, working with our late superintendent.

"[Dr. Scott Helton] was very passionate about issues involving minorities. He was very much an advocate and ally in the sense of making sure that all students felt

included and heard," said Veal. "This class is a representation of what he wanted, and his spirit lives on through the inspiration this class provides to students."

Gone, but never forgotten. Dr. Helton gave us one final opportunity to educate and improve the world.

While some students may wonder about the workload, Veal assures the assignments can be balanced.

"People hear dual credit and think of heavy assignments," said Veal. "Being a student with a busy schedule, I am still able to manage the classwork."

The Board of Education has already arranged future field trips and meetings with Elmhurst professors. As time progresses, so will the curriculum.

Veal believes the class is good for any and all at WB.

"We want all students to be competent and enlightened about the issues of today," said Veal.

Clapper believes the class offers an in-depth discussion about America's history and its impact on our modern society.

"[The class is for] anybody that wants to be informed about societal issues and is willing to put in the work to make some positive changes," said Clapper.

Until our society becomes educated about the roots of these problems, we will not be able to make progress. Each and every one of us holds a responsibility to be an active member of society, and this class will give you that ability.

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Willowbrook gets back to business

ALEX HIRSCH
STAFF WRITER

When the COVID-19 virus was initially declared a national emergency on March 13th, 2020, Willowbrook High School was put in a position never seen before. The school started utilizing a brand new online learning platform, maximizing technologies such as Zoom and Google Classroom. From the end of the 2019-2020 school year, and the entirety of the 2020-2021 school year, an online “e-learning” format was enforced to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Now in the 2021-2022 school year, Willowbrook is finally back in person. This isn’t the same school atmosphere from a year prior, as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic still affect the globe. While there are new mandates that must be followed, school Principal Dr. Dan Krause believes that it is worth it to be back in the school.

“Being back in school that first day was filled with emotion and energy, some students and staff hadn’t been back in a school building for 17 months, [and] there was tremendous excitement,” said Krause. “It’s amazing, having everybody back in person, being able to interact, seeing the learning, and really use the opportunity to enhance our teaching with what we learned from being online.”

The entire staff had their own struggles in the e-learning environment, relying on technology and the students’ accountability in order to receive their lessons. Terry Harrell, Willowbrook History and Sociology teacher for eighteen years, thought that the online environment was much more of a struggle than being in school learning.

“I love being back in person; the remote learning didn’t seem like school. I was really relaxed, and the students were the same way,” said Harrell. “It was very hard to interact, we were getting through the information like usual, but it just didn’t feel like school.”

Sophomore Dylan Jenkins



photo by Rylee Uezen

Among other changes, students have adjusted to wearing masks.

had very similar opinions on the e-learning atmosphere.

“It was a very negative learning experience,” says Jenkins. “I couldn’t get pushed as much from behind the computer. Being back in person is much better than being online.”

While it may have taken a few weeks, the student body is recovering from last year as things finally start getting back to normal at Willowbrook.

“Some people are treating the situation like students are glass and they can’t recover from this,” said Harrell. “We’re all going to recover!”

Being back in the building feels mostly the same as it was before the pandemic.

“Other than the masks and less high fiving in the halls, nothing has really changed,” says Dr. Krause. “We’re still able to interact and engage with the students. We can still be a strong Willowbrook family.”

The Dupage Health Department, Illinois Department of Public Health, and the Illinois State Board of Education have all played strong parts in making sure that it is a safe and healthy environment. Some of these new requirements include wearing a protective face-mask at all times, except for in the lunchroom and outside areas.

The Willowbrook lunchroom

has been expanded from its normal area into the school foyer and the courtyards. This is an attempt to socially distance all students during their lunch hours. Classroom seating charts are in a linear format, avoiding pods of desks in case a COVID-19 outbreak occurs. If there is a positive test, a two-week quarantine is required by the tester and potential contacts.

“Hallways have slowly become a hotspot for not following the re-

strictions. Cases in the school are still occurring,” said Mr. Harrell. “It’s not a game to see if I can wear a mask and you don’t catch me. It’s all about getting back to normal. We’re all trying to get to the other side together.”

