

The bell rang, ending lunch and interrupting my interviewee mid proclamation. Not that this toll stopped him; he continued, his voice only getting stronger and more passionate, the magnitude of his words filling up the small, dimly lit space we sat in. Eventually, the warning bell ended our discussion and we walked out into the harsh fluorescent hallway. His words still hung in the air, and I could see them as quotes already.

The truth was, I was terrified for this interview. I was covering a civil rights lawsuit, and my story obviously hinged on the messy, delicate and often danced around topic of race. I, a white reporter in a predominantly white school, was confronted with both my own privilege and my own power. This confrontation asked some extremely tough and terrifying questions, mainly where is my place, as a reporter and representation of my almost entirely white staff, when covering issues of race and privilege?

I found the answer the following year, when ironically I was writing a feature that had absolutely nothing to do with race. I was sitting in the living room of my feature subject. Both his parents sat across from me, and their corgi ran in circles around us, eventually coming to rest near my phone which was recording the conversation. The interview started out rather standard, but as they kept talking, I stopped looking at my list of questions. I was overtaken by the lull of their shining pride in their son, their love of him, and their excitement that someone else saw what they saw in him; he was special, noteworthy. I remember leaving and feeling over the moon. After that day, I came to the realization that interviewing and storytelling wasn't about me at all - it was the exact opposite.

It wasn't about me willing my interviewees into a state of vulnerability, it was about letting myself be the vulnerable one, and allowing them to

teach me, and for me to learn.

It wasn't about me asking a list of questions, it was about finding where their passions lie; I was only finding where.

All in all, it wasn't my story; it was theirs and I was only putting it in words.

Once I realized this, I fell in love with the interviewing process. I went on to write other stories dealing with the same issue. I covered the school's Black Student Union. The power I felt in these interviews was immense. I could feel the magnitude of their stories, but also began to realize the responsibility that came with the privilege I had. The privilege not only of being white, but also of being a reporter. I was giving a voice to someone and that mattered.

Whether or not my story will ever be read by anyone, I was given the opportunity to learn from someone, and to feel the power of their words. I started letting myself be entirely vulnerable and entirely open to learn from them, rather than willing them to fill in the blanks of what I assumed they were about.

I had to learn how to find where a person's passion lies, not where you think it is, and feed into that. This way, the only assumptions I'm making is that there is more dimension to this person and this topic than I could ever anticipate, and this person has something to teach me.

This rather dramatic manifesto is a culmination of many things. I had had some absolutely incredible opportunities to cover a wide range of topics. From global pandemics, to increases in enrollment, to controversial revamping of programs, I have met and talked to insightful, talented, and strong individuals over my time as a journalist. My work is far from over; I never want to stop learning from people and I never want to stop listening.



THE BLACK STUDENT UNION AIMS TO EDUCATE THE STUDENT BODY WHILE ENCOURAGING A CULTURE OF INCLUSIVITY AND CREATING A SAFE PLACE FOR MINORITIES AND MAJORITIES ALIKE

**“N**obody can give you equality, or justice, or anything. If you're a man, you take it". The Malcom X quote distorts as teacher **MATTHEW SHULMAN** walks in front of the projector screen that displayed the message he hopes to convey to the students sitting before him. Shulman said the dreary Monday in Room 210 held a feeling of urgency, a motivation and a sense of shared importance.

While student teaching last year, Shulman said he saw some of his students express interest in race relations and approached a few students about forming a Black Student Union, or BSU. He said he always knew he wanted to be involved in one wherever he worked.

"Students sometimes feel like they are on an island if they are the only black student in their class," Shulman said. "My vision for the club is diversity. Diversity begins to happen as more students feel comfortable speaking about specific issues. Hispanic, Middle Eastern, Asian, whatever race they might be, maybe they start to feel more comfortable [having] a bigger voice for kids of all races."

Senior **MCKENZIE ISZARD** said partially in light of the civil rights lawsuit against the school, she and others found urgency in starting the club.

"Knowing that someone could hold you back from something just because of the way you look, something you can't control, is painful," Iszard said. "This is something that will affect this community and the minorities in this community for a long time. Having a BSU here gives us that opportunity to have a community where we can monitor that those things don't happen again."

Senior **SASHA MITCHELL** said she moved to the Blue Valley School District from a predominantly African American school, a change that motivated her to join the club.

