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D.A. ALL DAY!

The World in One Room

By Paloma G. '28

From March 16th to March 18th, I was one of eight lucky students to attend a Model UN event hosted by the United Nations International School. This event made a lasting impact on me. The event opened on Monday with a dinner at the U.N.I.S. school, which included activities and performances. As we made our way over to the school, accompanied by Dr. Egler, I was excited to see what the afternoon would entail. We checked in and sat down in a dark theater. Around me, I heard many different languages: Chinese, Spanish, German, and French. It was uplifting to see how this seminar had brought together people from around the world. Then, the lights dimmed and the show started. There were many different productions performed by schools from across the globe. I vividly remember a dance performed by a group of students from Mexico. There were six girls and one boy, all dressed in traditional clothing and vibrant colors. As the group filled the stage with their twirls, they shouted in Spanish, "Arriba!" This brought such a lively feeling to the theater. At the end of their dance, they invited the students in the audience to join them. It was incredible to see so many cultures united by dance. After the hour-long show, we broke up into groups based on workshops. My friend and I picked a workshop called "Drops of Survival."

These workshops were student-led, and involved playing games and debating. We ended the day with a buffet-style Mexican dinner. My plate was piled high with delicious rice, guacamole, chips, and salad. At my table were UNIS moderators who helped run the conference. They were all very talkative, and we chatted about the conference. They said that they love the experience of meeting people from different cultures, but it is very hard to organize.

The next day, I got up bright and early to go to the conference taking place at the United Nations. With freezing cold temperatures, we waited, accompanied by Sister Joan, in a long line to pass through security to enter the building. Once we were in, I was in awe of the architecture, with winding staircases and images of important diplomats on the walls. When we entered the conference, a group of moderators sat us in a room where actual United Nations conferences are held. The room was huge, and it was so tall that it seemed as if it was never-ending. During the conference, different people who worked for the U.N. gave speeches. The speakers were a variety of directors and advisors who talked about how they became interested in the United Nations and major issues in our world. There was also an activity right before lunch called Economic Council Stimulation, which involved looking at data from different countries and analyzing it.

For lunch, we went to a Greek restaurant, despite it being Saint Patrick's Day. When we came back to the United Nations after lunch, a group of students gave



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a presentation about a handbook they created for financial literacy. There was also a student debate about green technologies and economic growth that I enjoyed watching.

As I went home, I took the wrong train and ended up in Long Island City. Thankfully, I was able to find my way back using Google Maps. However, this accident allowed me to reflect on my day. It was hard to wrap my head around the fact that I had sat in the same room where crucial decisions are made. It was interesting to hear the different accents of students, showing the diversity in our world. Also, I admired the students who gave presentations as they had big ideas which they were turning into real results. Overall, attending this conference was a truly inspiring experience and it encouraged me to learn more about foreign affairs.

Whodunit and Who We Will Miss: A Senior's Perspective on The Mousetrap

By Sophie N. '26

It is a cold winter night in a town not too far from London. The snow is falling rapidly, covering all surfaces and means of escape. You are now snowed in inside a cozy, newly opened guest house called Monkswell Manor, run by a newly wed and accommodating couple. On the surface, your current situation is not worrying, as you feel safe in this seemingly amenable hotel. Then, within hours, there seems to be a larger, more concerning issue consuming the

inhabitants of the guest house. A woman was strangled at Culver Street, and the murderer is on the loose. What started as a thrilling, distant true crime report turns into an ongoing investigation within the confines of Monkswell Manor. Everyone in the house is under suspicion, and you have no inkling who could be the murderer, or who could be slaughtered next.

The Mousetrap, written by Agatha Christie, is a classic murder mystery play that has enthralled West End goers for nearly 75 years. D.A. transformed into the St. Martin Theater for a riveting rendition of the play that left the crowd on the edge of their seats. This nail-biting thriller's plot-twist ending was truly shocking, but all audience members were sworn to secrecy to preserve the contents of the show within the Auditorium. Therefore, if you did not have the pleasure of viewing the show this weekend, you may never know who the Culver Street murderer is...

Not only did this production go off without a hitch, the cast and crew absolutely killed it (pun intended)! Since early October, all members of the Drama Club have worked tirelessly with immense effort to perfect every aspect of the production. With endless care and guidance from co-directors Emily W. '26 and Orla B. '27, and the nurturing moderation of Ms. Cerulli and Ms. Oing, a found family was formed among the club. From Saturday rehearsals to persistent full run-throughs, not only were all schedules completely packed with memorization and cues, but with camaraderie, support, and laughter. Through



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four years of tireless successful efforts of acquiring a large catalogue of sets, props, and a brand new curtain set. This thespian clan (of which I am a proud member!) grows bigger and our innovative ideas span beyond anything we could have imagined in years prior. We even put on our hardhats to design and construct a collapsible couch perfect for our future productions! A strong community forged in intensive yet immensely rewarding extracurriculars such as the D.A. Playhouse can only be found when all parties involved are truly passionate about their craft and foster a strong quality of care for each other. In other words, being a part of something that requires an alliance of creative and constructive minds that come together to produce something beautiful can only truly be captured in a sisterhood unique to a place like D.A.

