



A CRISIS CLOSE TO

HOME

Two recovering addicts share their experience

SARAH KALLIS, editor-in-chief

“The first time I had an OxyContin... I was at a Lawrenceville apartment complex pool. It was an OxyContin 40. I chewed it up and I had probably one of the most incredible experiences I’ve had in my entire life, and I kind of knew at that point that there was a problem,” said Rush.

Rush knew his first experience with OxyContin was dangerous, and far too enjoyable. Currently, he is in recovery from an opiate addiction, triggered by his experience at the pool. However, he is far from alone. A 2016 CDC report has placed Georgia in the top 11 states for most prescription opioid overdoses.

A TALE OF TWO RECOVERIES

Rush's first introduction to drugs and alcohol occurred when he was 12 years old, as his parents were heavy drinkers and he witness frequent consumption of alcohol.

“My first introduction to opiates was Lortabs that I got from my friend's medicine cabinet,” he said. Lortabs are a type of hydrocodone.

Although he was not immediately hooked, addiction soon took hold when he tried OxyContin at the pool. Once he felt the euphoria induced by the drug, he was willing to do whatever he could to get the feeling again.

“I was willing to do anything and everything it took to get these. It wasn't easy to come by. I knew some people who had cancer, they were willing to sell some,” he said. Doctors often overprescribe painkillers for patients (prescriptions per year have increased 272 percent in the past 25 years according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse), and the patients would sell the excess. “When you're in that life, you don't really have a choice,” he said about the necessity to use.

Rush's moment of clarity to get sober occurred after some years later at a family dinner in 2001 when he did not have access to drugs.

“I remember being in the restaurant, and the withdrawals hitting me. I started to sweat, I was shaking, and I couldn't be in that moment. So, I had to go out to the car, and I remember getting in the backseat of a car and curling up in a ball, in a fetal position, and trying to figure out, how can I get this to stop?” Rush said.

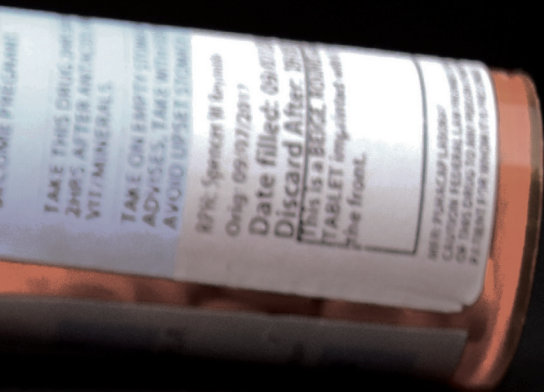
He went to his parents for help. They were initially skeptical of his desire to get clean since he had some previous attempts to quit the drug, but they wanted to assist him in finding help.

“The love of a parent is a pretty powerful thing. If they think there's a chance that their kid can get some help, they're going to do whatever it takes,” he said.

Rush was taking 320mg of OxyContin per day at the time when he entered a treatment facility, and when he arrived, he was put on Suboxone, a narcotic used to treat addiction. He remained in the facility for seven days, and left with a Suboxone prescription to wean him off of opiates.

“I'll never forget the day that I fully came off of it, and I didn't have any more left in the prescription, and I panicked. I went back to, basically the dopeman's house to get the drugs I was previously using,” he said about the quick relapse. “It was a struggle for me. I continued to use after I got out of that treatment center for years, until finally I went to jail.”

Rush was arrested in 2008, and remained there for about six months. The separation from drugs while in jail allowed him some clarity, and he made the decision to get help again.





Georgia Rehab facilities can cost up to

\$30,000

per month

"I was thinking a little bit clearer. I wasn't having that obsessive thought about using like I did six months prior. I was able to start going to meetings, getting a sponsor, working the steps," he said. He has been sober since he was released from jail nine years ago. "When I got to jail, I saw it as an opportunity."

Rush also said that his relationship with God gave him a sense of power, and was integral to him staying sober.

"When I come in here, and lack of power is my problem, then my solution needs to be a power. And the power doesn't necessarily come from [me]. I'm just a finite being. I need more than me. So, what the 12 steps did, and really it was the sponsor who introduced me to the 12 steps, the 12 steps introduced me to a power greater than me, which ultimately has kept me sober for the past nine years," he said. He then was able to get a job at a carwash, then eventually as a salesperson.

"Coming from the place that I came from, I didn't think there was a solution for a guy like me. I just thought that I was going to be destined to a life where I didn't have a choice except to use drugs and drink alcohol. It's not like I just had nine great years of this new life. I mean, we're talking about two or three years just to get back to normal," Rush said. While he was using drugs, he was not sleeping or eating well, and it had lasting effects on his health. However, after a few years, his body became regulated again.

One of the largest contrasts between Rush's life before and after treatment is his ability to relate to other people and form relationships. He cites getting a job as

"instrumental in me forming relationships with people." It taught him how to treat others, and how he wanted to be treated. "When you're out there, and you're using and you're drinking, there's a lot of isolation," he said.

**"When I
got to jail, I
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opportunity"**

-Rush

The structure the job provided helped him recover, and was initially scared of it because of "fear of the unknown. Really, the only life I had known was just drinking and getting high constantly." The concept of being self-supporting was foreign to him, and took some adjustment.

Ultimately, it turned out to be a positive growth experience. "When I got my first job, all I knew was that I was scared and I didn't know why. Now I know why." He now has the skills to cope with fear, and is grateful that he no longer has to use drugs to get through his fears.

Rush found talent in being a salesperson once he got over his initial fears. However, he knew that he would rather be in an industry that allowed him to help others more. He soon found a job as an outreach specialist at the treatment facility he currently works at. "I met the right people at the right time. I feel like it was kind of a God thing. I think God put these people in my life exactly when they were supposed to be there. Honestly, it's one of my dream jobs."

As an Outreach Specialist, he builds relationships with other treatment centers and hospitals, and helps find the right treatment center for patients. A large part

of his job is, "If the stars align and there's an opportunity to get someone into treatment, just trying to jump on that." Aside from his job, Rush helps recovering addicts by sponsoring them while they go through the treatment process and the 12 steps, fueling his passion for helping others.

