Multimedia Journalist of the Year Portfolio

Personal Statement

Over the last few years, I have truly developed a passion for journalism, something my freshman self would never expect. Coming into El Estoque, I had trouble getting to grips with the publication. Not only was it online due to distance learning, but unlike most of my peers, I had no previous experience in journalism. Yet I was eventually able to fit in and learn due to the helpfulness and advice of Justine, a Managing Editor, and Michelle, my section editor. Inspired, I applied for a position two months in and, much to my surprise, was given an editor position as a sophomore.

As Opinion Editor, I managed a group of seven and learned how to use websites such as Carrd and Readymag to design and publish cohesive multimedia packages. Through implementing multimedia elements such as TimelineJS and Google Trends and posting my first video, I discovered how multimedia could be used to enhance journalistic work.

In my junior year, I was a website editor and led the web team by redesigning the website and making presentations and tutorials. More importantly, as the year progressed, I served as a mentor to many new staff writers, just as Justine and Michelle did for me. By spending time helping others with multimedia, I learned how to be a leader, and by the end of the year, we had earned a SNO Distinguished Site honor.

In the past year, I have published in every section, and most of my 38 stories incorporate multimedia. For news, I have visualized data about school demographics, grade distribution, minimum wage and coronavirus cases, created videos about Robotics Club and Earth Day and published an interactive news quiz. In features, I published my third 50 Questions video and embedded maps of the routes two Ukrainian refugees went on. In my opinion story about African American representation in politics, I included a chart showing the number of African Americans in Congress over time. While sports game reviews typically do not have multimedia elements, my basketball game reviews included points by quarter, helping show momentum; for example, in this game review, the collapse of the team's first-quarter lead is easy to see. In addition to game reviews, I also wrote sports-features stories such as this one which utilizes SoundciteJS. Movie reviews usually lack multimedia elements like game reviews, but my reviews included screen time data, IMDb ratings and embedded soundtracks. Besides reviews, I used multimedia tools such as a pie chart in this entertainment opinion piece and embedded videos in my entertainment features story about the school announcements.

After more than 200 interviews, 75 social media posts, 60 stories and 20 awards, I was announced as an editor-in-chief for the 2022-2023 school year. Now I will work with the heads team and our advisor to transform El Estoque next year. I am proud to say multimedia journalism has changed my life and taught me valuable skills, and I will continue to be a listening ear and a helping hand for everyone on staff.

Declining enrollment impacts teachers

In this story, I interviewed three teachers of varying ages who shared their thoughts on the declining enrollment in MVHS. After getting insightful responses, touching on topics such as tenure and the increasing costs of living, I wanted to include interactive charts to help readers visually understand the issue. After cleaning up recent census data and data provided by our district's demographer, I added two animated pie charts relating to demographics and one chart showing the school's decline in population.

Marvel's "Eternals" disappoints despite an eternal run-time and diverse cast

Combining two of my favorite pastimes, watching movies and visualizing data, I published a movie review with a bar chart. In addition to the bar chat with screen time data for the 1o Eternals, I included a gallery with information on each superhuman protagonist.

COVID-19 surges for weeks following winter break

In the first three weeks of the second semester, 622 students and 74 staff tested positive for COVID-19 across the school district. To inform my community about the sudden rise of cases, I shared the advice of school administrators, the experience of a teacher who tested positive and included mitigation strategies. To show the gravity of the situation, I embedded three charts showing how quickly COVID had surged in the school, district and county.

Visualizing the COVID-19 pandemic in Santa Clara County

I created this interactive in November, thinking the pandemic had slowed down; however, after the surge of cases following winter break, I updated the numbers, republished and included a link to it at the bottom of COVID-19 surges for weeks following winter break. Not only does the story graphically display case numbers over time, it also has cards explaining inflection points and critical decisions. In addition, since the tool had never been used before, I recorded and shared a video tutorial on how to use StorylineJS with the rest of the staff.

Displaced by war

This story shares how two Ukrainian high schoolers fled for safety after the Russian invasion. I wrote it to give teenagers a voice and help MVHS students gain perspective on how the invasion affects people their age. I embedded Google Maps routes of their evacuation to supplement the quotes, and the story quickly became one of the most read on our website.