We cannot fully encapsulate the true essence of the Playhouse without acknowledging our seniors who are off to the next set stage in their life, college and beyond. For Emily W., being in the drama club for all four years of her high school experience means that she not only saw the club flourish before her eyes, but stepped into the role as a director. Emily pulled all things concerning actors and crew together and always remained a friend first. For leading actress Nicole L. '26 (Mollie Ralston), she sought a club to find friends after transferring from Maryland. She both blew away everyone with her immense talent and instantly became a perfect fit with her fellow actresses.

On a personal note, I joined in sophomore year on a whim to strengthen my acting skills. What I didn't expect to find is a lovely group of friends who are always friendly faces in the hallways and whom I am most excited to see on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. From playing a mysterious widow in *Clue*, a rich, disapproving aunt in *Little Women*, and finally a late coming detective in my ultimate production, it has been both a whirlwind of roles and one of the best experiences of my high school career. I loved every second of memorization and emoting, I can confidently say that everyone in this labor of love can say the same.

D.A. Talent Rocks Out at Coffee House!

By Katie B. '26

There's no better way to unwind on a Friday at D.A. than at Coffee House. One can drop one's exhaustion with one's school bag onto the seats of the Mezzanine as one makes her way to the concessions outside the Auditorium. Delicious cookies and chips accompanied steaming coffee and hot chocolate for each attending student to take on their way inside the D.A. grand stage. This year had some of the best performances to date, featuring solo singers and songwriters, belting duos, and the outstanding Glee Club and Senior Ensemble choruses. The crowd (full of students from all grade levels and supportive parents and faculty) heard incredible covers of Talking



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Heads, The Phantom of the Opera, and Lukas Graham.

One performance that stood out to me was made by Ben M. and Ezra K., singing "I'll Be Back" and "Misery" by The Beatles. Their harmonies alongside Ben's skillful guitar work blew the audience away, with roaring applause once they were done. I briefly spoke to Ben about the Coffee house experience:

How long did it take for you to prepare for your performance, and was it particularly challenging?

"Ezra and I would practice an hour a week for a month or so. It was a bit challenging at first, but we worked out the difficulties pretty fast."

Were you guys proud of the performance and the response from the D.A. crowd?

"We were very proud of the positive response we received after the performance! Although I wasn't too proud of my personal performance, I'm sure Ezra was."

While the 2026 Coffee House marks the last performance for many D.A. talents in the senior class, the emerging underclassman performers have only started their creative journey. I am sure that the coming Coffee Houses will continue to out-do the previous ones. Congratulations to all of this year's performers on a successful show!

An Average Freshman in the St. Patrick's Day Parade

By Kayleen D. '29

If I told my younger self I would one day be marching in the St. Patrick's Day Parade, she would lose her mind. Younger me always anxiously sat in front of the television watching all the cheerleaders, Irish dancers, and drill teams walk by, never



thinking I would be marching right next to them in a few short years. This year, as soon as the band in front of us started marching, my friends and I were so excited to start moving. Although we had to pause for what felt like every other minute before parading up Fifth Avenue, it was a unique and amazing experience. We even marched with some incoming freshmen, which honestly made me feel a bit old, but happy that I had the opportunity to meet some new Tigers. When the whistle finally blew and our block began to move from 46th street that old familiar anxiety was replaced by a



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surge of pure and exciting adrenaline. Looking out at the sea of people lining the outside of the barriers, my friends and I felt like amateur celebrities walking down a red



carpet in our light blazers (which we were freezing in) and our white hats with a green D.A. logo. We even saw Mr. Chen rooting for us in the crowd as we made our way to the Upper East Side. Although waving my hand was very tiring and my legs were hurting, the march was very rewarding and fun.

After the parade, we trekked back to D.A., chatting and laughing, when all of a sudden a bagpipe player came out and did a surprise performance for us. It sounded beautiful, and I will never forget its pinging sounds. After a short but beautiful melody, we ate some traditional Irish food, including corned beef, cabbage, potatoes, carrots, and most importantly chocolate cake for dessert

while being entertained by all of the talented Irish dancers and musical numbers. I came back after being dismissed to see 5th Avenue again, remembering how tiring the parade was. After we finished on 79th street, I finally understood why I chose to march in the parade at that very moment: to feel a part of something fulfilling and to represent the school that is dear to my heart.

“Reading” the Rooms of the Morgan Library

By Setareh B. '28

Have you ever heard of the expression ‘read the room’? That is what we were asked to do at The Morgan Library & Museum, where the sophomore class spent the day for school in the city. But on this day, reading the room meant we took time to reflect on our feelings and understand the history behind the space, to gain insight into not only the library and museum, but also J.P. Morgan and his life. We started our time at the museum in the main entrance, a space that ultimately connects the entire library and museum: this space was added in 2006, by architect, Renzo Piano, the same architect who designed the Centre Pompidou in Paris. We took time to reflect upon the building, coming to the conclusion that it allowed for brightness, and an outdoor feeling while still being inside. I looked around, admiring the natural light and giant plants within the space. Although this style of architecture was extremely modern compared to the rest of the library and museum, it fit in perfectly, allowing a calm feeling to settle over me.



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Stopping in The Rotunda, the older section, which originally served as the library's original entrance, we took time to “read” the room, and acknowledge the emotions that surfaced during the time. Many came to the conclusion that this space was darker and felt more serious than the newer building. Our tour guide explained the importance of this room, highlighting the reflection of J.P. Morgan's ideas and values on the ceiling, through depictions of various gods and goddesses, and themes of religion, philosophy, science and art. We learned that every detail, from the paintings on the ceiling, to the carving of wood on the doors, and the marble on the floor was specifically picked out by J.P. Morgan himself. An image of J.P. Morgan began to form in my mind, every new detail of the library added to my understanding of Morgan, and how he portrayed his wealth, throughout the library.