Chip is another recovering addict who now works in the treatment industry. However, his battle was long before Rush's. His introduction to drugs and alcohol occurred at young age. "I first drank beer when I was about six years old. I just snuck some and poured it in a glass with my buddy," he said.

Continuing to drink regularly by the time he was 12, Chip also began playing in a rock band where he was introduced to other drugs. "It's sort of natural to be rebellious as a teenager, and that's just sort of the route that I went," he said. Eventually, his first encounter with opioids occurred during the summer of 1969.

"I was taking LSD pretty regularly and of course smoking marijuana every day. A friend of mine had some morphine, and he said 'do you want to shoot morphine' and I was so in the drug lifestyle at that point that I just did it, and that turned out to be my favorite drug." Chip said.

Morphine was expensive and the addiction was hard to maintain, so he began mixing cocaine and heroin at age 16.

"The euphoria was so intense that I always wanted to feel that way, but never, ever felt that way again," he said about his first time trying the two drugs together. Chip quickly found out that heroin was taboo, even in the drug lifestyle, citing that many people looked down at heroin addicts. However, he and his friends overlooked the stigma to pursue the euphoria the drug brought them.

"It's unbelievably pleasurable. It's hard because I'm a recovering addict now for 34 years. Part of recovery is knowing you have to kind of put it in a box. You have to know that there's something out there that's probably the best feeling in the world. Better than anything you can experience. And let it be there. And not go there." Chip said.

Chip continued to use heroin, financing his addiction through dealing other drugs. "I always thought that stealing was really bad karma. I just sold drugs to people I knew," he said. But, soon he began to feel the weight of his addiction, and attempted to stop using multiple times while he was still a teenager.

"I'd swear off, and I'd stop for a few weeks, but I just never could stay stopped until I finally got through recovery," he said. Chip also mentions that "the urges to use are so unbelievably powerful, not like what most people could ever conceive of."

He finally entered treatment several years later, after one particularly hard night with his young son.

"I was just using, and I couldn't stop, and I looked at him and I felt such shame that I had this little kid, and I was his dad, and I just felt like some kind of worthless creature. I didn't even feel like a human being. I was so addicted, and I just couldn't stop. I started writing, and I must have had some suicidal ideation in there or something, saying I just had no idea how to stop." Chip said.

His mom found the note he left and confronted him. After Chip admitted he had an addiction, his mom took him to the family doctor. He entered a treatment

program within 36 hours and has not used since.

Although he views treatment as a positive experience, detox was unpleasant.

"I couldn't get warm. It was February, and body temperature goes down a lot. I just couldn't get warm. I sat on heaters with sweaters on, and I just wanted to leave. They wouldn't give me the drugs I wanted," he said. Chip expected to be weaned off of drugs, but since his program was abstinence-based, he was not allowed any drugs.

"I would just kind of make it one more day. I packed up my bags to leave twice, but the other patients convinced me to stay. I had a doctor named Martha...She kept giving me the option to stay or go, and I trusted her. I didn't trust many people, but I trusted [her]," he said.

His relationship with his sponsors, peers, and his doctor helped him recover. Another integral part of his recovery is his involvement with Narcotics Anonymous (NA), which his doctor, Martha, convinced him to go to.

"That is the main reason that I am still in recovery," he said about NA. Chip still attends meetings and particularly values the service opportunities that NA provides him with.

"You literally start to form new connections in your brain through neuroplasticity," he said about how service helps form new reward systems in the brain and help addicts recover. "You start to feel good about being honest rather than being a good liar."

The sense of community within NA as another integral part of Chip's recovery. "You got to have some place where you go in and people can relate to you on the level of being an addict," he said, acknowledging the fact that NA can always provide him with friends. "It gives me a real sense of safety that I never have to use again."

Chip now happily works as a counselor and at an Atlanta area treatment center.

"It's great. It gets me up in the morning. I feel really honored that people let me into their lives," he said. He also encourages addicts to speak up about their experience, in order to discourage stigma. "One person can make a difference. I think it will take individuals going out and talking about this."

Chip wants others to know that the recovery process is viable, no matter how daunting it may seem. "Recovery is possible. Alcoholics and other addicts don't have to die from it. They can stop using and find a new way to live."

THE TRIANGLE

Rush and Chip are both from suburban Atlanta, where opioid addiction is especially prevalent. Fulton county has the highest number of opioid-related deaths in the state, and Cobb county falls in second place.

On October 24th, 2017, Fulton county filed a lawsuit against companies that make and distribute opioids. The Heroin Triangle, which includes Sandy Springs, Dunwoody, Alpharetta, and Marietta, is categorized by having an unusually high amount of opioid-related deaths. HIES and many student are geographically located in the triangle. According to the C&G 2017 Winter survey, 19 percent of students know someone who has been affected by opiate addiction.

"It gives me a real sense of safety that I never have to use again."

-Chip

The Triangle has a high death rate partially because of easy access to drugs and a lack of an access to affordable treatment centers treatment centers. A typical detox costs about \$7,500, and treatment facilities range from \$15,000 to \$30,000 a month. Recovering addicts often need to go to treatment multiple times, and the costs add up. In order to decrease opioid deaths, the state of Georgia has plans to expand affordable treatment. However, doing so is a challenging task.

The Substance Abuse Research Alliance (SARA) wants the State of Georgia to decrease opioid deaths by increasing access to Naloxone, a drug that reverses opioid overdose. The state wants to allow first responders, parents, and educators easy access to Naloxone to help prevent opioid-related deaths.

SARA proposes an increase in governmental funding for both medical assisted and abstinence-based drug rehabilitation. It also wants to increase funding for education that prevents substance misuse, and fund prescriber education on opioids. SARA also wants to increase prescription drug monitoring (PDMP), and "Increase oversight" of pain clinics, more commonly known as "pill mills". Although they must register with The Georgia Composite Medical Board and The Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, pain clinics are not currently required to register with the PDMP. Georgia currently has no specific prescription guidelines surrounding opioids.