"I had to take a step back and say to myself, 'do you want to see a change in your community?'" Mitchell said. "I really want to make my voice heard to the community."

Junior **ALINA MALHI** found motivation from a similar place, moving to Blue Valley and finding the demographic shift difficult.

"I joined because I think it's important that we talk about issues that aren't being discussed as much as they should be, especially at this school" Malhi said. "With a majority of white people I think it's important to share our story."

Shulman said meetings strove to cater to these motivations. The club discussed concepts from national issues to individual experiences with discrimination.

"There's been a few [stories shared by students] that were really eye opening," Shulman said. "You never know what somebody's story is and you never know what people have gone through and for some of these kids to have an opportunity to share and a place where they feel comfortable to share is really important."

The club also worked to celebrate black culture, something Shulman said he wanted to emphasize. In order to educate the non-minority population, Iszard said the club decorated the main staircase during February, Black History Month.

"The decorations on the main staircase are really a way to get people engaged in the history," Iszard said. "Something as little as googling a person's name shows now you know that person and you know why they are significant."

While the club worked to celebrate black culture, it also worked to affect and support the entire student body.

"The main thing I want them to take away from [BSU] is that we are the same person," Mitchell said. "Were all still equal, no matter what race, no matter what hair color, we want them to know we are all part of this great big family."

Iszard said the club emphasized and encouraged a diverse member base, welcoming all minorities and majorities alike.

"I know that African Americans and minorities have a very good understanding of the history and a very good understanding of the social situations but if that doesn't affect you on a daily basis, you are not gonna know," Iszard said. "The willingness to learn what it's like to be a minority is something that is of value."

While frustrating events such as students from other schools mocking the club on Twitter were disappointing, Mitchell said it motivated the club even more.

"Obviously it hurt," Mitchell said. "It kind of motivates you more to want to do better; reach out, branch out to your community. That tweet out there is not gonna stop me from doing what I want to do for this community."

Mitchell said she was proud of what the club accomplished and hoped their efforts sparked an urgency for change.

"You never know, maybe that change will come in a week," Mitchell said. "Maybe that will come in ten months or a year but we are just trying to strive for change and trying to strive for greater things."

STORY BY CAMRYN DILLAVOU  
DESIGN BY PRAGATHI VENKATESH

Shulman said the club looked beyond the walls of the school to cause change, reaching out to feeder middle schools.

"When you get to be in high school, you can feel lost and alone," Shulman said. "We want to make them feel like they know right when they get to high school they are already a part of something."

**REACHING OUT** THE BLACK STUDENT UNION STRIVES TO CONVEY THEIR BELIEFS OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL



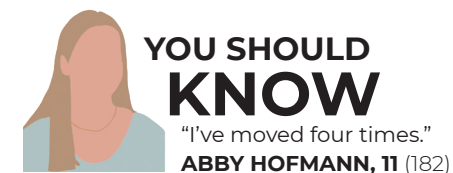
far left: **WRAPPING STREAMERS**, SENIOR **AYOMIDE EJELONU** helps create a pattern across the top of the main staircase while helping decorate for black history month. **PHOTO BY MEREDITH JOLITZ**

top left: **MAKING NEW BANNERS** for the main staircase, junior **JADYN UNDERWOOD** paints the words "Black History Month." **PHOTO BY MEREDITH JOLITZ**

bottom left: **DECORATING THE STAIRS**, freshman **DEMARCUS DARENSBOURG** and sophomore **DAMON JONES** toss decorations to each other on Feb. 20 **PHOTO BY MEREDITH JOLITZ**



**TAKING DOWN THEIR** previous work, Senior **SASHA MITCHELL** helps the Black Student Union update the the main staircase decorations Feb. 20. **PHOTO BY MEREDITH JOLITZ**





# UNCHARTED

# TERRITORY

STORY BY ABBEY GRIFFIN & CAMRYN DILLAVOU  
 DESIGN BY ELLA HUTNICK

## GLOBE

2019

NOV. 17 **FIRST CASE**

First case of the coronavirus in Hubei, China.

DEC. 31 **REPORTED**

Unknown virus in Wuhan, China reported to the World Health Organization for the first time.

