

Results Surface from Academic Stress Survey

By Vicky Liu '20, School News and Features Reporter

A comprehensive survey completed by the junior class concludes, "Our academic challenges are leading to burnout. Even when we don't have pressing work, we know the wave of work is coming, and we can't relax." According to statistics of the survey, this daunting "wave" is true for 91.9% of the 62 juniors, who were sophomores last year when they filled out the survey. Nowadays, students are surrounded by all types of pressure stemming from athletics, academics, peers, extracurriculars, standardized testing, and more. Though all of these factors can be motivating at times, the amount of work seems to be too much to handle. Yet, it also seems luxurious to expect to live a life in high school completely devoid of stress. As Ms. Novo, the dean of the junior class who spearheaded this survey initiative, suggests, "I don't think it's great to feel like it's never okay just to take a break."

As one of the 62 students sampled in the survey, Julia Dani '20 shares her agreement with the statistical result of the survey: "Most of what the survey was asking was that school stresses me out. And yeah, it does." She continues, "It does feel like that we are in this loop of if we are not taking the test, we are studying for a test, or if we are not writing a paper, we have to think about an upcoming paper. I have something every single day...and it feels like if you are not three weeks ahead of something, you are behind, which is super annoying because it feels like you can never fully be ahead." Like Ms. Novo suggests, "We have an official message that you should take care of yourself, but there's an unofficial message that you'd better take everything you can to

"Stress," COTD. on p2

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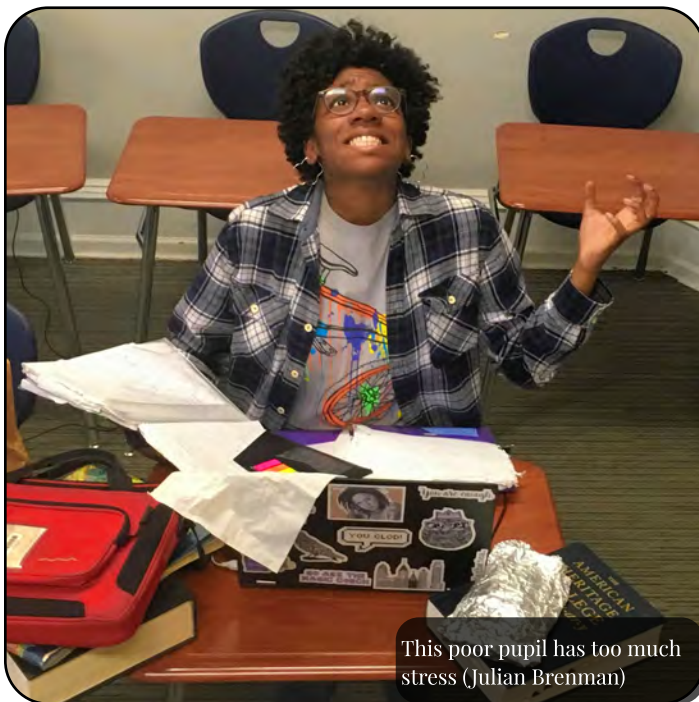
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Sending Pointless Mass E-mails: STOP

In light of the recent wave of the puke-worthy emails that have been sent to the ENTIRE student body penned by *certain* members of our community, *FOCUS* reached out to our assistant principal, Mr. William "Bill" Kennedy, about his opinion on the matter. His response is as follows:

"Students should *not* be sharing silly mass emails with everyone else. It clogs up everybody's inbox, and it's inappropriate use of the school network." When our editor pressed Mr. Kennedy about what students should expect if they continue to send such nonsensical electronic messages, he revealed, "Maybe [the consequences] won't be as funny as the emails--that is yet to be seen." One student sent an email indicating that he lost his computer and another that she misplaced her lunchbox. One junior, He Who Shall Not Be Named, even utilized G-Mail to alert the whole Upper School that he lost his sanity. His *sanity*. While we sympathize with this young man, one thing remains clear: he shouldn't have sent this inappropriate mass email.

<REPLY ALL>



This poor pupil has too much stress (Julian Brenman)



A group of guys enjoy a sunny day (Sevag Yepoyan)

"Stress" from cover

go to college." As a method of trying to deal with her stress, Julia lists where her stresses come from, which is the first step to being able to relieve any of it. Then, in order to decompress stress outside of school, she also makes full use of her free time in school to complete as much work as possible.

Ms. Novo also notices the on-and-off circles of explosive academic stress, which both the survey and Julia have mentioned. She comments, "The 'wave' is challenging. We have talked a lot over the years about how to coordinate assignments, but we haven't figured out exactly how to make it work." Next, she explains, "It's hard to imagine how to create a system that would address this because people take such different classes. Sometimes it's challenging just because people are in so many different places." However, Ms. Novo says there are adjustments made for a grade-specific unified project, for instance, the ten-page research paper of the American history course: "We do know when the history rough draft is due. We can work around that." Moreover, from results of a homework inventory survey, Ms. Novo finds, "Some people do their fast and finite homework first, but for reviewing or working on a paper, they don't feel comfortable when they stop." She observes that "an interesting piece of self-regulation" can help reduce stress.