Although it is common in the Triangle, opioid addiction is rampant across the United States, as 91 people per day die of opioid overdose. Heroin and OxyContin are examples of two opioids with high addiction rates, but contrary to the popular belief, only about 5 percent of prescription drug addicts turn to Heroin. Addicts often get hooked by trying them recreationally, or becoming addicted after a surgery that prescribed opioid painkillers. The epidemic started when large manufacturers and distributors of opioids began pushing for over-prescription.

Purdue Pharma, the company that manufactures OxyContin, admitted to promoting over prescription, and was fined 650 million dollars in 2007. Opioids are commonly prescribed for chronic pain, and some patients sell their excess pills. Pill mills are also notorious for over prescription, and some pharmacies are willing to fill bogus prescriptions from doctors.

National legislation also plays a large role in resolving the opioid crisis. It was declared a Public Health Emergency by President Donald Trump in late October 2017. This allows the administration to use the Public Health fund to address the

crisis, but that fund is almost empty, according to NPR.

In March 2016, Congress passed the controversial Marino Bill. It was written by a former Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) attorney, Linden Barber, and was sponsored by Tom Marino, a Pennsylvania Representative. Some champion the bill as a way to allow pain patients the medications they need, and others see it as a way to protect big drug manufacturer's interests, and inhibit the DEA's power. The bill did not get much media attention because the 2016 presidential election dominated most major news outlets.

Joe Rannazzisi, a former DEA lawyer, strongly opposed the bill, citing its limitations to the DEA, particularly its limitations to the DEA's ability to freeze drug shipments. According to the Washington Post, the DEA was formerly allowed to freeze any shipments of drugs that posed an "imminent danger" to a community, including unusually large orders of opioids. Now, they must prove "Substantial likelihood of an immediate threat," including injury or death, in order to freeze a shipment. The Marino Bill causes the DEA to go through more steps to intervene in unusual situations involving drug shipments.

However, Marino defends the bill as a way to ensure that pain patients get their medication without interference with the law.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE LAW

According to the Human Rights Watch, a person is entered into the US prison system every 25 seconds for possession of drugs. But, this mass incarceration does not need to happen.

Dixon, Illinois is a prime example of a community that decreased stigma by decriminalizing addiction. The Chicago Tribune reports that this program was specifically designed to reduce heroin addiction, and allows addicts to surrender any substances they possess in turn for access to treatment, and no charges pressed against them. Felony drug arrests decreased 39 percent in the county in 2016.

Providing low-cost access to treatment is another way to reduce both stigma and addiction. Currently, there are two primary paths for treating opioid addiction: medical assisted and abstinence based.

Medical assisted treatment usually involves a treatment facility providing Suboxone to a patient, gradually weaning them off.

20

Percent of HIES students know someone who has been affected by opioid addiction

11

Georgia's ranking for highest number of overdoses per state.

3,091

Number of opioid-overdose deaths in the US in 2016

"Studies have shown that short-term tapers don't work on Suboxone, they work on long term tapers," Rush said. Patients typically remain Suboxone for several months before they are fully weaned off of opioids. Suboxone therapy reduces withdrawal effects, and ease addicts into a completely drug-free life.

Chip works in Abstinence based treatment, which also proves to have high success rates. He believes in the importance of total sobriety to treat addiction, and involvement in NA. The 12 step program and regular meetings with a sponsor get many people clean. He believes the solution to the opioid crisis is expanding access to abstinence-based treatment, in order to prevent dependency on Suboxone.

Aside from legislation, breaking the stigma surrounding opioid addiction plays a large role in addressing the crisis. The first step to breaking stigma is recognizing that addicts do not choose to be addicted. Many people do not understand this "because they compare it to their own experiences with substances," Chip said.

"The fact of the matter is that we are bodily and mentally different than our fellows," Rush said.

Chip compares the urge to use like the need to sneeze. "When you lose the choice it's like trying to stop yourself from sneezing. You have to use like you have to sneeze," he said.

Both Chip and Rush describe the lack of power they felt while using, and Rush remembers a particularly moving instance.

"We don't have a power not to use. If we did, we would have stopped a long time ago. Trust me, I would have stopped when my brother was crying and screaming at me on Christmas day because he knew where I was going. It was the last thing in the world I wanted to see, or really even be a part of, and I just didn't have that power," Rush said.

Once others can realize that addicts did not choose to be addicted, and cannot simply choose to stop being addicted, they can become more compassionate towards addicts, and reduce stigma.

REDUCING STIGMA

A unique way to reduce stigma may lie in the death notices of people who die from an overdose. Anna Clark, a journalist who reported on ways communities broke down opioid stigma found that honest death notices provide a human face to the crisis. They garner support, and allow the crisis to become more personal. Clark mentions that obituaries show what we value and stigmatize by what is included and excluded, and candid obituaries refuse to accept stigma. They can also facilitate conversations, breaking down the barriers of stigma.

Coming from the opinion of a former addict, compassion ultimately breaks the stigma surrounding addiction. "You just got to think of it in terms like 'how would I show up for somebody if I knew they weren't going to be here next week?'" Rush said.

He and Chip both have stories of triumph over addiction, and want others to show compassion to those still struggling in order to help them.

"There are people out there who are struggling, and they're just very close to death. I think it's really important to be compassionate to that. If you think there's something wrong with somebody, don't be afraid to reach out. At the end of the day, I think what people can relate to is the love and compassion that we have for one another, because we're human beings and those are our emotions," Rush said.



Opioid usage often causes dilated pupils. sarah kallis/ EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

AN INVISIBLE

It is estimated that 3,300 homeless youth live in Metro Atlanta. One of them shares his story.

SARAH KALLIS, editor-in-chief

Every morning, Jeremiah* wakes up. Brushes his teeth. Washes his face. Makes his bed. Prays. Gets dressed, and heads to work, like many 21-year-olds do. However, there is a distinct difference between Jeremiah and his peers: he is homeless.

