

OWEN West Side Story
Iowa City West High School
AANESTAD

Photojournalist of the Year

Contributions and what I have learned

Throughout the pandemic, anytime another stressful decision was made or more lockdowns were enforced, I would always find myself in my backyard with my camera in hand searching for something to photograph. No matter what is going on around me, photography is my escape from the stresses of being a student, a journalist, an athlete and even just a teenager. I first found my passion for photography at twelve years old behind the backstop of various little league baseball parks with my parent's camera. Ever since, photography has challenged me to reach out and find interests like journalism that I could never have predicted.

While first learning to drive a car at the age of fourteen, my dad always used to tell me to remember one word while driving: anticipate. "You can never tell exactly what the other car is going to do," he advised, "but you can always anticipate what they are going to do so you are never in harm's way." This year I learned that this doesn't just apply to driving, one of the biggest things I learned this year as a photographer is the importance of anticipation. Being able to predict where your subject is going to be and what they are going to be doing there makes the difference from photos that are simply something to look at and photos that make you feel like you were there and tell a story about the subject or subjects.

In my third year of being a part of the Iowa City West High journalism program, I found ways to not only improve as a person, writer and photographer, but discovered new ways to inform the community while also being creative. As a junior, I took on the role of being the West Side Story online sports editor, Trojan Epic yearbook co-sports editor, and a photographer for all three of our school's publications. The journalism program enabled me to be one of the first people back on the sidelines covering and photographing high school sports during the pandemic. Throughout the past year, I was able to photograph almost every sport offered and display my work for one of the best journalism teams in the country. Next year I will be taking on a new role as the Editor-in-Chief of the West Side Story [website](#), and I cannot wait to lead the team and continue to learn more about photography and being a journalist.



Starting left tackle Liam Becher '22 celebrates the Trojans' fourth consecutive Battle for the Boot win at Trojan Field on Sep. 4. For the first time ever no fans were allowed to watch the 52nd Annual cross-town matchup due to the Iowa City Community School District's safety guidelines. With a lot of help from West High's unstoppable offense, the Trojans moved to 2-0 on the year after defeating the Little Hawks 56-20. ([Published in Iowa City West's West Side Story on September 5, 2020](#))

Behind the Photo

1/250 sec at f/2.8, ISO 1000, 70mm

After defeating crosstown rival City High every year all the players swarm the trophy known as the "Boot". Knowing where the trophy was on the field I set up on the track a couple of feet away and locked Liam Becher '22 into focus as the team jumped up and down with excitement with the trophy.



Marko Migambi '21, Michael Nelson '23, and Miguel Cohen Suarez '22 celebrate after scoring a goal to go up 2-0 towards the end of the first half against cross-town rival Liberty on April 13. The boys soccer team went on to beat the Lightning 5-0 to improve to 4-1 on the year. ([Published in Iowa City West's West Side Story on April 14, 2021](#))

Behind the Photo

1/3200 sec at f/2.8, ISO 1000, 200mm

In a game I knew was going to be pretty high scoring I set myself up on the Trojans' scoring end of the field in order to catch the majority of the game's action. Too far back to catch the front side of Cohen Suarez's late first-half goal I positioned myself in hope of catching his celebration with his teammates as he made his way to the other end of the field. Right as he turned around to high five Migambi, the opposing team walked into the frame and I held down the shutter to capture both sides of the game and the second goal of the game.



Sprinter Fabian Brown '21 inches towards the finish line in the last few meters of the first heat of the 200-Meter Dash at the Forwald Coleman Relays at City High on April 15. Brown finished sixth overall with a time of 23.82 to help lead the Trojans to a fourth-place team finish on the night.

[\(Published in Iowa City West's West Side Story on May 14, 2021\)](#)

Behind the Photo

1/800 sec at f/2.8, ISO 1600, 110mm

As the sun went down and the track meet just started to ramp up I positioned myself directly behind the finish line and in one of the best lit places on the track in hopes of catching the runner's fight for the finish. Knowing Brown was in lane four, I locked him in focus from about 100 meters away and held down the shutter as he separated himself from the pack and emotionally crossed the finish line.



Jenny Geng '21 takes a breath while swimming the 100 breaststroke at the Mercer Park Aquatic Center on Oct. 17. "I just feel grateful to still have a season and still have the opportunity to race because I wasn't sure if that was going to happen or not," Geng said. The Trojan Bolts took home the virtual conference championship with their dual win over City High 141- 42. ([Published in Iowa City West's West Side Story on October 17, 2020](#))

Behind the Photo

1/1000 sec at f/2.8, ISO 1000, 200mm

While attending my first swim meet of the year without any spectators, I set up towards the end of the pool next to the team in hopes of catching the swimmers approaching me. The breaststroke is a really fun stroke to shoot, so when the 100 breaststroke was announced, I made sure to lock in the closest swimmer and was able to catch this photo of Geng.



Pleasant Valley's Rhys Ward '22 celebrates with his teammates after scoring the go-ahead goal in the second half of the state championship against the Trojans on June 5 at Cownie Soccer Park in Des Moines. The Trojans finished the year with a 20-2 record after falling to the Spartans 1-0. Coming into the tournament as the sixth seed the Spartans' cinderella story lived on all the way to their first-ever soccer state championship. ([Published in Iowa City West's West Side Story on June 6, 2021](#))

Behind the Photo

1/8000 sec at f/2.8, ISO 320, 200mm

As time continued to expire in the second half I set myself behind the West High goal in hopes of catching a Trojan go-ahead goal. To my own surprise, the Pleasant Valley's Ward found the back of the net before any Trojan could and I was in the perfect position to catch their celebration right next to their bench. As Ward made his way past his teammates and back onto the field I held down the shutter to catch his reaction after scoring one of the biggest goals of his life.