Jay Zhao '19, a current senior, brings a different perspective. He experiences academic stress differently and compares the pressures he faces here to what life was like in his native country of China: "The pressure from school, I think it is not too much. Studying here is probably less stressful than in China, but it is not always easy, especially on the eve of paper due dates and the exam days." He adds a stress-relieving piece of

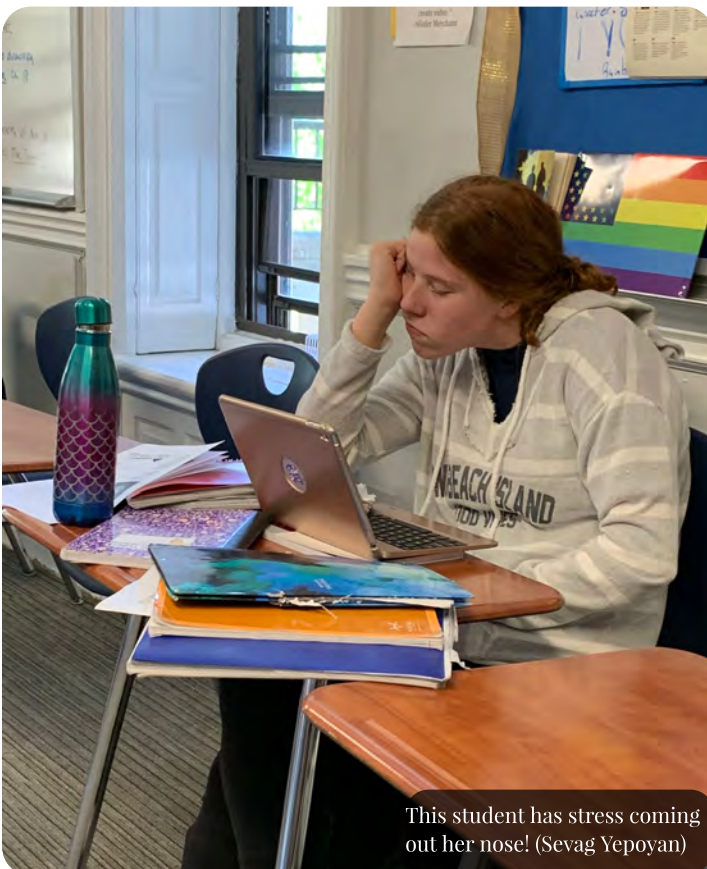


Poor kid...too much stress
(Lydia Varcoe-Wolfson)

philosophy: "Although I have done a lot of extracurriculars, sometimes I feel bored. When boredom accumulates, there will be an intangible pressure hanging over my head." In a tense environment, not feeling overwhelmed by pressure even becomes a pressure. The effect of this type of environment is "contagious," Ms. Novo explains. A consciousness develops when everyone seems to be complaining about the stresses they feel, as they work with and against each other in a competitive environment. Even people who have an acceptable stress level join the chat of this mythology of stress.

For some, the academic stress is particularly destructive. Elise Ingram '21, a current sophomore, shares the stress she encounters in after-school life: "Finding out how to map out my day and when to do my work [is where my stress comes from]. Especially because I have ADD, with which it's really hard to stay concentrated. A lot of the times I avoid stuff to do, and it ends up piling on, so I feel like I can't catch up." As an independent school student and as a daughter, she wants her parents to worry less: "There's a big pressure on me to perform really, really well because I don't want to let my parents down. But it's hard to do that when I can't concentrate on anything. It takes me twice the amount of time it would usually take a person to do the homework." Elise comes to Friends' Central in her sophomore year from a public school. She admits that being new to a school raises pressure too. She says, compared to public school, there are "so many classes and homework in one day that it's hard to keep up." Although sometimes it might take enormous effort to relieve the anxiety, it will improve the situation by thinking that it is always okay to feel like you need a break.

As academics seem to be a common source of stress, for people who do sports, "required" athletic practices also increase students' stress load. Fotini Mourelatos '22 expresses that balancing school work with athletics is difficult, even as a freshman: "I'm a competitive swimmer. During the varsity seasons, I spend so much time after school focusing on athletics." Fotini explains that there is an uneasiness of balancing time between athletics and academics, which Fotini believes must have been due to the rise of a grade. Fotini describes how 9th graders try to adjust to workloads: "In eighth grade, there wasn't that much work to do outside of school. In ninth grade, they just pile it on. It's a noticeable increase.