"Growing up in foster care, I didn't know that homelessness was even a word, to be honest. I didn't know homelessness was real until I was going to school and I was seeing people that I see now from the perspective of homeless," he said. Jeremiah was in foster care for most of his childhood, and when he aged out in 2015, he found himself on his own with very little support.

The Department of Family and Child Services helped set Jeremiah up with a program that rented him an apartment, and he enrolled in college.

However, this façade of stability did not last long. "I had an apartment, I lost it because they closed the program down, but I wasn't really doing what I was supposed to do," he said.

Jeremiah then sought out Covenant House for aid, but quickly left. Looking back on it, he believes that it was because he was not ready to commit to living a stable lifestyle.

Many of his friends were homeless, so Jeremiah turned to them for support next. "I was comfortable for a minute," he said. But, he soon grew uncomfortable with the lifestyle his friends lived.

"The stuff they did was different. They stole a lot of stuff, and I didn't understand because I wasn't a thief," he said, "It was the way they survived."

However, Jeremiah is clear that he does not believe that means taken to survive affect one's character.

"Every person that's homeless is not a bad person, you just have to do certain things to come up out of the struggle in that moment, but I want to make it where it's not momentary, it's forever," he said.

Now currently residing in Covenant House, Jeremiah's perspective has changed. "Being homeless, you feel like you need stability. So right now, stability and maintaining employment," he said. He also cites stability as his biggest challenge in life right now.

"If I don't stay focused, then that's the problem," Jeremiah said. He prides himself on his determination and vision, and is confident these two qualities will lead him to a better life.

"I got a vision board in my room hanging up. Every time I walk into the shelter I look at it. It's right on the door so everyone can see it. It says, 'In my 30s, I will have a girlfriend'. 'In my 40s, I'm going to get married.' It has a picture of a house. It says 'veganism', it says

'safe lifestyle, stable, stability, wealthy habits, savings', all that good stuff. So, I see it, I'm just going to try to- I'm not going to try to- I'm going to shoot for it," he said.

Another one of Jeremiah's goals is making a difference in his community, and he aspires to work for a non-profit organization. "I have a big heart. I want to change my surroundings," he said.

He particularly aspires to create change surrounding people's views of homelessness. "Now that I'm in a situation of homelessness, I want to be an advocate for homelessness for homeless youth and homeless people my age," Jeremiah said.

"I just want to change stereotypes that homeless youth don't take care of themselves," he said, "[People] think all homeless people are nasty, even the youth." Jeremiah says that hygiene is an often-overlooked challenge that homeless youth are faced with.

"I have a promising future ahead of me"
- Jeremiah

In reality, most homeless youth take care of themselves, but access to showers and other forms of hygiene is limited.

"You wonder, where am I going to take a shower at, where am I going to do this at," he said. The lack of access to basic hygiene also leads to issues with employment, and Jeremiah has seen many friends struggle to keep a job because of lack of access to showers.

Since homeless youth often do not fit the stereotypes that are often attached to them, Jeremiah believes visuals are the best way to

encourage compassion rather than judgment.

"Show them a picture of a homeless youth, and ask them what they think about this. They can say 'they look like an intelligent person', and you can say, 'do you know that this person is homeless currently?'" he said.

Jeremiah's leadership qualities played an important role in his drive for activism and stability, and learning how to lead at Covenant House gave him purpose.

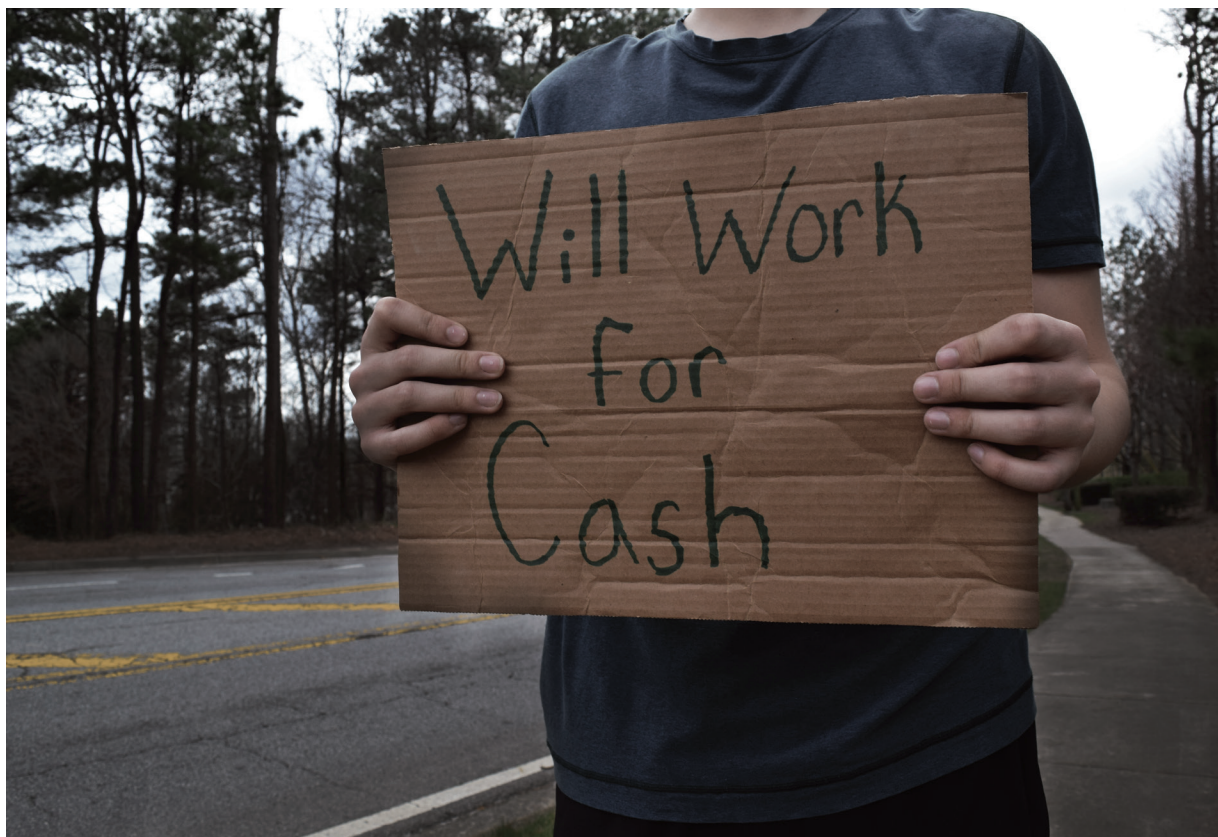
"I think the leadership role played a huge part," Jeremiah continued, "Every time I came back, more peers would come to me," he said.