2020

JAN. 7 **CONFIRMED**

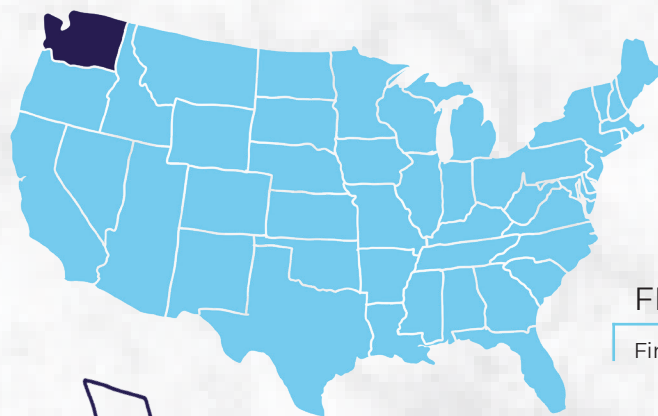
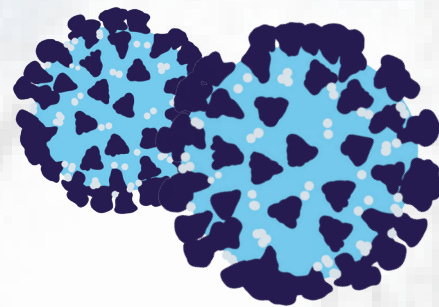
Virus is confirmed to be identified as the coronavirus or 2019-nCoV.

JAN. 9 **FIRST DEATH**

First death of a 66-year-old man in China from the Coronavirus.

FEB. 11 **NAMED**

World Health Organization officially named virus COVID-19.



JAN. 21 **U.S**

First confirmed case in Washington state in the United States.

JAN. 31 **DENIED ENTRY**

Trump administration said they would deny entry of people traveling from China in the past 14 days.

FEB. 29 **FIRST U.S. DEATH**

First death in the United States (Washington state).

MAR. 6 **SPENDING PACKAGE**

Trump signed an 8.3 billion spending package to mitigate virus risk in the United States.

MAR. 12 **CANCELLATIONS**

The NCAA limited attendance of the remainder of the season's games to only essential staff and family. Later in the day, the postseason tournament was cancelled. The NBA suspended their season, and President Trump announces travel ban, barring travel to Europe for 30 days.

MAR. 13 **NATIONAL EMERGENCY**

Trump declares national emergency.

## NATION

## NORTHWEST

THE ESCALATION OF THE GLOBAL COVID-19 PANDEMIC DRASTICALLY AFFECTS MANY ASPECTS OF DAILY LIFE, ON A GLOBAL AND CITYWIDE LEVEL

MAR. 4

**FIRST CASE REPORTED IN JOHNSON COUNTY, KAN.**

I remember at a dawghouse game everybody got the notification that it was in Johnson County. It was closer than I ever thought it would be. Everyone was shook up by the proximity.

MEREDITH GOLDSTEIN, 10

MAR. 13

**JOHNSON COUNTY PARKS AND REC CANCELS ALL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE ORGANIZATION.**

The virus is affecting my job so much. I am not going to be making any sort of money for months and that's really unfortunate since college is just around the corner.

ISABELLE CARROLL, 11

MAR. 16

**JOHNSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER DR. JOSEPH LEMASTER SIGNED AN ORDER THAT ALL JOHNSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS WOULD BE CLOSED UNTIL APRIL 5. JOHNSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT LIMITS FOOD SERVICE TO DRIVE-THRU/PICK UP ONLY**

MAR. 12

**DAWGHOUSE BAND AND CHEERLEADERS DO NOT ATTEND THE FIRST STATE BASKETBALL GAME DUE TO COVID-19 CONCERNS.**

I was sad because being a senior meant I was fully ready to embrace that if we lost that game that would have been my last game playing with the dawghouse band. The fact that the game before that was actually my last game and I didn't even realize it was what hit me so hard.

CADEN HUGHES, 12

MAR. 13

**THE INTERNATIONAL DECA COMPETITION, MUSIC FESTIVALS, AND WE THE PEOPLE ARE ALL CANCELED. BLUE VALLEY ALSO CLOSES ALL CAMPUSES FOR A WEEK OF DEEP CLEANING.**

MAR. 17

**KANSAS GOVERNOR LAURA KELLY ORDERED ALL SCHOOLS IN KANSAS TO CLOSE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR.**

You have a certain way you expect the last quarter of your high school career to go and that was completely thrown up in the air.