This student has stress coming out her nose! (Sevag Yepoyan)

COTD. on p3

"Stress" from p2

Last year, it would take me an hour to do the homework. Now it can take me two or three. It's not that it's much more difficult but it's that there is so much. You get really tired, and you can't really focus. You make little mistakes, and can cause a lot of damage if they add up." A previous homework inventory initiated by Ms. Novo echoes Fotini's experience that the overwhelming anxiety about performance itself adds difficulty to effectively regulating work. As for ways to reduce stress levels, the interviewees form two main lines of thought. One is expressed by Fotini: "It would be nice if there are more time during the day to do some of it. I can get a fresh mind when I get home and just be able to do it all efficiently. Then I can have free time to read, or just take a nap." The second is shared by Ms. Novo: "There are ways to study smarter."

Spring Has Sprung!

While it's not yet warm and sunny on a full-time basis, we students have been enjoying the recent increase in glorious Spring days--Enjoys these Felson Common snapshots taken by our very own Sevag Yepoyan '20!



FOCUS accumulated thoughts from the student body about the screening of the movie *Angst* on Friday April 12. We hope you find these thoughts meaningful.

Phoebe Rotondo '21: "I think the movie talked about an important topic, and I'm happy that we had it. [However], the movie could have been shortened and the point could have been made in a less amount of time, and then we could have had longer discussions afterwards because my homeroom only had time to start a conversation but not actually finish it or get anything done."

Audrey Blinman '22: "I thought the movie presented different anxieties pretty well, but it was pretty general. I mean it was only an hour long. It made me see the diversity between small effects of stress on people's lives and then deeper effects. It was really interesting to see how people battle stress and what their methods are versus what my methods are and my sources of stress."

Amanda Thompson '21: "I was on the Day of Silence so I couldn't talk, [but I didn't think the discussions] carried a point through. You need to have a more in-depth understanding of anxiety in my opinion to really understand the full purpose of the movie rather than just an outsider perspective who gets stressed on a daily basis. I think the message that should be conveyed is that anxiety is pretty common, and often more common mental disorders are overlooked."



A memorable scene from the moviestress (*Angst*)

Students Frustrated with VHL Language Program

By Sophia David '21, School News and Features Reporter

VHL Central is an online program used by the language department at FCS. Many Spanish and French students use it regularly for homework assignments, which include activities, videos, listening practice, and speaking practice. However, it is well known that VHL is not exactly loved among the student population. Here are eight student's reasons many students *strongly dislike* VHL:

Uno/un) Rore Anderson '21: "The oral activities don't even work with my computer. It says that they are overdue even though I did them. Then it just leaves it there, reminding me that they are overdue. It's not compatible with my computer because I can't open the online textbook while I am doing the activities, and it makes me mad."

Dos/deux) Anonymous '20: "I don't mind the VHL exercises themselves, but, because we do them at home and they are corrected at home, we don't actually review them in class. I feel like, if you don't try that hard on them or understand the concepts behind them, you never actually learn them."

Tres/trois) Rebecca Wusinich '20: "My least favorite thing about VHL is that to find your past assignments, you have to go to the calendar, and it's a whole mess."

Cuatro/quatre) Katie Leone '19: "If you capitalize something and it's not actually capitalized, it says it's wrong. If you fo



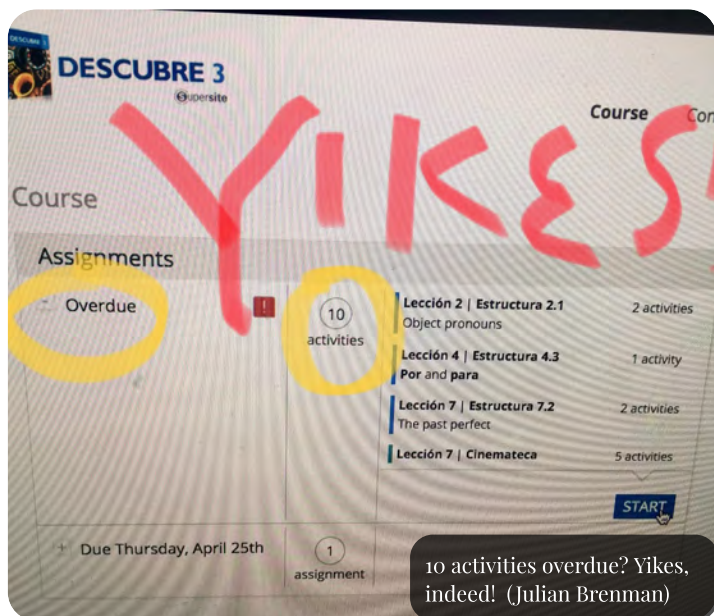
Despite Sra. Perez's kind help, this lad still despises VHL (Sevag Yepoyan)

Seis/six) Ruby Kauffman-Rosengarten '21: "I hate it because it's glitchy. I also don't like when it doesn't give you options for filling in blanks. Often the words you choose could be right, but it tells you that they are wrong because they are not exactly the one it was looking for."