Our tour continued into the East Room, or the original library. We took in the vast amount of books, large space, and darkness of the library, as well as the Netherlandish tapestry. Ironically enough, the tapestry depicted avarice, one of the seven deadly sins, and the sin that focuses on the extreme desire for wealth or possessions. I wondered if J.P. Morgan chose this tapestry in an ironic way, knowing the wealth he possessed, or in a warning to others. My idea of Morgan began to grow further, as I learned how important literature was to him, not only reading, but collecting thousands of valuable books.

Additionally, we took time to sketch something that stood out to us. At first, I thought this would be a random boring activity to pass some time. I randomly chose a depiction of a zodiac sign on the ceiling, but as I began to sketch it, taking in the intricate details, I realized why we were drawing. I was able to take time to truly appreciate the details of the library. We also learned that the staircases used to access the higher levels of the library were located behind the book shelves, hidden from the public eye.

We made our way into the West Room, which served as J.P. Morgan's study. The walls of the room were covered with red silk, and the study reflected a dark and calming mood. Walking around the room, many of us took in the religious themed paintings, and massive steel vault. The power J.P. Morgan held became apparent in this room. Our tour ended in the North Room or Librarian's Office. This room became the office of Belle da Costa Greene, a woman who worked as Morgan's first director, and passed as white to navigate the segregated society of the time. She ran the library for around 43 years, hiding her African-American heritage the entire time. Once we took some time in this room, our tour concluded, and we were left to continue our day with the new knowledge of the library and museum, J.P. Morgan's life, and the significant and important, Belle da Costa Greene. As I navigated through the library towards the exit, the details of every room returned to my mind, and I realized just how



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much I enjoyed “reading” the rooms of The Morgan Library and Museum.

School in the City: Stay Gold, D.A.

By Nora W. '27

At first, the stage went pitch black. I could not see anything, and everyone in the theater froze, waiting to see what would happen next. Immediately, a blue screen of Ponyboy's head in the water and the sound of bubbles filled the room. Then, as Johnny Cade freed Ponyboy from Bob's grasp, he stabbed his knife into Bob's back and lights flashed everywhere. The stage went black again until the light returned with a bloody Bob. This, along with many other visually appealing scenes, made *The Outsiders* a fantastic play to see.

On March 25th, D.A. juniors and seniors watched *The Outsiders* on Broadway for School in the City. Before watching the play, we went to Gossip Restaurant on 9th Avenue. The restaurant felt super cozy. I sat at a table with my friends, and we started playing Wavelength and talked about our excitement for the play. Then, my food came. I ordered the penna alla vodka with a side of crunchy garlic bread, which I devoured instantly.

Soon after, we waited in a line for about thirty minutes outside of *The Outsiders*, and although I was eager to watch the play, I was amazed by the sights around me. Times Square felt like a different world. Bright colored signs of different plays and stores illuminated the streets. People flooded the sidewalk and tried to shove past me. Before I could take it all in, I

was handed my ticket and pushed inside. As I stepped into the theater, the air had shifted. When the lights dimmed, a smile spread across my face. It was time!

Written in the 1960s in Oklahoma, *The Outsiders* follows a fourteen year old boy named Ponyboy Curtis and his two older brothers, Darrel and Sodapop, after their parents die from a car crash. They are considered the Greasers, the poor kids on the east side of town. Conversely, the Socas are the rich kids on the west side. This rivalry presented itself extremely well throughout the play. The songs, clothing, and their cars on stage all emphasized this tension.

The actors for the Greasers excelled at making the audience feel remorse for their lack of freedom through class. Ponyboy and Darrel were portrayed as people who are incredibly intelligent and caring but have no mobility in status. Sodapop is a character who uses laughter and fun to hide the pain of his situation. Dallas Winston is a man who is always bogged down by society and runs instead of facing obstacles. Johnny Cade is considered the sweet one of the group. He is sixteen years old and is abused by his family; as a result, the Greasers feel like they have to look after him. There are also some Soca characters, such as Bob the bully and Ponyboy's crush, Cherry.

As mentioned before, Bob's death was one of my favorite scenes in the play. However, the rain scene was just as beautiful. The rain scene takes place at the end of the play when the Socas and the Greasers have an ultimate battle because the Socas want revenge over Bob's death. At



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first, the actors demonstrated their fighting performance skills proficiently. Then, I heard a gush of water and saw rain pour down onto the stage. It was so impressive because the dancers flipped, demonstrating fighting skills while getting soaked. The absence of any music besides the sound of water made it more memorable and dramatic for the audience.

Overall, I rate the performance a nine out of ten. It was a beautiful story, and they held onto the message of the book extremely well. One phrase that stood out to me was “stay gold.” After Johnny killed Bob, Ponyboy and Johnny ran away from the police. While they hid, Ponyboy told Johnny Cade about this poem called “Nothing Gold Can Stay” by Robert Frost. “Stay gold” remained a prominent saying throughout the play, but I went home not thinking much about it.