Willowbrook is pushing for all students to join clubs, activities, and sports. Some have seen involvement skyrocket from previous years.

“Just because the school is still back on the rise from COVID-19, that isn’t preventing inclusion,” said Harrell, “Willowbrook is still a family for all to find their way. Go put the phone down and meet people!”

With school spirit on display everywhere you look, it looks like the building is finally getting back to normal. While these are new times at Willowbrook, it is providing everyone a new opportunity to make the most of the situation being faced.

“We’re all looking for a balance between what we remember school as and what it is now,” says Krause, “We’re back, we’re in this together, and it’s amazing to have our family of Warriors back together again.”



World watches Afghan schools



Protestors march in Athens, Greece, over Taliban policy for girls.

photo courtesy of scmp.com

NEERAJA KUMAR
STAFF WRITER

Even though the pandemic has put a wrench in the educational progress of American students today, this is by far less devastating than the plight faced by many of Afghanistan's children. The takeover by the Taliban forces has put a large question mark on the future education possibilities for millions of children, especially young girls.

According to *First Post*, since 2001, "...significant progress had been made in girls' education, with the number of schools tripling and female literacy nearly doubling to 30 percent." Afghanistan was showing great progress, mainly in cities, on the educational front. But all this came to a stand still with the Taliban takeover.

Some Afghan girls have returned to primary schools with gender-segregated classes as of mid-September, as stated by *SBS News*. This is unfortunately far from the vast majority of students, as schools still remain mainly closed in Afghanistan's capital,

Kabul.

The plight of older girls is precarious as they wait with no clarity over if and when they would be able to resume their studies at the high school level. As it is, schools have been forced to restructure their teaching system to teach girls in the morning and boys in the afternoon to allow for gender segregation. Teachers are doing their best under the uncertain circumstances. The pandemic already led to a great shortfall in the educational system for female children as many did not have the resources or support for at-home learning.

As said by *The Guardian*, "The Taliban have effectively banned girls from secondary education in Afghanistan, by ordering high schools to re-open only for boys."

Afghanistan is the only country on earth to ban the female half of its population from getting a secondary education. According to *The Guardian*, tactics are very similar to those employed by the Taliban when they last ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001.

Surprisingly, the new regime

has permitted women to go to private universities, though with tough restrictions on their clothes and movement. Many women have chosen not to return in fear of their lives. However, it is unlikely that there will be many women in universities in the long run, if they are banned from secondary education.

Pakistani activist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai tweeted that "This is shameful and not at all new. In the past, the Taliban imposed a 'temporary' ban on girls' education that lasted five years. They are testing our resolve. We demand that leaders stand up for Afghan girls' right to go to school." Some world leaders are beginning to take action.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the U.N. has asked the Taliban to clarify when girls will be allowed to return to school. Diplomats across the world are still hopeful that the new Afghan government won't impose a permanent ban on female education at the secondary level. But, at present, the possibilities look grim.

Hurricane Ida disrupts many regions

"There was no water left in Walmart!" said Raecha Syeda, a medical student residing in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, which was one of the many states to declare an emergency. People were stocking up on resources as the state went into a lockdown. [Full disclosure: the quoted subject is a sibling of this *Skyline* reporter.] Surprisingly, this was not due to COVID-19 but because 150 mph Hurricane Ida was one of the strongest hurricanes in U.S. history.

According to "Save the Children," about 1 million people lost power due to the disaster. *The Washington Post* stated that it was a Category 4 hurricane that caused "one of the worst urban flood disasters in U.S. history in the Northeast." The *Post* also reported that there have been 48 casualties and a lot of flooding in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut. *The Associated Press* confirmed that the hurricane's speed increased by 65mph on its last day. The natural disaster also caused tornadoes that touched states from the Mississippi Coast to Cape Cod in Massachusetts.

Raecha Syeda is a student at William Carey University, which was closed due to the hurricane warnings. Syeda reported that there were heavy rains and strong winds as she sheltered in her house for the weekend.

Moreover, the hurricane affected people in different ways, some more severe than others. *The Washington Post* added that the Hurricane remained powerful for nine hours, unlike other hurricanes that die down after a shorter time.