Siete/sept) Phoebe Rotondo '21: "Sometimes it requires a period, sometimes it requires a space, and sometimes it doesn't require either. If you don't put the right thing, it marks the whole answer as wrong."

These reasons may cause us to wonder why we continue to use VHL, but it is not all bad. We asked some World Languages teachers to share their thoughts on the program. Betsy Katzman, who teaches Spanish, said, "As a teacher of Spanish I, II, and III, I have used the online VHL activities as homework frequently, and my students frequently do not like it. The benefit of it is that you get instant feedback. I try to work with students to understand that I only [grade based on] effort and completion for VHL. It tells me how long someone has worked on the activity, so even if you fail the activity but you worked on it for a while, you can get the full homework credit. It's okay to be annoyed with the system but it is more helpful than doing a workbook activity where you wouldn't get the immediate feedback."

Madame Clemence, our French teacher, added, "A good part of VHL is that the book is online, and students can have direct feedback. This is good because we don't need to spend time in class correcting it, which is really boring and takes a long time. [A problem is] that the exercises are very hard, and students get discouraged sometimes because since it's a computer, [their answers] are either right or wrong. They feel that they never do well enough, and this can be hurtful. There is the possibility with VHL to go very far with progress because students who want to be challenged can really be challenged. It forces me to be in a pattern of **'VHL Central' COTD. on following page**



10 activities overdue? Yikes, indeed! (Julian Brenman)

EarthFest was a hoot!
Thanks, Sustainability Club.
(Julian Brenman)



Senior Word Search

T K A I B L D B S L R J A C L
M Y V V N I J E I T X S F L C
Y Z U J P G P C I D G E P Y L
B W B L M B R D W I Z N B J L
Y I O B N Y Z A A R G I X U B
M M H L W L P L D S T O S E S
A O Q O O N K K Z U J R S H A
I Z R L G D K N V G A S O Q Q
N W R P X T L M F W C T Y Z Q
C O M M E N C E M E N T I Y Y
M V E C A R R E T L N T H O N
F E P A T S T M X D G Z P Q N
C A P H M Y J R J E Z Z X E J
B L O O A O T M L F K T Z X R
I L Z M G N K V U Z D S H G F

Can YOU Find These Words?

seniors prom May cap gown
diploma graduation terrace
commencement

'VHL Central' COTD. from previous page

lessons and vocabulary accumulations that is problematic because it is hard to get out of the book and do something else. Sometimes I wish I could do something more creative, because [VHL] is just one way of learning the language."

Sra. Perez, a Spanish teacher and the chair of the World Languages Department, gave three reasons she likes VHL, saying, "1. Lots of different exercises [and] practice for everything covered in the text. 2. Instant feedback for the student (most of the time) about how they did. This allows the student to see what they still haven't mastered right away and to get extra help in those areas if they need it. This is much more useful than having to wait for a week for a teacher to hand something back, by which time the class has probably moved on to something else. 3. The teacher can see how much time the student spent on an activity."

Though it was difficult to find a student who held this opinion, we were able to find a freshman who is "pro-VHL." He shared, "I appreciate VHL because it's easy to assign practice, and the format remains the same. It's really easy for the teachers to assign and the students to find. Because you are learning a language, it's important to just be exposed to the language. I think it makes a lot of sense, in the context of individual assignments, to keep you engaged with learning the language."

In conclusion, although disliked for an array of valid reasons, VHL has its benefits and may contribute more to our learning that we realize.

Who is this guy?



A current teacher in his teen years (provided)

Put simply: not who you may think. Find out by reading our "Back to the Past" article about our teachers as teens in the next issue!

So Long to the Seniors

Seniors Reflect on FCS

"Leaving FCS doesn't make me feel sad necessarily; it presents me with a whole slew of emotions. Mostly I'm just sad I'm leaving people I really enjoyed spending my time with. As we leave for the real world, it's time for us to start actually thinking and making decisions for ourselves, and that's the scary part. Most of us haven't been independent for that long; we rely on a lot of people for a lot of things. At some point, we have to take a leap of faith. I personally just hope that I can pass a feeling of hope and tenacity to people I've talked to. I really hope anyone who feels doubtful or hopeless can look at an example I've made and realize they can do it, too."

–Naim Saleem

"I've been thinking that I was ready to leave high school since the middle of junior year, but now with my final days of high school so quickly approaching, I'm no longer so sure. While I'm ecstatic to put an end to the work and responsibilities of being a high school student, there is the subtle feeling that maybe I didn't accomplish all that I wanted to do during high school. Maybe I should have spent more time with the people around me, more time having fun in the way only a high schooler can. I know I will spend many lonely moments of my life wishing I could just be with all the people here again."