However, the next day in class, Dr. Cagney asked what it meant to “stay gold.” I said something about staying true to yourself. However, it means so much more. It is about keeping your innocence and appreciating the beauty around you while facing obstacles placed in front of you. Thank you for this experience, D.A. These trips help shape my appreciation for where I call home, and I am looking forward to the next School in the City!

Serving with Purpose

By Setareh B. '28

As we made our way out of D.A. we knew that our sophomore retreat had officially begun. My group set out to the

Cabrini Immigrant Food Service pantry, with the message from Mass lasting in our minds and hearts, thinking about how we could spread our love and service to those who we encountered and helped. Earlier we had heard the urging of Israel to return to God with sincere words instead of empty rituals. The Gospel defined unconditional love for one's being, and this message was further explained within the homily. We heard about the importance of accepting and loving oneself, and how self-love allows us to love our neighbors.

When we got off the A train's final stop, anticipation and excitement began to rise as we searched for the service site. On our way, we encountered an outdoor food pantry and many people lined up in the cold. As we passed by, realization began to settle in, and we recognized how important food pantries and other services are to those in need. We arrived at the Cabrini Food Pantry, and the food pantry's coordinator, Paul, greeted us warmly, showing us around the pantry and introducing us to other volunteers. I quickly understood what a kind volunteer community the Cabrini pantry had as many stopped what they were doing to welcome us. Paul explained that we live in times of difficulty and uncertainty for many, as food costs grow and benefits like SNAP and Medicaid are being cut. With this in mind, we began with our first tasks, which included lifting bags of potatoes, carrots, bananas and more, and organizing them for distribution on the following Saturday. Our group began to settle into a steady flow as we lifted, carried, organized, and took



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breaks. As our arms started to ache, our appreciation for other volunteers, who came to the site weekly, began to grow.

Later we formed an assembly line, quickly packaging bags with beans, canned items, milk, and more. After a few tries, we began to find a flow within our line, efficiently packaging the food. While we focused on placing the right amount of rice or the correct cans into the bags, we were able to reflect on the work we had done, actively seeking God within each of our actions. In total we organized and packaged enough food and bags to feed around 427 families. Not only were we able to provide this service to help those in need, we also saw how a community of volunteers came together to help a cause they believed in, inviting us to do the same. Throughout our few hours of service, we grew to understand just how important the help of volunteers is and how we can spread our kindness and love to those around us through our actions.

Finally, we arrived at St. John's gym for an hour-long reflection period, thinking back to the homily we heard at the start of our day. We reflected on our feelings and emotions, and our overall experience of the day. When asked where we encountered God during our time of service, many responded with the thought that they encountered God within other volunteers or people they were serving. I thought back to how I felt at the beginning of the day, unenthusiastic to spend hours bagging food but curious to see what was in store. Once I had finished helping at the pantry, my feelings completely changed, as I enjoyed

every minute. What I thought was going to be boring - the bagging of items - turned into a productive flow with a community coming together to help those in need.

Although my arms smarted from carrying heavy bags of potatoes, and my eyes were tired of seeing the same pound of rice I constantly placed in bags, the feelings of accomplishment and appreciation that I felt outweighed anything else. The D.A. community was able to offer their help to the community of hardworking volunteers and those in need who benefited from the services, allowing two communities to join together, becoming one.

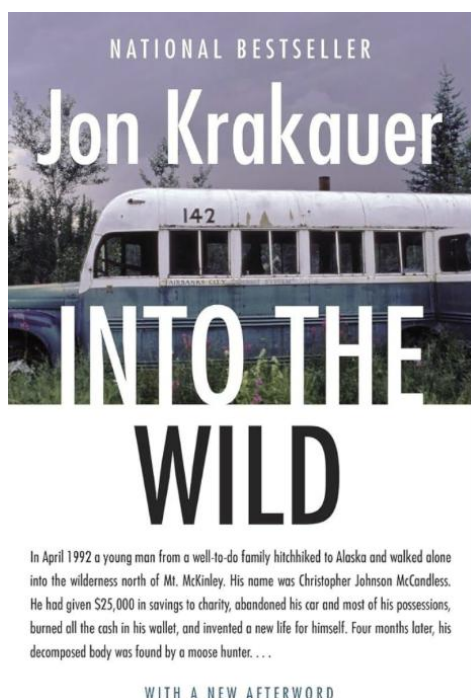
Together, we came to the awareness that we can use our abilities to spread love, while beginning to be guided by our faith. With these ideas in mind, we were dismissed for the day, allowing us to take what we had learned during our retreat, and use it not only while providing service and helping others, but in our daily lives.



COLUMNS

Stepping Into the Wild

By Ana D. '26



Book of the Issue: *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer

Rating : 

For most people hiking through the isolating Alaskan wilderness alone with only a small backpack would be a nightmare. But for Christopher McCandless, this was his lifelong dream unfortunately cut short by tragedy. Jon Krakauer, legendary non-fiction author, narrates the months leading up to Christopher's unfortunate death that had previously been shrouded in mystery and

comments how every decision eventually led to his passing.

If you are familiar with the world of non-fiction adventure novels, you have likely heard of Jon Krakauer's most popular novel *Into Thin Air*, a phenomenal suspenseful story detailing the events of the Mount Everest disaster of 1996 from a first hand account. *Into the Wild* is Krakauer's more underrated novel written a year prior that most adventure non-fiction lovers often overlook. However, at times *Into the Wild* reads like a commentary autobiography rather than a riveting account of a young man's nomadic life in pursuit of spiritual meaning. This may scare away potential readers, but the story of Christopher McCandless's life carries a common human desire: meaning.