The CDC has announced how difficult it is to plan for disasters amidst the pandemic. The states that were affected were also badly hit by COVID-19, and states like Louisiana have had to shut down schools again. Hurricane Ida remains another one of the major disasters that the country has had to deal with in recent years.

~Ruzaina Syeda

New Cinderella is a disappointment

NICEA SCHEELER
FEATURES EDITOR

If any review could tell a potential viewer everything they need to know about a film, the Rotten Tomatoes 69% audience score of the 2021 Cinderella remake would take the top slot. Brought to life by director Kay Cannon, the movie attempts to appear more diverse and sinks its own ship into the water in a way not unlike the Titanic.

As the first version starring a Latina Cinderella, the good intentions are there, but it is missing sufficient execution. It is great to see some representation for key minority groups, with Cinderella being Latina and the “Fabulous Godmother” being a gay Black man, but the leading actors lack much-needed experience.

This was leading actress Camila Cabello’s acting debut, aside from her film-like music videos, and it was obvious in the manner in which she acted. Her facial ex-

pressions were off, and her voice tone was weak in some of the scenes.

As for the film’s Prince Charming, or Prince Robert as he is known in this movie, despite having about seven years of acting experience starting with *The Beat Beneath My Feet*, his performance was deeply mediocre.

However, Idina Menzel did a fantastic job as Vivian, the stepmother in this adaptation. As a big actress who has been in many different works, including other fairy tales such as *Frozen*, her phenomenal performance was expected.

Minnie Driver also smashed her role as Queen Beatrice out of the ballpark. While some of the other stereotype situations were a bit too cheesy and dramatized, it was refreshing to see a queen not living her life in the shadow of her king constantly. While she did serve as a nurturing mother to her two children, she also had a life that was not just her children,

which was empowering to mothers everywhere.

One of the things that I always look forward to most when I hear about fairy tale live adaptations being in the works is the soundtrack. I had high hopes for this one, especially since it was a brand new adaptation and was not using the exact same plotline or music from the previous adaptations, but as the movie progressed, I felt my hopes plummet to the ground.

Most on the soundtrack were covers of songs from pop culture over the years, including but not

limited to Ed Sheeran’s “Perfect,” Madonna’s “Material Girl,” and “Somebody to Love” by Queen. There were only a few original songs in the film, including Camila Cabello’s “Million to One.”

In short, what this movie lacked in its scenes, it lacked even more in its soundtrack. The casting department did not do a good job of selecting promising candidates for the roles. In the future, the lead of a movie should not go to someone with no acting experience just because she is a big music industry name.



photo by Kerry Brown/Amazon studios courtesy of atlantic.com

Spider Man fans watch trailer and await No Way Home

ELISE SALECKER
STAFF WRITER

The last time Peter Parker, secret identity of the web swinging superhero Spider-Man, appeared on the movie screen, he was in his second film of the Marvel-Cinematic Universe, *Spider-Man: Far From Home*. In the preceding movie of the Spider-Man film trilogy and highly regarded comic series, viewers were teased with a shocking cliffhanger in the end.

The trailer for the third installment of the Spider-Man movie franchise released its first trailer on August 23rd, 2021. This trailer has revamped the hype around the friendly neighborhood hero.

According to Guinness World Records, the *No Way Home* trailer had 355.5 million views in the first 24 hours on the internet. This surpasses the previous record set by *Avengers: Endgame*, which received 289 million views. *End-*

game is the second highest grossing film of all time, which could mean great things ahead for the movie.

No Way Home is scheduled to premiere in theatres in December. The movie is being directed by Jon Watts, the script is written by Chris McKenna and Erik Sommers, and the story is being produced by Kevin Feige from Marvel Studios and Amy Pascal from Sony Studios.

16-year-old Peter Parker is set up to fix the complication from the previous movie’s ending. However, in order to fix the situation, it looks like he will have to travel through the “Multiverse” in hopes of everyone forgetting his identity.

He is reintroduced to Doctor Strange, a wizard with many different magical powers, who provides him with the information of how to resolve the situation.