–Anonymous

"Leaving FCS is a bittersweet moment. I have formed many deep and meaningful connections with people all across campus, and leaving that will be difficult. However, FCS fostered a community where I feel that I will always feel welcome, and this will always be a safe place. On the other side, I am excited to move on and grow more as well as hear about all the amazing things that my peers will achieve."

–Zak Loudini

President Levitties Shares Touching Farewell Letter

Hello Everyone,

As I reflect on this past year, I want to start off by saying that I'm honored to have been given this opportunity to serve as the Student Council president for the past year and to have worked with the team of such wonderful people: Anna Comstock, McKenna Blinman, and Kalila Jones. I hope that in the time that we have held these positions, your lives as students in the Friends' Central community have been as enjoyable as possible. I am happy to say that we were able to in some way implement most, if not all, of the points I had in my platform and speech from last year.

First, we led the initiative to have more fun and inclusive assemblies, as well as use the extra blocks that we had this year in order to open up more time to clubs and other groups to share on the amazing work that they do around campus.

Second, we organized more enjoyable and community-oriented events in order to raise school spirit while showcasing the amazing talent that we have as a student body that is not always shown.

Third, we were able to work more closely with the faculty, staff, and administration in order to voice the student issues that were brought to us in the community and propose solutions that were either implemented this year or hopefully will be implemented in the future.

Lastly, I want to thank all of the people who have helped me to accomplish these goals, starting with all of the people who participated in our events and assemblies. I would also like to thank the teachers and administration who I met with frequently in order to organize what we have been able to. Additionally, I want to thank CJ Keller and the stage crew who worked endlessly behind the scenes in all of our events and assemblies. Most of all, I want to thank the members of Student Council who met with me every week and dedicated their time to helping me make this the most successful year that I could.

Thank you everyone,

Nathan Levitties



Tribute to the Class of 2019

A Word of Thanks to Our Senior Photographer

Dear *FOCUS* Readers,

For the past twelve months, our publication has been fortunate enough to have been served by a caring and talented Senior Photographer. As Lydia prepares to embark on the next exciting chapters in her life, we members of *FOCUS* extend our praises and well wishes. I was particularly grateful to have Lydia as my right-hand colleague this year; she was always available for advice, and I will fondly recall the numerous late-night, laughter-filled phone calls we shared regarding the paper. We wish her all the best.

Yours in journalism,

Julian



Farewell to Our 12th-Grade Reporters

The *FOCUS* staff takes this opportunity to thank Jerry Yu for his contributions to the paper this past year. Jerry has aptly spearheaded the implementation of two new columns, *TechFOCUS* and *GamingFOCUS*, which in turn, have broadened the reach of our paper and taught all of us more about the enthralling digital world. We are pleased to report that Jerry will continue his service to *FOCUS* through the remainder of the school year. Lastly, we offer gratitude to Miles Johnson, who has contributed to the sports section of *FOCUS* this year. We look forward to hearing about his future endeavors in the world of sports journalism!



Best Wishes to the Class of 2019!

Seniors Reflect on FCS

"I've been at Friends' Central since kindergarten, so I've always seen this institution as a second home of sorts. Thus, going off to college is like moving to a new home where I'll make new memories, but cherish the old. I'd like to thank Friends' Central for helping me down my path to success, and I hope college will be an equally beneficial experience as school was."

–Nir Netz

"As excited as I am about going to college, I wish I had had more time to really get the most out of every resource available. There were so many teachers I never took a class with and so many subjects I haven't explored as fully as I wanted to. Don't get me wrong, there was so much I was able to learn and so many opportunities that I'm so grateful I had. But FCS has so much to offer that I just didn't have time for. I will hopefully be met with similarly abundant opportunities in my next school environment."

–Anonymous

"I think for me, leaving FCS is basically like leaving my second home. This is the place I credit with my development as both a student and person, and so it's bittersweet to know that I am leaving behind my foundation but prepared because of it."

–Carson Lonner

"No matter what I do, time keeps moving. I am being gently forced out the door of the place I have spent 13 years of my life, separated from those I have spent those years with. As it all comes to an end I am reminded of how many times I dreamed for this moment. It's easy when you're stressed, anxious, depressed, etc. to wish high school would just be over and you could leave it. However, I urge the ninth, tenth, and eleventh graders not to wish a moment of their time away. Eventually they will be where I am, where we are, holding onto every 'last' we have together."

–Sara Bergmann

GamingFOCUS

Cloud Gaming: Reinventing How We Play

By Jerry Yu '19, Technology Reporter

You want to play a game that has amazing graphics, smooth action, and diverse mechanics.

You look at the spec requirements

You quit and play Fortnite instead.