He is currently in a program called Delta Career Readiness, where he learns the interpersonal aspects of jobs, and leadership is a common theme.

"Sometimes to be a leader, you got to sit back and watch," he said.

Although he wants to pursue a degree in Human Relations, Jeremiah is also a skilled poet, and wants to publish a poetry book one day. "It expresses how I came about and how I feel about things," he said.

E POPULATION



Working for cash is a common sign of labor exploitation

sarah kallis / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

"Homeless youth are very creative, intelligent, they hold so many gifts and qualities," he said, "This is all unhidden talent. Just a gold mine in homeless youth that's just waiting to be opened."

However, Jeremiah wants to stabilize himself before he pursues this dream. "I'm going to focus on my wellbeing, getting housing and maintaining employment," he said.

Another one of Jeremiah's desires is "Achieving goals like getting a social security card, getting a birth certificate, getting an ID and sooner or later, getting a driver's license," he said.

Jeremiah is hopeful of what's to come. "Sometimes I feel like giving up. But I really want to see what I look like in the future. What I'm holding out to be," he said.

"What's for sure is that I'm going to not be homeless for a long time, it's almost over, and I have a promising future ahead of me," Jeremiah said.

Many others share a similar story to Jeremiah, and the issue of youth homelessness demands to be addressed in a different manner than adult homelessness.

"We're trying to disentangle the youth issue from the adult issue," Georgia State University professor Eric Wright said. He founded the Atlanta Youth Count, an organization that conducts surveys to measure the amount of homeless youth in the Metro Atlanta area, and their nature.

"The youth patterns of behavior are different than the adult patterns of behavior," he said, "The principle [difference] is that they are more mobile."

Wright mentioned that youth are often more difficult to count because of their mobility, and they often cross county jurisdictions.

The living situations of many homeless youth are different than homeless adults as well. "People tend to find homeless youth less intimidating interpersonally," said Wright, "People feel sorry for them, so they invite them into their house." As a result, about 50 percent of youth surveyed in Atlanta Youth Count reported Couch Surfing.

However, the price to pay for a place to stay is not cheap for many youth, as many engage in sex work as a condition of living in a certain place.

"A lot of kids talk about 'I have a street mama or a street daddy. And I love them a lot, so I go have sex with them for money, and bring the money home to the family," Wright said. Their "street mama" or street daddy" is effectively the youth's pimp, and the youth is often not aware that they are being trafficked. Some also report their pimp to be their boyfriend or girlfriend. "It makes you wonder, to what extent is that a condition of them having a place to live?" Wright said about the reported sex work.

Sex trafficking is often hard to measure, as the lines tend to be blurry in many situations. "It depends on the extent it conforms or doesn't conform to the stereotypes," Wright said.

However, the main indicator of sexual exploitation lies in the conditions surrounding their sexual behavior.

"One of the things we really are concerned about is doing a better job measuring whether or not the youth felt like they would lose something if they changed their sex

behavior,” Eric Wright said about one of his main goals for the upcoming count this spring.

However, the law defines sex trafficking as “a commercial sex act... induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age,” slightly different than Wright’s measure, as the legal definition requires that another person makes money off of the trafficked person.

As a general statement, homeless youth tend to be more involved in sex work than the adult homeless population. “Because our society is focused on youth being more sexually attractive, they have more options that way” Wright said. Homeless youth also tend to look differently than homeless adults, as many appear to be more clean cut and less disheveled.

Wright also examines the demographics of homeless youth involved in sex work, and finds the highest rates among transgender women. LGBT homeless youth may be exposed to sex work faster than heterosexual youth.

“One of the big differences between LGBT Youth and non-LGBT Youth is that LGBT Youth usually become homeless because they’re being kicked out of their homes. So, they’re being forced onto the streets because of being gay, so they gravitate towards the LGBT community. That leads them to bars, that leads them to sex clubs which are often in bad parts of town where you have high rates of drug use and a lot of sex work going on,” Wright explained.

Furthermore, there are more options for women to enter the industry. “Women tend to do things like modeling, porn, stripping, that kind of stuff, and men are more involved in sex work,” Wright said.

Labor exploitation is another common reality for many homeless youth. When a youth is not paying taxes for their job, and is paid cash, they are being exploited for labor.

“A lot of people see it as odd jobs. But if you’re making a living off of odd jobs, it’s different,” Wright said.

The stress of homelessness takes a toll on youth, and mental health is a common issue. Atlanta Youth Count found that about a third of surveyed youth had some type of severe mental illness. Although they did not diagnose the youth, many showed symptoms of mood disorders, such as anxiety, depression, and bipolar disorder. It is unclear on whether these conditions preceded homelessness, or came as a result of the pressure of homelessness.

Kellie Glenn, the director of development at Covenant House, believes mental health treatment is a key component to getting the youth back on their feet. Covenant

House offers mental health services for many disorders, including PTSD, anxiety, and depression. Many youth have witnessed violence while on the streets.

“You can’t expect a kid who has endured so much in their childhood, or who has been on the streets for even just a month to years to be in a stable place to get their life together,” Glenn said.

Although the future of many homeless youth may seem bleak, there is a way out. Organizations like Covenant House and Lost and Found Youth provide shelter to many homeless youth, and provide services to help ease them into independent living.

Covenant House typically uses outreach teams to find youth to bring into the shelter. Once there, youth learn how to navigate conflict, apply for jobs, and many end up going to college.