Later on in the trailer, we see

Peter Parker travel into the multiverse, and he is ironically introduced to the old Marvel villain, Doctor Octopus. Doc Ock is a reappearing villain to Spider-Man not only in the comics, but in Sam Rami’s *Spider-Man 2*, released in 2002.

We asked WB students about their thoughts about the reappearing Spider-Man villains alluded to in the trailer.

“I was in shock,” said sophomore Ellie Brewer. “I’m so confused as to what they’re gonna do with the movie”

Brewer was very surprised after watching the trailer. Freshman Gavyn Bumba has his own opinions on the upcoming blockbuster.

“I have a theory on the Multiverse because Alfred Molina’s character, Doctor Octopus, was seen in the trailer,” Bumba informs. “He was a villain from Sam Rami’s Spiderman Trilogy.

So that’s why I think villains and Spider-Men from different movies will all come together and fight.”

According to “Memelord” on YouTube, Tom Holland, actor in the MCU Spider-Man, had a conversation with an interviewer about the rumors of actors Toby Maguire and Andrew Garfield reprising their own former Spider-Man roles. Holland responds by refusing to respond, avoiding whether the rumor is factual or not. Considering his former habits of spoiling movies, this could mean something big is coming.

There seem to be endless possibilities of what’s coming for Spider-Man. With all of the rumors flying around, all that can be done at this point is wait. You can swing into the theaters and catch *Spider-Man: No Way Home* for yourself when it debuts in theaters December 17th, 2021.

Tennis team plays well on new blue courts

NEERAJA KUMAR
STAFF WRITER

Willowbrook's girls tennis team intends to make quite a racket this season.

On August 8th, the team began training, which has generated impressive results. The team had won 6 out of the 9 matches played through mid-September and even shut out some schools.

Willowbrook hosted its own D88 eight team invitational in which it took 3rd place overall. It was a top-two singles and top-two doubles tournament, and every Willowbrook player medaled in the tournament. It was attended by many board members, the School Board President Donna Kane, Superintendent Jean Barbanente, Principal Dr. Krause, and Willowbrook's Athletic Director Brandon Murphy.

Hard work and determination along with a new set of shiny courts are some of the contributing factors to the team's success.

"I am a firm believer that you play how you practice," says one of the team's senior captains, Penelope DelValle. "The hours I put in on the court, in the beaming sun, in the cold rain, in any conditions are the hours I depend on to give



Lauren Schalk follows through on a shot at a recent practice.

photo by Rylee Uezen

me the confidence in my matches."

"I'm big into team chemistry. That's like the biggest thing because these are the memories you're going to carry with you forever," explains Coach Eddie Delacruz.

The tennis conference matches are usually Tuesdays and Thursdays with a couple of extra matches scattered on other days throughout the season.

The team itself has 36 players in the program across their JV1, JV2, and varsity teams. Tennis players practice almost every weekday

during the season.

"Training sessions are a perfect balance between serious and fun. Coach Delacruz knows how to combine the two perfectly," said fellow senior captain Mackenzie Parente

The school has revamped the north tennis courts and has given the team additional practice space, which cannot be discounted when it comes to the success of the team this year. Willowbrook now has 16 courts on campus, which is more than any other local high school.

"You are never going to find a

high school that has 16 courts on campus. That's unheard of. Most schools have 8 total...That means we'll be able to host IHSA sectionals at Willowbrook," said Coach Delacruz.

"Those beaming blue new north tennis courts are gorgeous," says DelValle, "I want to thank my coach, athletic director and all administration for fixing our tennis courts for the class of 2022's senior year!"

In October, the girls team will head to conference and sectionals.

WB adopts SuperFanU to increase engagement

EVAN LUNDGREN
STAFF WRITER

SuperFanU is a new app used to help everyone stay connected here at Willowbrook High School. It will help students stay in the know about new events, clubs, and activities. According to Rachel Karos, a P.E. teacher and the head of the new Student Diversity and Inclusion organization, "It is a new and inclusive way to get the students involved and active around the school."

As long as students have the app, they can get notifications as to what's happening in and around Willowbrook.

Each time students go to one of

these events, they can use the app to earn points. These points will not only show how involved students are at Willowbrook, but students can use them to earn prizes. Prizes can range from all sorts of Willowbrook spirit gear to special student events, depending on how many points students earn.