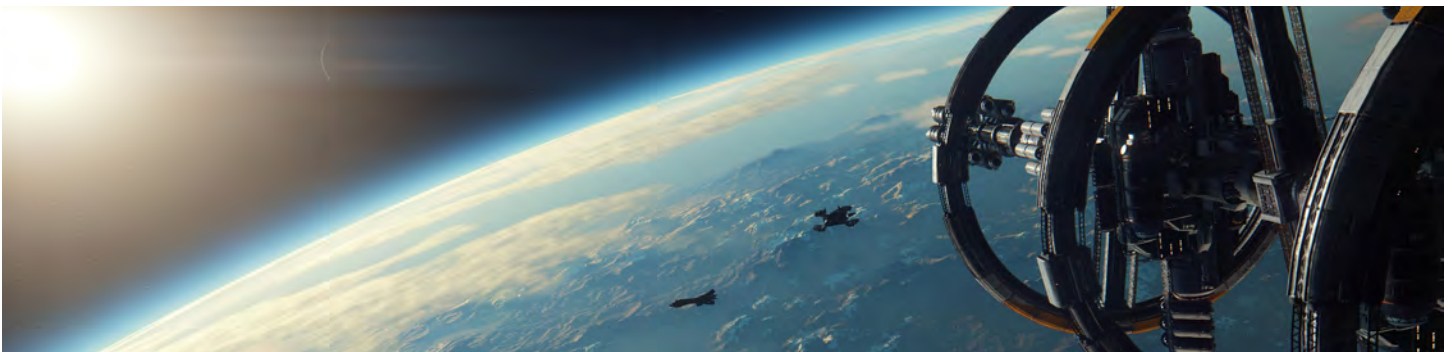
Now, the AAA games require AAA machines, with graphics cards pricing up to hundreds of dollars, but that's not all. The CPU, motherboards, and memory have to be on par with the high-end graphics. Modern 144Hz displays sell for hundreds of dollars, while keyboards, mice, headsets... Admit it, PC gaming is a money drain. However, as internet bandwidth becomes faster and faster, companies such as Google, Nvidia, Amazon, and many others are betting on the concept of "cloud gaming," where all you need on your PC is a stable connection and good peripherals, while all the computing is done on the cloud. The magic of their technology is that their software captures mouse and keyboard movements from the user and remotely uses them to operate a virtual machine in a cloud server. Then, the video footage of the game is streamed back to the user's device like a video.

Back in 2015, Nvidia released their GeForce Now service for public beta testing. They claimed that with a broadband internet connection of over 50Mbps, users can gain a solid performance of 60 frames per second. All of this sounded like music to me, since it would be miles better than the competition if it came true and became market-available. However, as an early beta tester, I did not have a good time. Sure, it made AAA games like Battlefield or PUBG quite smooth, but this feeling quickly breaks down when somebody else uses the internet. Streaming footage at 60 frames per second at 1080p requires twice the internet as a YouTube video, since normal videos are played at some 24 frames each second. That means when my roommate began watching YouTube or Netflix, neither of us would have a good time. Since G Sync is not available in this software, it's frame rate, or the rate at which new frames are delivered to the monitor, is locked at 60 frames per second for my device. When the bandwidth isn't enough, the feed quality would be decreased, which made a AAA title look like an NES game. Meanwhile, a bandwidth requirement of 50 Mbps means that Starbucks gaming is still pretty far off.

However, as 5G launches are projected to happen in late 2019 and speed up in 2020, Google decided to place their bid, too. Famous for their online services like Maps, Mail, Search, and YouTube, Google wants to take advantage of their infrastructure and build a "one-of-a-kind gaming service" to "revolutionize gaming." They called this Stadia and announced it at CES 2019. Not only will it feature cloud computing, it will also take advantage of Google's Assistant and make an in-game AI Assistant. Games will be available straight from YouTube, where players can test, buy, play, and share, all from a phone like the Pixel and a Stadia-compatible controller.

Other tech giants are also following up with bids. Amazon, the largest cloud computing service provider by far, posted a hiring ad asking for an AI engineer who will work with cloud experts to help develop "a never-before-seen kind of game." Amazon has already created its own game studio and a game engine called Lumberyard that has attracted developers like that of Star Citizen, an extremely demanding multiplayer game. It has also tested running in-game AI enemies from the cloud and sending control instructions to the tablet back in 2014. Microsoft, the company making the Xbox, decided to quietly buy PlayFab, a cloud game development company, and said last October that this year it will start testing a cloud gaming offering, Project xCloud, that will work on mobile devices. It's Azure PlayFab service currently allows devs to access their designing over the cloud.

These may not come tomorrow. Even if they launch, they would need a fast enough internet service to power their data needs. Maybe the 5G era will be when they thrive. As promising as playing The Witcher 3 on your phone at the bus stop or designing and developing entire games from iPads may sound, the future is still on the horizon, always two years away.