Though McCandless's arrogance and overconfidence can be irritating, you come to sympathize with him and, if feeling adventurous, maybe envy his freedom. As we follow McCandless through his journey across the country before his final adventure in Alaska, the mystery around his death and disappearance unravels with Krakauer's commentary and insight that puts his life into a unique perspective. Ultimately though, the three Tigers I have granted *Into the Wild* are generous. After reading *Into Thin Air* two years ago, my high expectations of Jon Krakauer's literary portfolio were carried into reading *Into the Wild*. Krakauer lingers too long on irrelevant details of McCandless's story that do not feel meaningful to the main narrative that initially hooks readers. Spending so much



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time on highly specific details about McCandless's car troubles before he finally abandons the car is unnecessary padding that feels hard to get through. If you are looking to explore non-fiction adventures by Jon Krakauer, *Into Thin Air* will serve as a better starting point.

Let me know if you have any comments or book recommendations by emailing me at adelgado2026@dominicanacademy.org.



Upper Eats Side *Food Review: Café Maud* Vivienne S. '26

Rating: 

Happy Spring, Upper Eats Siders! This new warm weather is not only perfect for the return of our light blue skirts and walks in Central Park after school, but it is the best atmosphere to grab lunch at a new spot with sidewalk seating. I have somehow managed to deliver another wonderful option...it must be a reviewer's intuition!

Tucked into the tree-lined streets of our neighborhood, Café Maud offers a cozy

escape from the usual rush of Manhattan and a beautiful menu of European-American cuisine. It is both curated and comfortable. It is the sort of place you can sit down for a cold drink and flavorful bite without feeling hurried out the door.

The atmosphere strikes a balance between modern and homey. Soft lighting, natural wood accents, striking shades of green, and a minimalist aesthetic give the



space a clean and Instagram-worthy look. It also, however, manages to escape a cold and staged feeling some overpriced, publicity-seeking lunchonettes exude in the surrounding area. Instead, it feels comfortable and welcoming, with a steady hum of conversation that makes it ideal for



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catching up with friends over breakfast, lunch, or dinner!

The service is the combination of attentive minus overbearing that I always applaud. Their staff members are friendly and efficient. The location has been very busy lately, especially during brunch hours, and they managed to keep things moving smoothly. I love it when those hired in a service position take time to make the experience feel personal rather than transactional. Many of the waitstaff shared with my table how they enjoyed being a part of the Café Maud family and appreciated its dedication to celebrating the Irish heritage shared by both owners and staff.

Café Maud draws inspiration from



the famous Union Square institution, The Coffee Shop. The ties are clearly noticeable in the all-day café concept and the elevated

comfort food they offer. Café Maud is not just a brunch spot; it runs from morning coffee to late-night dinner, which mirrors the kind of flexible, community-centered model made famous by places around Union Square. Café Maud leans into light, health-conscious options like matcha, brunch plates, and balanced dishes. But at night, it shifts into something more energetic and social with a livelier atmosphere. Their physical setup also represents the inspiration with a coffee window for quick grab-and-go orders, a sit-down dining space for lingering meals, and even a separate upstairs bar (The Domino Room) for a more upscale experience. Inspiration drawn from European café culture, particularly Parisian influences, is also seen through the decor and blend of old-world charm with distinct New York sensibility.

Café Maud does, however, distinguish itself in its food. The matcha latte I ordered was already a strong example. It was well-balanced, avoiding the overly sweet or bitter extremes that can sometimes ruin the drink, and was smooth, slightly earthy, and velvety in texture. The milk is steamed to a light foam that complements rather than overwhelms the matcha, making it feel more refined than the average café version. The eggs Benedict was even more memorable, largely because of its unexpected twist: It's made with braised short rib instead of the traditional Canadian bacon. Even as a die-hard fan of the classic Benedict combo, I loved the substitution. The short rib was tender and deeply flavorful, with a slow-cooked richness that



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added a lot of depth. It contrasted nicely with the lightness of the poached eggs, with yolks breaking open to create a natural sauce that blends with the hollandaise. Digging my fork into the yellow center to find a flow of warm yolk after it is punctured is a salivating moment for me. The disappointment I feel when I find it is overcooked is not something you want to witness.

Speaking of the hollandaise, it is notably well-executed. Silky and buttery, but not overly greasy. It enhances the dish without masking the flavor of the short rib, which I would consider the star. The English muffin base underneath provided just enough structure and a slight crispness to balance the softness of the meat and eggs. Eggs Benedict can feel very heavy with its composition of bread, meat, and mayo-based sauce, but even with the addition of beef, Café Maud surprised and delighted me with their well-balanced version. Altogether, the dish feels elevated and is a thoughtfully composed entrée.

Café Maud lives up to its reputation as a neighborhood favorite. With its inviting atmosphere, attentive service, and food that goes beyond the basics, it is easy to see why it's become a go-to spot on the Upper East Side and why it might become yours. Go walk the sun-covered streets near school up to the corner of 2nd Avenue and 85th Street and remind yourselves how I would never let you all down.

Until next time, Upper Eats Siders. Buon appetito, buen provecho, and guten appetit!

Is Cash Truly King?