Karos is all for student inclusion. In an interview, she said that some future prizes we can expect will be cool exclusive experiences for the students. These can range from free parking spots to tickets for sports and dances.

"We were thinking at a football game, we could do King or Queen of the couch," said Karos. "Students can enter a raffle, and, if they

get pulled, they could be served by me, get free food all night."

Prizes aren't the only thing that this app is used for. Making sure that all students are included at Willowbrook is the top priority of SuperFanU.

"We can use this app to track who is going to what event, and make sure that all of them get the attention they deserve," said Karos. "That's the whole point of SuperFanU."

Here at Willowbrook High School, keeping everyone included means finding new and innovative ways to do so. Using SuperFanU is a great way to stay connected with the Willowbrook community and get involved.

"Without SuperFanU, I wouldn't have known about upcoming football games," said Will, a junior. "I love going to games and wouldn't want to miss one."

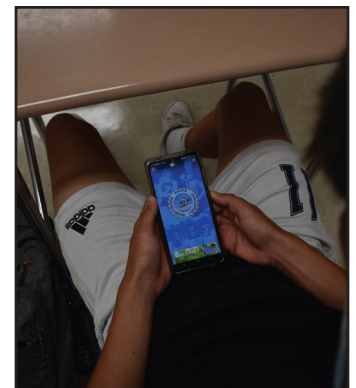


photo by Rylee Uezen

WB comes back to Homecoming

ISABELLA HOFFMANN
STAFF WRITER

With homecoming approaching quickly, many questions float through the air. What can be expected? Faculty advisors for the student council, Malcolm Ross and Ashley Anderson, helped clear the air on a few potential concerns.

The theme will be a masquerade, with accent colors of black and gold. Masks will be required while indoors, and students will be asked to pull masks up if they fall below their noses. There will be refreshments provided by Brook Catering in the courtyard, which includes beverages and light food.

In previous years, homecoming was located in the main gym, foyer, and one courtyard. This year, the cafeteria, the second courtyard, and possibly the auxiliary gym will open up as well to allow for more space for students to social-

ly distance themselves from each other. There will not be a capacity, but around 1500 students are expected. According to Ross, students will be able to bring outside guests.

In addition to the dance, there will be a homecoming spirit week from September 27th through October 1st, consisting of games and theme days. The games will be during lunch periods. Monday's game and theme will be a water-balloon toss and pajama day, Tuesday a human ring toss and generations day, Wednesday karaoke and class colors, Thursday a pie-eating contest tie-dye, and Friday balloon float and black-out. The generations for Tuesday will be freshmen as babies, sophomores as kids, juniors as adults, and seniors as senior citizens.

The Friday before the dance, on October 1, the homecoming football game will take place. The

varsity game will start at 7 pm and will be against Addison Trail.

Every year, the student council is in charge of planning homecoming. But what exactly do they do? According to one officer, senior Emma Rattana, this committee is responsible for a multitude of things. This includes--but is not limited to--decorations, planning spirit week, lunch activities, powderpuff, the food that is served, the tickets, and every little detail that others might not think of.

Another officer, Eric Veal, calls this dance a "MASK-uerade," due to Covid-19 protocols requiring masks or facial coverings.

Willowbrook's students also had an opportunity to share their opinions about homecoming. Three out of four students interviewed for this article said that they will be attending hAomecoming.

"I don't think I'm going to go

this year, but I think it would be a blast," said senior Liz Michael.

With the safety precautions taken to prevent to spread of Covid-19, it is certain that the dance will look different. But how different? Students have different thoughts about this, but Katie Corsini has one idea.

"I imagine us outside or spaced out, with different areas for different things, sort of like how we did prom last year," said Corsini.

While some students might wonder if homecoming would be as fun this year as it had in the past, WB senior Ali Vittorio is confident it will be.

"I do [think so] because it is my senior year, and I know how to make it the most fun it can be," said Vittorio. "It is a subjective opinion, and homecoming is only fun if you make it."

Cartoons from Mr. Epple's Animation Class



cartoons by Colton Emmert (above) and Elaine Cervantes (left)