TechFOCUS

An Exclusive Interview with Ben Lehrer

By Jerry Yu '19, Technology Reporter

At Friends' Central, there is a large STEM community full of intelligent and industrious young engineers and scientists. This month, we interviewed Ben Lehrer '20, known at school for his rock-climbing and programming talent. We hope that Ben's story can encourage more of our friends to pursue an education in STEM.

Ben told *FOCUS* that his passion in engineering started in the ID Tech Camp at Villanova university, where he learned programming and made a game. Soon, he started working with Arduino and practiced programming. "I taught myself how to program," Ben recalled.

Teaching himself to program was not a simple task. Many people, at learning this, compliment him as being "very intelligent." A Friends' Central student, after seeing Ben's robot, commented, "He is quite a genius. He has what it takes to be the best. I sort of envy that." However, Ben disagrees with that person, as he claims that his effort, not necessarily his talent, have been what have allowed him to succeed: "If you are motivated enough, you can do it." He believes that the internet offers aspiring engineers many useful resources, from guides to reference sheets, that can make learning much easier. When asked about the drawbacks of using the internet, Ben commented that programmers should learn to debug programs by themselves instead of immediately going to forums like StackOverflow and asking others for help. Finding errors in one's own code can be quite challenging at times, yet familiarizing oneself with the tools and methods in debugging can improve one's skills and understanding greatly.

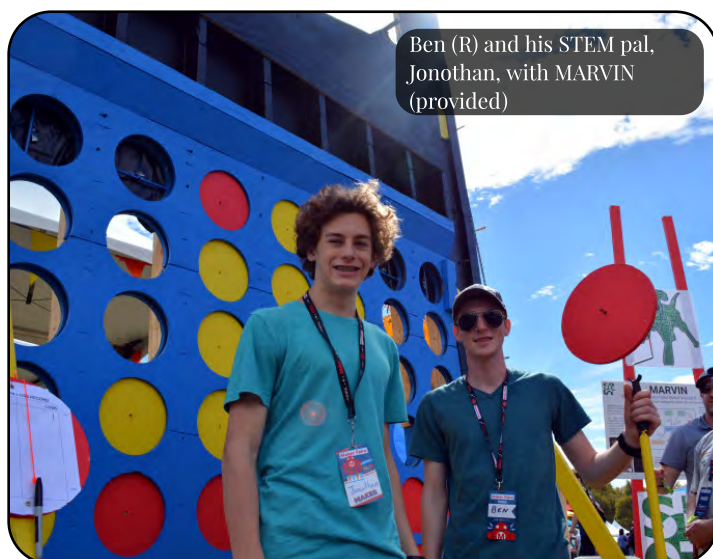
Every year Spot Technology, a group started by Ben Lehrer and his friend, classmate, and tech partner, Jonathan Roach '20, would make a project and attend fairs to show off their work. Last year, they debuted the MARVIN, a Connect-4-playing robot powered by an AI that allows it to win



Ben Attentively at Work
(Sevag Yepoyan)

against most humans it has played against. Besides the program, it also features a large elevator that lifts huge game pieces to the top of the 15-foot-tall device, while a ramp and gate system accurately drops the ball at the desired row. According to Ben, the large mechanisms were also quite difficult to design and make. With MARVIN, Ben hopes to create an interactive and fun project that can make more kids interested in engineering. Spot Technology displayed MARVIN at the lower school, where students showed great interest. Ben told *FOCUS* that his happiest moment was when kids began asking him how they could make something like that, as he knew that he has inspired more kids to be interested in engineering.

Beyond high school, Ben wishes to become a rocket engineer and devote himself to it. Ben says he likes the stereotype of rocket science – complicated, challenging, and imposing. He enjoys using his knowledge to solve any challenge that may be set before him (such as an imposing rock wall, as rock climbing is another one of his passions). According to Ben, rock climbing is similar to his STEM pursuits because it "is also problem solving," where he has to "figure out how to step," paying attention to angles, steps, and the mechanics behind each move. To the FCS community, he commented, "Don't say you're not 'smart enough.' Put in time and effort," and you can succeed. Meanwhile, he hopes that the school starts an introductory engineering course where students get to learn ways to apply their understanding in physics to solve practical problems.



Ben (R) and his STEM pal,
Jonathan, with MARVIN
(provided)

Athlete InFOCUS

Tristan Szapary, Fencing Superstar

By Miles Johnson '19, Reporter

Although Fencing does not garner the attention of some of the “tradition sports” in America such as football, baseball, basketball, and hockey, it is widely popular all over Europe and Asia. One of our very own Friends’ Central students, Tristan Szapary ‘20, has risen to be one of the premier Fencers in our country. Szapary’s accomplishments in the sport are vast. He was ranked in the top 20 under 19 (U19) in the United States. He has been able to compete in 6 national competitions every year. He won a 14 and under (U14) national competition. He was 4th in the country last year in U17, which meant he was the first alternate for the World Championships in Verona, Italy. Additionally, in his freshman and sophomore years of high school, he was named First-Team All American and All-Academic.