KAT MASON, 12

MAR. 13

**IN AN EMAIL FROM SUPERINTENDENT TODD WHITE, ALL TRAVEL ASSOCIATED WITH KSHAA ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS IS SUSPENDED FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR.**

MAR. 13

**THE KSHSAA TOURNAMENT IS CANCELLED AFTER QUARTERFINAL ROUND PLAY. THE BOYS WERE SEEKING THEIR FOURTH STATE CHAMPIONSHIP IN A ROW.**

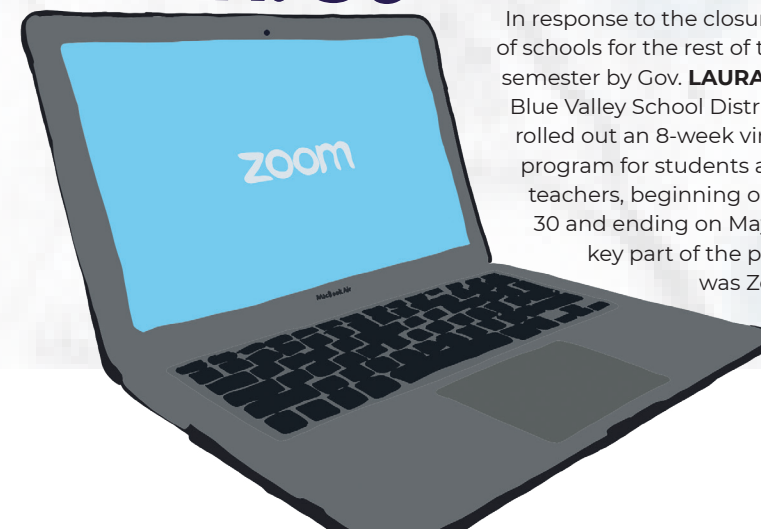
Working the entire year to go win a state championship and having that taken away from us, all because sickness, was disappointing... but everyone knows if we would have gotten the chance to play those next two games we would take it home.

MARKELL HOOD, 12

MAR. 28

**GOV. LAURA KELLY SIGNS AN EXECUTIVE STAY-AT-HOME ORDER, IN EFFECT FROM MAR. 30 THROUGH APR. 19**

MAR. 30



In response to the closure of schools for the rest of the semester by Gov. LAURA KELLY, Blue Valley School District rolled out an 8-week virtual program for students and teachers, beginning on Mar. 30 and ending on May 22. A key part of the program was Zoom, an

online video chat service that allowed students to interact with their teachers and each other. Teachers and students were provided with an hour of Zoom time every other day for each class, but the teachers decided whether or not attendance of those sessions was mandatory.

Background photo courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



**TURNING AND KICKING** her leg to help her transition off the ground after a triple turn, Junior **MOLLY THOMAS** performs at the Homecoming Assembly Oct. 11. "Performing a dance is fun, and it is even more fun when you get to do it in front of a group of people," Thomas said. **PHOTO BY RICHA LADDHA**



## REFOCUSED, REDEFINED

THE PACK FEELS THE EFFECTS OF SCHEDULING CHANGES, DRASTICALLY AFFECTING THE SEASON'S FOCUS

Coaches **ANDREA SMITH** and **ERIN PEARSON** said due to a district decision, the team would not attend a national competition this year.

Steketee said while the team enjoyed nationals in the past, the decision allowed for more energy and time to be put into attending games and school events.

"[Nationals] was our whole second semester...it has changed because all our focus is on basketball season which is really awesome," Steketee said. "I think everyone wanted a little bit more focus on gameday and creating a team that we loved."

# COMEBACK SEASON



## AMID SWEEPING PROGRAM CHANGES, THE PACK SETS DELIBERATE GOALS TO REDEFINE THE NORTHWEST DANCE TEAM

The 16 members of the Pack dance team trickle into the aux gym, all wearing newly branded tank tops, proudly proclaiming the team's "We Over Me" motto. Lively conversation and laughter fill the stale air of the aux gym before coaches and teachers **ERIN PEARSON** and **ANDREA SMITH** begin discussing the day's agenda. The girls begin to perform their individually choreographed dances, all followed by applause and positive feedback. Senior and team captain **BELLA STEKETEE** said the uplifting atmosphere is a product of various changes to the team.