“In that time, we’re really trying to stabilize them, get them connected to family if that’s an option, get them a job, really trying to get them to a place where they can go out on their own,” said Glenn.

Another important aspect of Covenant House is the sense of community that it offers. “Homelessness is very lonely,” Glenn said.

“Sometimes I feel like giving up. But I really want to see what I look like in the future. What I’m holding out to be”
- Jeremiah

However, Glenn champions the strength of the youth, and their drive to get back on their feet. “Our kids are incredible. They are amazingly resilient,” she said.

Shelters for youth specifically are incredibly important, as many youth do not go to the adult shelters where they are often exposed to drug use, rape, and violence.

“Instead of turning a blind eye to homelessness, we should create a foundation to help homeless youth. Build more shelters like the Covenant House. Instill them with the values we have at the Covenant House,” Jeremiah said. The city of Atlanta is currently working on a project to build a youth-only shelter, where people over 25 are not allowed in.

Overall Homeless Youth are a population that must be invested in. “The invisibility of the population translates into less resources and services,” Wright said.

Jeremiah knows the importance of the homeless youth population first hand, and wholeheartedly believes in them.

“Homelessness is a problem that needs to be dealt with now instead of later. People are aware of homelessness, but they’re not in tune with it. Homeless youth in Atlanta now are the generation that will make the coming generation,” he said.

*Name has been changed

Definitions

Youth:

A person between the ages of 18 and 25

Labor Exploitation:

The action or fact of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work.



A recreation of Jeremiah's vision board

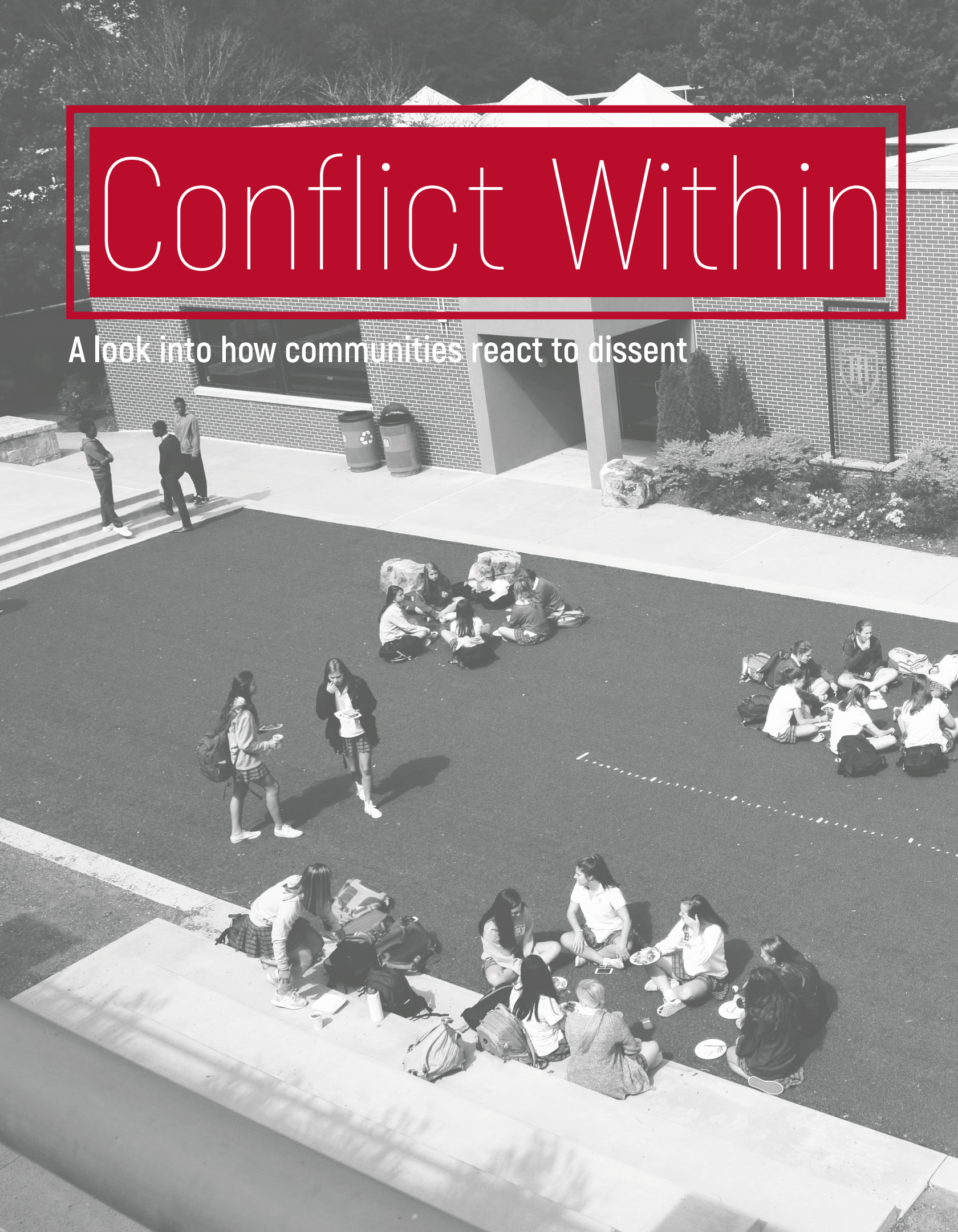
sarah kallis / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Sexual Exploitation:
Sexual exploitation is the sexual abuse of children and youth through the exchange of sex for other basics of life, and/or money.

Sex Trafficking:
Modern-day slavery and involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of commercial sex act.

Conflict Within

A look into how communities react to dissent





SARAH KALLIS, editor-in-chief

A reading from the Quran during the 2016 HIES Convocation sparked debate about values that HIES holds true. "It was and it still remains in my mind as incredible. It was an incredible opportunity to educate and re-educate people on what it means to be an Episcopal school," Head of School Paul Barton said.

The incident occurred when a student read from the Quran during Convocation, and some angered parents in the Holy Innocents' community responded by sending mass emails to parents and administration.