By Paloma G. '28

You may have heard of the age old saying, "Cash is king." However, the most popular method of paying today is through card, specifically Apple Pay. In fact, some stores that have recently opened have stopped taking cash entirely. I discovered this when I went to Meadow Lane supermarket, which opened only a couple months ago. I pulled out my wallet thinking I could use cash, but the cashier saw my wallet and gave me a weird look. She told me that they only take forms of contactless payment. Luckily, I had my card, but this experience opened my eyes to how cashless our society has become. Nevertheless, this leads to an important question. Is becoming a cashless society an advancement or decline?

Both cash and card have their respective advantages and disadvantages. For starters, with cash, you can control how much you are spending and physically budget your money. Then, you can actually see when you are running low on cash. Additionally, cash provides privacy as your transactions are not recorded on the internet. This protects your data and allows you to remain anonymous when paying. Thus, it removes the risk of hackers and online fraud, which have become increasingly common. Finally, there are no extra costs imposed, such as interest or transaction fees. In fact, some stores will provide you with a less expensive price on items if you pay with cash which allows you to save.



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Paying with a card also has advantages. It is much easier to stay organized. You don't have to deal with pesky coins and one dollar bills. You can just tap your card with no hassle involved. Also, through Apple Pay, you do not even have to remember to bring a wallet as you can keep a card on your phone. This can provide some mental relief because as students, we always have many things to remember when leaving the house. (Sometimes, it feels like a never ending list.) Using certain cards to pay also allows you to build up rewards, such as points and travel miles. These points accumulate as you spend money, leading to large savings in the long run.

Despite the benefits, both cash and card have their disadvantages. As I mentioned before, stores that have recently opened up do not always accept cash. It is also hard to find out online if these places are card only, so you can end up in a situation where you don't have a form of payment. Additionally, there is no insurance policy when paying with cash. This means if your cash gets lost or stolen, there is no way to retrieve it back. On the other hand, when using a card, it can be scarily easy to overspend and lose track of how much money you actually have in your bank account. Additionally, when using a credit card, the bank asks you to pay interest on the amount of money you charged on your card. As we are living in a city that is expensive enough as it is, these card fees are just an added, unnecessary cost that can be avoided if you pay with cash. Finally, something to consider is areas of lower income. Many

individuals who come from a low income background do not have access to banks, so they rely on cash and are not able to buy products at cashless stores.

Now that you have information, I leave it to you to form your own opinion. Are you in favor of this cashless society, or do you still believe that cash is king?

A Dash of Happiness and a Sprinkle of Gratitude: One Last Time

By Melissa B. '26

Spring has sprung, bringing with it the beauty of flowering nature. But with the dawn of spring comes a feeling of sadness, especially for our seniors. For most of D.A., it feels like just another fourth quarter. But for the seniors, it is their last semester of high school. It is the last time they can feel like kids before the change and responsibility that college brings. It is the final stretch of classes and preparation before A.P. exams. As the days inch closer to graduation, everything has a nostalgic filter. You cannot help but appreciate even the smallest moments throughout your day: the same lunch table that you sat at for four years with the same group of friends; your usual spot in the library to study; looking outside the window during a slow class just to see the trees; the breathless feeling from walking up the stairs. For this final edition, I wanted to highlight the way many seniors and I saw D.A., our home away from home. Welcome to this month's edition of a Dash of Happiness and a Sprinkle of Gratitude, the finale.



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Looking to spring, I can't help but feel sentimental for my four years at D.A. It feels like such a long time ago when I first walked through the ornate wrought-iron doors of 44 East 68th Street. I remember seeing the nervous freshmen on their first day this year and understanding just how they felt. I was so excited to meet my teachers, to make new friends, and grow up into the young woman that I wanted to be. I knew from the first day that D.A. was going to be the place for me. In freshman year, with all of the clubs that I eventually joined, I knew I wanted to write for the school newspaper. I wanted to highlight the good news within the community. So much of the news we read, then and now, is full of the worst of what is going on. I wanted to shine a light on the good, especially in the lives of those around us. Taking that initial step of sending my first survey to the whole student body was one of the most nerve-wracking but exhilarating feelings ever. I truly loved reading all the good news people had. It always put a smile on my face as I read about swim championships, plays, and good grades. But that was always just a small snapshot of what D.A. is really like. I've truly grown as a student, a friend, and a writer in these four years. And I have my article to thank for that!

Thank you to everyone who read or sent their good news throughout the years. For one last time, make sure to add a Dash of Happiness and a Sprinkle of Gratitude to your life!

Faculty Feature - Mr. Fredrick

By Vivienne S '26

The Many Roles of Mr. Fredrick

At six a.m., long before more students are awake, Mr. Fredrick is already walking D.A.'s halls. He checks every corner of the building, making sure doors are secure, everything is in place, and the school is ready for the day. By the time students begin to arrive, he is stationed on the sidewalk, greeting them as they walk in. The first person you see when you walk through the front doors is not a principal or a teacher, it is Mr. Fredrick, greeting students by name and somehow keeping everything running smoothly before the first period even starts. For many, he is the first familiar face they see. But he is more than just the person keeping the building safe. He is also the assistant softball coach, a problem-solver, and, according to many students, one of the most approachable adults in the building.

From Chaperone to Coach

Surprisingly, his role on the softball field started by chance. "I just asked to be a chaperone for a game," he said. "Then I saw how much passion the girls had." Soon after, he was asked if he knew baseball. As a devoted Yankees fan, his answer was easy. One game turned into an opportunity. He was asked to help coach first base, said yes, and never looked back. Now, he is a presence on the field, bringing the same energy and support to practices and games as he does in the hallways.