Tristan started fencing at 10 but did not start playing competitively until 13. He told me, “My parents always wanted me to play a sport but I was a pretty uncoordinated kid, so traditional sports weren't really working out for me. There was this after school program for fencing at my old elementary school that was super basic. They just taught us footwork and stuff, but I really liked it. I didn't know anything about it, but it sounded



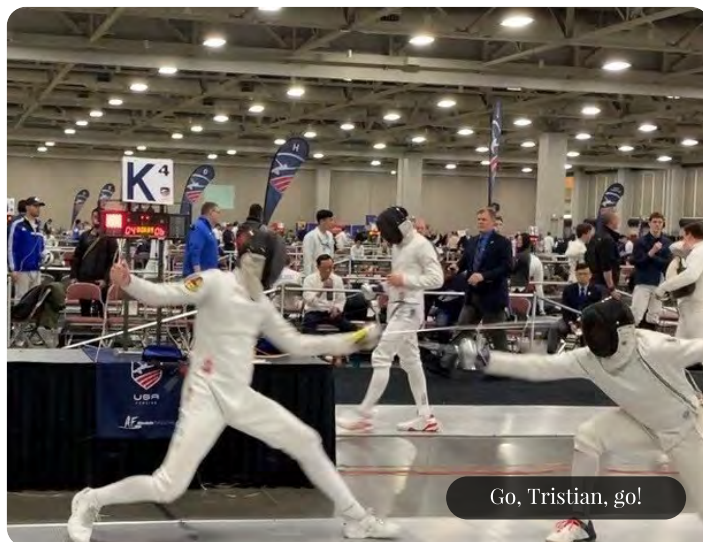
Tristan, Master Swordsman

like sword fighting. I liked *Star Wars* and lightsabers, so I decided to pursue it.” The main fencing club in Philadelphia is called “Fencing Academy of Philadelphia.” This club (and specifically one of its coaches) helped lay the foundation for Tristan to become the talented fencer he is today. This special coach taught Tristan footwork, technique, and discipline. Although Tristan started as an “uncoordinated kid,” he credits fencing, as well as his terrific coach, as what “kind of turned [him] into an athlete.” Yes, Tristan is surely quite the athlete. In fact, he continues to train with this coach today.

Fencing does not get the media coverage like the main sports in America; however, fencing has been in every single modern Olympics and is a part of the NCAA. In fact, most of the Ivies and many big state schools, including Penn State, Ohio State, and Notre Dame, who are known for their strong football programs, all have strong Division One programs for fencing. We can’t wait to see how Tristan takes advantage of the many fencing opportunities that undoubtedly await him. Until then, the Phoenix are rooting for Tristan as he travels nationally for fencing competitions.



Tristian with his Coach
(Provided)



Go, Tristian, go!

Athlete InFOCUS

Yeah, DeAndre! (FCS Archives)



DeAndre in action (UVA)

De'Andre Hunter: Friends' Central's National Champion

By Max Marinelli '22 Sports Reporter

De'Andre, De'Andre, De'Andre. One has been able to hear the name echoing around the halls, in the meeting room, in the gyms, and through the fields for weeks now. In case you have been living under a rock, March Madness has become huge news amongst FCS students, staff, and faculty members. This is all thanks to De'Andre and the rest of UVA not only making the tournament, but advancing up and through the Final Four. On Monday the 8, at around 9:15pm, the national championship between 3 Seed Texas Tech and 1 Seed UVA tipped off. The game was expected to be a close, low-scoring, defensive battle. This would end up not quite being the case in the end, as a game that was expected to total around 50 points per team ended tied at 68 before heading into OT. Not before De'Andre would hit his second clutch corner three to send the game into OT in the final seconds of regulation though. Virginia would go on to score an astounding 17 points in OT on their way to De'Andre's career high and a National Championship. This is an all-time storybook bounce-back ending, as UVA entered the tournament as a number 1 seed last year, but ended up losing to 16 seed UMBC in a historic loss.



De'Andre at FCS

De'Andre Hunter now looks to enter the NBA draft as a possible lottery pick. Friends' Central has been abuzz in the days leading up to the championship, and has continued to into the following day. Supportive students stayed after school on Monday night to watch and cheer on their fellow graduate. They sent a message to De'Andre. This March Madness was filled with amazing, exciting, and historic games, and this national championship will remain in the hearts of the FCS Community for years to come.

Seniors & Kindergartners- The Photos Say It All

Few things are more precious than witnessing the adorable boys and girls in the Lower School be accompanied into the Shimada for the All-School Assembly by the dear members of the senior class. Please enjoy these precious photographs of the most recent All-School Assembly, taken by Mrs. Luzuriaga!



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