"It was a painful thing to go through and a lot of nasty e-mails coming my way. People in the name of Jesus Christ wanted to say some really hateful things," Barton said.

Although the HIES Parent Association was not affiliated with the emails, they also had to deal with the aftermath.

"I felt like as a parents' association, we had failed," Gephardt continued, "We were so worried about the reaction that we didn't worry about the family that was affected, and that was upsetting to me."

Despite the controversy, Barton has no regrets over the decision to include the reading in Convocation. "I feel completely comfortable I would have no issue doing it again," Barton said. He also chose to view the situation in a positive light, and jumped at the opportunity to educate the community on the HIES Episcopal identity.

"Anytime there's a crisis there's an opportunity," Barton said. "I think it was sort of a manifesto of this is who we are as a school. We don't apologize for it. We're unapologetically Christian. We're unapologetically diverse. We are unapologetically diverse and inclusive and sometimes those will rub against each other."

While it can be necessary to avoid conflict at times, embracing the struggle



Paul Barton explains the 2017-2018 School Year theme to the Parents' Association; Photo courtesy of Tricia Gephardt

and working through differences can often strengthen a community, using topics that once threatened to tear it apart.

"Conflict is constant. It motivates much of human behavior, but usually this conflict is subterranean," Georgia Tech sociologist Dr. Kate Brown Pride said about the ever-present force that can be easily triggered.

Forming group identities is inherently conflict-causing as well. "People build identities by constructing boundaries: I know I am 'me,' because I am not 'you.'" Groups create internal cohesion by fostering a collective identity," Pride said.

Although it is natural for humans to associate with others that are similar to them, this can further the tension. "If a group feels threatened (materially or symbolically), fear can strengthen in-group solidarity. To build solidarity, the group reinforces its everyday boundaries between 'us' and 'them.' It may reach the point of ridicule, caricature, or even de-humanization of the out-group."

This phenomenon can be clearly seen in today's political environment, with people refusing to associate with the opposing party, and as a result failing to see another side. As sides begin to become more polarized, it becomes increasingly more difficult to reach a resolution.

Barton deals with dissent and resolution often in the HIES community. In his experience, most conflict arises out of a lack of empathy and understanding.

"Many [conflicts] are just confusion and a lack of empathy," Barton continues, "I think sometimes it really boils down to how do we how do we encourage cultivate promote a sense of empathy in our community. So, we don't jump to conclusions so much as asking questions important about someone else's point of view before we react,"

However, modern conflict resolution tactics do not always follow this approach. "For the last 300 years, Western civilization has seen rational, impersonal

process as the best means to reduce conflict. Checks-and-balances, rule of law, representative government, regular transfers of power, universal suffrage, equal rights – the idea was that adherence to rational institutions would suppress the irrational impulses of interest and identity. The problem is that those institutions are only as strong as our adherence to them" Dr. Pride said.

Barton trusts the institution of the school, and when a disagreement arises, he follows a relatively simple process to resolve it.

"I think the beginning of anything is the willingness to actively listen again to withhold judgment and to try to understand," Barton said. He then goes on to share his side of the disagreement, eventually working towards a compromise. "It is so rare that we can't reach either a compromise or an understanding or a resolution."

Former Parents' Association President Tricia Gephardt has a similar experience while working through disagreements. Her secret? Making sure everyone feels like they are heard.

"It can be hard to separate yourself, but you just have to do the best you can to represent everybody," Gephardt said of the experience of representing people she does not necessarily agree with.

Because of this, Gephardt was able to work with opposing viewpoints reach a compromise or resolution and focus on the goal.

"It's about the work. It's not about all of the other stuff," Gephardt continued, "Don't be afraid to point out something you think is small. Because sometimes the small things turn into big things. If we can solve a small problem, it's a lot easier than solving a big problem. Don't be afraid to speak up. Speak out. Speak loud."

Contrary to popular belief, not all conflict is bad. While it can be divisive, it can be a highly effective way to learn. "I think instead of seeing those things as a crisis,

we try to see them as an opportunity to like educate. So how can we find as many ways as we can to understand... what the four pillars of our mission mean and how we apply them." Barton said.

He views conflict as a way to teach the community about its values, and unite it rather than divide it, and tries to use conflict as a way to grow. According to Barton, the best way to healthily disagree is to establish trust beforehand.

"Once trust is established, we can have a lot of disagreements. If we don't trust each other it's really hard to disagree in what I call constructive way." Barton said.

Although trust is an important part of resolution, it is not always possible. Dr. Pride is an expert in the science of conflict, and recognizes the difficulty in resolving it in a way that satisfies all parties involved, especially when they do not trust each other. "There is no one-size-fits-all blueprint for conflict resolution," she said. "Much depends on the nature of the conflict. Generally speaking, though, the conflict is not going to go away. So, instead, the emphasis should be on building a process that everyone will adhere to that can channel and mitigate the conflict."

Like Gephardt, Pride also emphasizes the importance of making sure that all people are heard and validated. "Thinking about the role of boundaries and identities in conflict, I would add that it would probably help if each group can feel its own identity affirmed in the process."

She cites Dr. Martin Luther King as a prime example of someone who was able to affirm identities while working towards a goal.

"[King] affirmed and praised an aspect of white Americans' identities -- Christian and American -- while simultaneously demanding that they relinquish their identity as a superior race. To be good Christians and good Americans, they could not also be white supremacists. He offered them a way to build a positive identity while relinquishing a problematic identity." Pride said.

While compromise often proves to be an effective way to resolve conflict, at times it can be important for a group to stand their ground, and stay true to the values that they hold, like Dr. King did.

HIES stayed true to its values during the Convocation controversy, citing the inclusivity of the Episcopal Identity as a motivating factor. "We're a big tent and Jews, Hindus, Atheist, or Agnostic all have space in the tent," Barton states. He champions the Episcopal Identity, citing it as one of his favorite parts of Holy Innocents. "I love the Episcopal identity because I do think it a lot and allows us to leverage a position that's unique in the society we live in and we need to have some very core values around worth and dignity of the human being, and it allows us the flexibility to be inclusive of other faith traditions or no faith tradition within it," he states.