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A Job That Goes Beyond the Title

Although his official role focuses on safety and facilities, Mr. Fredrick's day rarely fits into a simple job description. From setting up spaces for students to responding to issues around the building, he does a little bit of everything. On some days, that might mean managing security systems. On others, it could mean helping set up lunch on the roof or stepping in wherever he is needed. "Everything we do is for the kids," he said. "I love what I do, but I wouldn't love it if it weren't for them."

Balancing Safety and Connection

As the person responsible for school safety, Mr. Fredrick has to maintain authority, but that does not mean being unapproachable. At first, finding that balance was not easy. Over time, though, he has built a system based on mutual respect. "Yes, I'll laugh with you," he explained. "But when it's time to be serious, it's time to lock in!" Students know they can joke with him but also trust him when it matters most. He understands that every student is different; some are outgoing, some are anxious, some just need someone to listen. That awareness shapes how he interacts with people every day. "I'm a big believer in letting kids be kids," he said. "As long as you're safe, smile, laugh, that's important."

Making an Impact

Mr. Frederick has been working in schools for over 13 years, starting in maintenance and working his way up. Mr. Fredrick says the biggest reward is simple:

the students. "The small difference you can make in a kid's life, that's what matters," he said. And that impact goes both ways. Through his daily interactions, he says students have changed him, too. "No two days are the same," he said. "You learn something new from kids every day, their personalities, their humor, the way they see things." He describes the school as a "family." From early mornings to the end of the school day, he is not just doing a job, he is looking out for people he cares about. "I don't wake up early for myself," he said. "I do it for my family, the students."

Changing the School

Since arriving four years ago, Mr. Fredrick has helped reshape what safety looks like at the school. From improving procedures to increasing security measures, his presence has made a noticeable difference. He has become a consistent, visible part of our daily lives.

More than Work

Outside of his responsibilities, Mr. Fredrick's personality shows in unexpected ways. He is a huge sports fan, often showing up to support different school teams, not just softball. And if there is one thing students might not guess right away, it is that he LOVES roller coasters. "I've had a season pass for years," he said. "The faster, the better." It is just one more example of the energy and enthusiasm he brings not just to his job, but to life in general.



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Legacy and Advice

When students look back, Mr. Fredrick hopes they remember one thing: “That I kept it real with them and they could keep it real with me.” If there is one piece of advice he wants students to hold onto, he says, “Be kids. Don’t rush to grow up. Act like kids and appreciate this time.”

We are all so incredibly thankful for Mr. Fredrick and everything he does for the student body. Thank you for taking the time to let us get to know you better!!

Arts and Architecture Column: The Simple Yet Enduring Architecture of Machu Picchu

by Iris M. ‘27

One of the most anticipated excursions of D.A.’s spring break trip to Peru was to Machu Picchu, an abandoned Inca citadel in the Andes and one of the Seven Modern Wonders of the World. Early on a Thursday morning in Aguas Calientes, near the city of Cusco, Peru, D.A. students boarded buses that would wend their way through the mountains to the site, atop a mountain of the same name. Arriving in a torrential downpour, we donned plastic ponchos and then trekked up a series of Inca terraces until we arrived at a viewpoint roughly 8,000 feet above sea level. There we could see the ruins of the citadel with Huayna Picchu and other Andean mountains as a backdrop. I was struck by the beauty and grandeur of the surrounding Andes and the clouds drifting quickly around them, as well as by the fact that a city at such an

altitude had endured for centuries in the Andes’ harsh environmental conditions. It was a true feat of architecture and engineering genius.

The Incas constructed Machu Picchu around 1450, during the peak of the Inca Empire’s influence. However, the city was abandoned—unfinished—by roughly 1530. In 1911, a group of Peruvian farmers led American archeologist and Yale Professor, Hiram Bingham—often thought of as the real world inspiration for Indiana Jones—to the site. Bingham, who is now credited as the site’s official discoverer, and his team cleared the jungle that had covered the area for centuries to uncover the lost Inca city and carry out extensive study and research. Archeologists and historians theorize that the citadel was built as a place of worship and a royal estate for Incan emperor Pachacútec, and that it was unfinished and abandoned either due to a smallpox outbreak or the 16th-century Spanish conquest of Peru that virtually wiped out the Inca population.

Machu Picchu is separated into agricultural and urban sectors. The agricultural area consists of steep terraces that were built along the edge of the mountain, which facilitated the growth of maize and other crops by creating flat areas of land and prevented erosion of the mountainside. I was amazed at how the Incan architecture was in such harmony with the mountain that it was able to sustain the population. Machu Picchu’s urban sector contains a home with restored straw roof (a signature of Incan residential architecture)



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known as the Guardian's House, Inca temples such as the Temple of Three Windows, a semicircular structure which has windows that align with sunrays at solstices, a Sacred Plaza that was at the heart of the citadel while it was inhabited, and many other structures that those who resided at Machu Picchu used every day and can still be seen by visitors.

All of the structures in the citadel were crafted with granite blocks carved directly from the mountainside, further demonstrating how in tandem the Incan architecture was with the surrounding environment. "What the Incas did that was really smart is, rather than trying to make an architecture that alone is going to be impressive, they instead made an architecture that was in dialogue with the vast impressive landscape," as architectural historian Stella Nair said in History.com's article "The Engineering Secret Behind Machu Picchu's Stonework."