"It's a very different atmosphere than it has ever been," Steketee said. "I love what it's turned into, and I love what we are creating."

Steketee said due to past events, The Pack felt motivated to change.

"Seeing everyone unhappy with where we were at, I think was our motivation to create something that we were gonna love and that we could rebuild into something new and different," Steketee said.

Pearson said changes began with the team name itself; the former Dazzler dance team becoming The Pack.

"To start a new program, you have to have a clear identity and be proud of that," Pearson said. "If we want to start fresh, we need to start fresh."

Smith and Pearson, who both had prior experience coaching the Northwest dance team, said they both placed huge importance on communication with the team members.

"You don't just teach Spanish and you don't just teach English," Pearson said. "We want to make sure they are taken care of and we can move forward to

be able to better handle anything that comes our way—not just associated with some of that negativity, but just as human beings operating in this world."

Junior and team captain **COURTNEY KREBS** said while the team's time in the limelight felt difficult, she thought it created momentum for this year.

"It almost motivates us to restart and bring the best reputation we can to the new team," Krebs said. "I definitely think the farther we get away from it, the more helpful it is to feel like this is a fresh start. It was a more or less sort of traumatizing experience with those girls and we know in the back of our minds we are not going back to that."

Steketee said the team set intentional, specific goals not only to improve, but to change the program's reputation; one of the main focuses was having a larger presence in the school.

"Our biggest focus this year has been supporting the school in every aspect of the school," Steketee said. "In the past we have focused on competition and making ourselves look the best that we can, and while that's important, it's also important to show we are supporting everyone else."

Junior **MOLLY THOMAS** said she believed the team's willingness to change would improve their reputation. "I think the fact that we are encouraging the change within ourselves and within each other allows for the student body to want what we want," Thomas said.

Thomas said she felt another factor going into improving the team's reputation included the addition of two Northwest teachers to the team.

"I think a lot of people are seeing the dance team in a new way because a lot of people have a lot of respect for EK

and Senora Smith," Thomas said. "I think the coaching staff has allowed for the student body to have respect for us."

Smith said while she and Pearson appreciated the school's respect, they hoped the team's work ethic spoke for itself.

"I think the team has worked hard," Smith said. "That has helped them gain their respect back."

Smith and Pearson both stressed the importance of working hard on the dance team and in the classroom by keeping standards high.

"We have always believed because you represent the school, you should be held to a higher standard," Pearson said.

Steketee said these high standards were important to create a better team culture.

"I feel like there's so much more we can bring so holding that high standard has been helpful to rebranding and improving," Steketee said.

Steketee said increasing weight on the image the team creates allowed for an improved atmosphere.

"[In years past] I never really thought about being an image for the dance team," Steketee said. "I didn't think it had much significance in past years but this year I feel we've taken steps to make that known. [We want to be] embodying kindness and encouragement to all those around us."

Pearson said she and Smith hoped all the trials and changes helped the girls find passion and pride in The Pack.

"We just want them to be proud of their program," Pearson said. "Be proud of their name, be proud of their identity and be proud of what they stand for."

**STORY BY CAMRYN DILLAVOU**  
**DESIGN BY ELLA HUTNICK**



*dominant:* **GRINNING AT THE CROWD**, junior **COURTNEY KREBS** dances with the pack. "Husky Night is our first performance of the year, so it's always exciting to debut our new team and routine," Krebs said. **PHOTO BY EMILY FARTHING**

**PERFORMING HER FIRST** hip hop routine of the year, Freshman **LINDSAY HARRIS** dances at an assembly with The Pack Sept. 6. "Dancing is a good way to exercise but also express yourself at the same time, and I can be myself when I am doing it," Harris said. **PHOTO BY RICHA LADDHA**  
**THE PACK PERFORMS** during Husky Night festivities Aug. 30. **PHOTO BY EMILY FARTHING**





## JUNIOR JOSH MURDOCK LOOKS TOWARD FUTURE HORIZONS BY WORKING TO SECURE HIS PRIVATE PILOTS LICENSE

As the late summer sun fell in the sky on the night of July 29, **SHARON MURDOCK** stood in the wide open New Century Airport. She said the air felt calm enough to cool her nerves as she watched a Cessna 172 land safely on the runway, her son the pilot. Junior **JOSH MURDOCK** completed his first solo flight that his mom said was perfectly backdropped by a freight train rushing past in the distance and hearing her son's voice over the radio, declaring a safe landing.