The Incas often moved the blocks, many of which were multiple tons, into place using handles which they carved into the sides of the stone. While some structures at the site were constructed with mortar, most of Machu Picchu's walls and structures were built without any mortar or cement. Using their masonry skills, the Incas carved the giant stones to interlock with each other so precisely that mortar was not needed. This technique has allowed Incan structures around Peru to withstand major earthquakes much more effectively than Spanish colonial or modern architecture, likely because it allows the stones to slide among each other

as the ground shakes. "The most amazing thing about the architecture of Machu Picchu was the intricacy of the stones. Each stone was carefully picked and shaped to fulfill a specific spot and hundreds of years later they still stand in the same spot which shows the craftsmanship of the Incas," said junior Nora W., who visited Machu Picchu during D.A.'s trip to Peru.

Machu Picchu's marvel, beauty, and architectural excellence continue to fascinate visitors today. More than a million people visit Machu Picchu each year, which generates a substantial amount of Peru's tourism income. "When you think the task is impossible," said Mr. Frederick, who chaperoned D.A.'s Peru trip, "think of what the Incas did."





ARTS AND CULTURE

Exploring Culture and Community in Peru

By Mara L. '27

This Easter break, D.A. traveled to Peru to explore its vibrant culture and communities. From the bustling capital city of Lima to the colorful markets of Cuzco, we experienced a world and way of life vastly different from the familiar streets of New York City. I was feeling both nervous and excited as I met up with the rest of the group at the Newark airport. I had heard a lot about elevation sickness, but I had heard even more about the gorgeous sightseeing and



delicious food in Peru. As we boarded the plane for our eight-hour flight, I wondered if my Spanish would be good enough, what I would eat, and if I would make new friends

on the trip. But, before I knew it, the plane landed in Lima and our adventure began.

The first stop on our trip was the capital city of Peru, known for its seaside views and historic sites: Lima. During our four days there, the group took in the history of Peru through sightseeing tours and a visit to the Larco Museum, in which we learned about the Inca civilization that existed on the land before modern-day Peru. The museum had hundreds of artifacts on display, and we analyzed the history of Incan society through the different methods of creating pottery, as well as their various designs and styles. We explored how crafting textiles and ornaments could record history, trace family trees, and symbolize changes in rulers.

While in Lima, we made it a point to try as much of the local cuisine as we could, the most popular being *ceviche*, a citrusy raw seafood dish, and *lomo saltado*, a savory plate of marinated beef, vegetables, and rice. Some students who were feeling adventurous even tasted *cuy*, or roasted guinea pig, and alpaca meat. There were various cultural cuisines to try in Lima, from Andean to Japanese to Chinese, due to massive immigration starting in the late 1800s.

We spent Easter Sunday in Lima where we attended Mass and visited the Basilica and Convent of Santo Domingo, a Dominican convent frequented by both St. Rose of Lima and St. Martin de Porres, as well as the house and sanctuary of St. Rose. St. Rose of Lima, the patron saint of Peru, South America, and the Philippines, spent her life in Lima caring for the sick and poor.



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St. Martin de Porres, the patron of social justice and racial harmony, also spent his time in the convent with St. Rose, caring for others regardless of their race. By visiting the places where these saints spent their lives, we were able to reflect on their service to their communities and how they lived out the Dominican pillars.

After our time in Lima, we made our way to the city of Cuzco, located in the Andes mountains, which holds a deep cultural history and beautiful architecture. We marveled at the remains of Inca civilization located both in the town of Ollantaytambo as well as the famous ruins of Machu Picchu (be sure to read Iris' article on the architecture!). However, with the change of location came a change in altitude. Due to the elevation of Cuzco at over 11,000 feet above sea level, we had to adjust to the thinner air as we traveled from town to town and slowly increased our altitude throughout five days.

Stepping into Cuzco, I was immediately overwhelmed by the bustling markets filled with street art, textiles, and artisanal goods that reflected the vibrant culture and traditions of the community. The

group took a trip to Ceramics Seminario, a workshop run by well-known ceramicists Pablo Seminario and Marilú Behar. We learned about the process of producing pottery, as well as how modern creators use their art to tell history, continuing the legacy of their Incan ancestors. Continuing our exploration of the culture of Peru, we had the special experience of visiting a local mountain community in Lamay in order to learn about their traditions, daily life, and agriculture. The locals walked us through a routine day for them, including enjoying a snack after cultivating in the morning, making an offering to thank *Pachamama*, or Mother Earth, for what they have, and preparing a meal to eat together for lunch.

Not only was the trip a chance to travel, sightsee, and take thousands of photos, but it was also an exploration of the Dominican pillars of both prayer and community. Although we came back to New York feeling thoroughly exhausted from our ventures, I'm sure we can all agree that it was a trip of a lifetime, and we wouldn't have missed it for anything. We can't wait to hear where D.A.'s next journey will be!



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D.A. IN PHOTOS

Peru in Photos



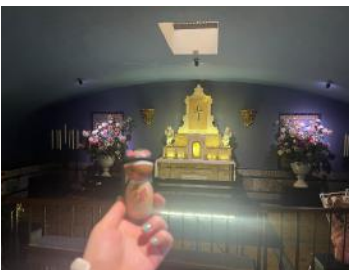


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