"He was always our train guy as a little kid," Murdock, Josh's mom said. "Here was our little train guy now landing... we could hear the radio and him talking. It was exciting and scary at the same time."

Josh's first solo flight belonged to a larger process he had been pursuing in order to achieve a larger ultimate goal.

"I am currently working on my private pilot's license," Josh said.

Josh said he always remembered having an interest in aviation, an interest that only strengthened with time.

"As a kid, I thought it was something that was really cool," Josh said. "It was just one of those things I always dreamt that maybe I would do someday."

**KYLE MURDOCK**, Josh's father, said he and his wife were supportive of Josh's endeavors despite safety concerns.

"I was pleased he had something he wanted to pursue, that he had that passion," Josh's dad said. "To have something to set up there as a goal I think was exciting... Even though we were nervous about it we've tried to be very supportive."

With the support of his parents, Josh remained true to his childhood dreams and began pursuing his license seriously at the beginning of the summer of 2019. Josh said he began doing so in preparation for his future; looking to obtain first his private, and eventually commercial licenses.

"To fly for any of the big airlines.... this is the first step," Josh said. "It's a very linear, robust path that you have to take."

Josh took lessons with Air Associates, an FBO (fixed based operator) located at the Johnson County Executive Airport. He said he went to lessons almost every day, flying for about an hour and a half at a time sometimes with his instructor and sometimes flying solo.

"It's actually quite relaxing and freeing," Josh said. "It's kinda like driving a car, but amplified."

His mom said beyond his actual time in the sky, her son put countless hours into studying for the license exam and understanding the ins and outs of flying. Despite the large time commitment, she understood the appeal to her son.

"It's exciting and fun and freeing," she said. "He also sees his future and I think he does it because it's becoming his niche."

Josh said he looks forward to turning 17 and being able to take the exam to get his license, which gives him many unique capabilities that come with huge responsibility.

"Once I turn 17, I can get my private pilot license, which means I can go anywhere with anyone I want," Josh said. "I just can't fly specific types of planes."

Josh's father said while the concept of his son flying can be scary, he recognized his son's ability.

"As we watched all of our kids grow up and their friends grow up you know you realize how capable they are," he said. "It takes a little getting used to but at the same time we want him to be confident and develop these skills."

Josh said the next step in achieving his goal of being a commercial pilot involved attending K-State Polytechnic, where he would be eligible to get his ATP (Airline Transport Pilot), which would allow him to fly commercially for major airlines.

"I would like to fly internationally," Josh said. "I don't know where, don't know for who, but yeah, that's my ultimate goal."

Future plans aside, Josh's father said he saw the passion his son has for flying.

"It's something unique for him," he said. "It's something neither of his brothers or his parents ever did and it's something he really made his own special thing... When he flies he is focused on that... It's kinda a chance to reset and for that hour or two hours and everything else is put on hold."

Josh's mom said she could see her son succeeding in the field.

"He's been very rule oriented," she said. "...I found myself at airports paying attention and it struck me one day that he has the demeanor of a pilot. He has that personality and his body language seems like a pilot now that I've watched and analyzed."

While Josh recognizes the amount of sacrifice it takes, he said a distinct appeal keeps him coming back.

"Ultimately it's the light at the end of the tunnel," Josh said. "Yes, it's time consuming and it does cost a lot of money... but once you start getting paid and flying all over the country and potentially the world, that's really fun. Might as well get paid to do something you love."

**REMOVING THE COWL** plugs Nov. 11, junior **JOSH MURDOCK** gets the plane ready for takeoff. "It's cool going on a cross country flight to another airport, and being able to look at everything from above," Murdock said **PHOTO BY CELIA HARRIS**

# JOSH MURDOCK

STORY BY CAMRYN DILLAVOU  
DESIGN BY ELLA HUTNICK





above: **AS SHE EXECUTES** a quad pop Sept. 25, freshman **MAKENNA TENBROEK** finishes her turn lifting in the weights room. "[The class] is pretty big, but it works well because we all work in groups and it helps us all work together," Tenbroek said. **PHOTO BY LUCY ZIMMERMAN**

right: **LAUGHING IN THE** weights class, Freshman **PAUL SCHLIMMER** helps cheer on Freshman **CHARLIE OLM-SHIPMAN** as he lifts weights Oct. 2. **PHOTO BY LUCY ZIMMERMAN**

## BIGGAINS

WEIGHTS CLASSES EXPERIENCE A SURGE IN ENROLLMENT

In the 2019-2020 school year, 310 students requested weights each semester. 150 in weights one, 160 in weights two. Number listed in the illustration is the number of students who requested weights per semester for the past five years.



far left: **LAUGHING AT THE** expressions on her friend's faces, freshman **ARPA DAS** lifts a deadweight in the weights room Oct. 2. "Since weights class is fifth hour, I have already had most of my core classes which stress me out, so having weights stresses which is why I like it," Das said. **PHOTO BY LUCY ZIMMERMAN**

left: **DURING FIFTH HOUR,** freshman **DEVIN TRAMBLE** dumbbell benches 30 pound weights Sept. 25. "I like that I have friends in the weights class, and it can help you get stronger," Tramble said. **PHOTO BY RICHA LADDHA**

### STUDENTS ENROLLED IN WEIGHTS DISCUSS THE POSITIVE PUSH FOR PARTICIPATION IN WEIGHTS AND THE EFFECTS OF THE INCREASE IN POPULARITY

Senior **EVAN RANALLO** stood shoulder-to-shoulder, packed into a crowd cheering on a single student. The smell of sweat and the dense humidity in the room backdropped the piercing tone of a bell and the slam of the weight rack clanging against the floor. It's max out day in **CLINT RIDER'S** fourth hour weights class.

According to Ranallo, the scene contrasted his experience in weights in past years. "The weight room was empty and lacked a lot of energy," Ranallo said. "There were usually about three people to rack or less and now there's no room. It is completely packed and hard to move around."

Senior **JULIA BREIDENTHAL** said she noticed an increase in popularity throughout her two years in the weights program, a shift she said brought positive change.

"Last year it was kind of mellow," Breidenthal said. "I think this year it's going to be a lot more fun because there's so many more people to cheer you on. When you have the whole entire class screaming at you to get up it's really encouraging and makes you want to lift more."

Ranallo said he attributes the increase in popularity to Rider.

"I think Coach Rider really made a big impact," Ranallo said. "He involved the whole school with weights and brought everyone together."

Weights teacher Clint Rider said he got the school more involved by using

social media as a platform to showcase his class.

"Kids aren't just naturally, instinctively motivated to walk in and lift heavy things and to sweat during school," Rider said. "But [weights] is a really neat environment and we need to show everyone else what it is like so we can generate some interest."

Rider focused on pursuing freshman participation by using summer weights and making weights available as a class that provides a PE credit as ways to increase enrollment.

"[Weights] is a life skill," Rider said. "Everybody needs strength training of some kind, so when they get in freshman year, they're more likely to continue."

Freshman **ARPA DAS** said she took weights as a class because she enjoyed doing weights over the summer.

"Everyone was motivating each other every time someone gets their goal," Das said.

According to Das, since weights became an option for freshman more took the class due to possessing a different appeal than a traditional PE class.

"Some people don't like working out but weights is more strength based," Das said.

Rider said the increased interest in weights created a more diverse environment in the weights room, noting the influx of girls taking his class.

"I think both boys and girls benefit from each other because they offer different things to the room," Rider said. "It's not that girls are welcomed, it's that they are wanted. There's a difference between the two."

Breidenthal said she only had two other girls in her weight class last year, which prompted her to encourage other girls to take the class.

"We were able to make other girls see that girls can take weights too," Breidenthal said. "It's not just an environment for boys."

Rider said the increased interest and availability of the class brought a greater comradery to the class and the school.

"The culture we've tried to create in this room is that it doesn't matter if it's multiple sports coming together, we're going to support each other," Rider said. "It's the One Northwest, or Pack mentality."

Ranallo said due to the larger class sizes and subsequent increase in "hype," he grew to enjoy and benefit from the class.

"It has definitely taught me a good work ethic," Ranallo said. "To do your best at everything you do, try your hardest and pull people up with you. Bring them up to the standard that has been set."

STORY BY CAMRYN DILLAVOU  
DESIGN BY ALLISON DRAGOO



#### DID YOU KNOW?

"I was born in Roma, Queensland, Australia."

**SARAH-NICOLE HARPER** (240)