Although some families chose not to re-enroll their child as a result of the difference in values, Barton appreciates the fact that Holy Innocents' was able to hold true to its values and create growth within the community.

While tension, especially within the HIES community can be uncomfortable, it is important to embrace it at times to eventually reach a solution. The task can seem daunting when very different groups disagree but must work together for a common goal, but it is absolutely possible.

Gephardt spoke heavily of the value of tension, and the possibilities of accomplishments. "You can all come together to work for a common purpose and a common good no matter what side of the spectrum you come from."

Stages of Conflict

1. Latent Conflict

Factors that could become conflict arise

2. Percieved Conflict

One group percieves the other group as a threat. It can often be caused by lack of communication

3. Felt Conflict

Conflict becomes personalized and affects the individuals on a personal level.

4. Manifest Conflict

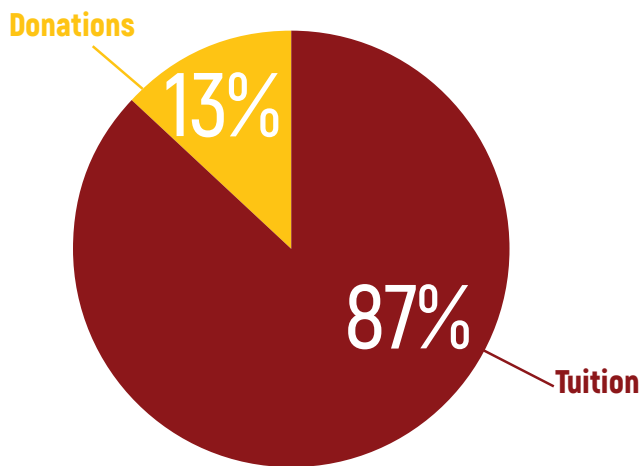
Opposing groups engage in behavior to gain a response from the other side.

5. Conflict Aftermath

Conflict is resolved or supressed. If it is repressed, the cycle repeats itself.

The BUSINESS of

HIES Annual Revenue



SARAH KALLIS, editor-in-chief

“The school is a business. And a big one,” Mark Noland said, someone more than familiar with the business of Holy Innocents’ Episcopal School. As the school’s Chief Financial Officer, he works closely with Head of School Paul Barton and the Board of Trustees to constantly re-evaluate the school’s finances, making sure that every department’s needs are met.

Tuition, donations, the endowment, and campaigns are all factors that allow the school to run smoothly, but the finances can seem mysterious to members of the HIES community who are not familiar with the budgeting process.

Tuition is financial revenue that parents and students tend to be most interested in. As of the 2017-2018 school year, it costs about \$27,000 for an upper school student to attend HIES, and the cost tends to increase about three to four percent a year, depending on markets and the costs of the previous year. That tends to be a large investment for many families, as the median household income in the United States is \$59,039 per year, according to the US Census Bureau.

“About 75 percent...goes to employees - salaries, benefits, medical, retirement,” Noland said about the expenses that tuition is typically used to cover. The next largest expense that tuition revenue covers is maintenance. However, HIES would not be able to function the way it does now if it relied solely on tuition, as the school has many other expenses.

“About 87 percent of our cost is covered by tuition, 13 percent is donations,” Barton said. Many of these donations come from HIES’ Annual Fund, a yearly fundraiser

Fundraising Process

1. An architect designs the plans for a new addition
2. A feasibility study is conducted to estimate fundraising
3. Large donors are interviewed to gauge their support
4. Donations are opened up to the HIES community

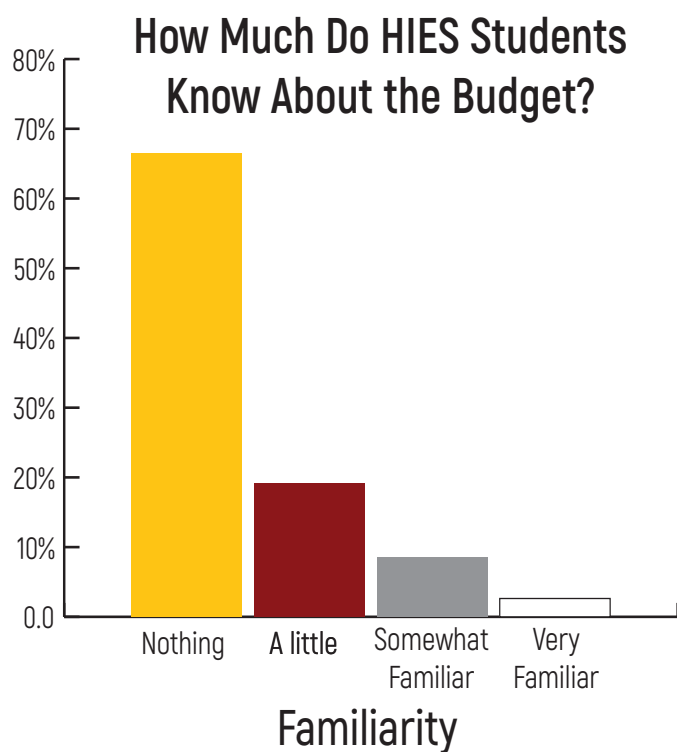
that provides unrestricted donations to the school. If a donation is unrestricted, the school can use it wherever it so chooses, and the money raised from the Annual Fund will go wherever it is needed.

Donations supplement departments, build new facilities, and improve the over livelihood of HIES. Barton champions the giving nature of many families and alums, saying that the mission statement to “Develop in students a love of learning, respect for self and others, faith in God, and a sense of service to the world community” acts as a motivating factor for donors. He is especially inspired by alumni who continue to donate to the school after the graduate, no matter how small the donation may be.

“It’s amazing to see who wants to be part of something that is so special that people give so much money,” Barton said. In order to solicit more donations, Barton said that the school utilizes the human aspect of giving. “Let’s let somebody who gave to endowment tell the story about why.”

HIES uses donations to fund projects that improve the infrastructure of the school, such as the STEM building and electronic school board. Fundraising campaigns raise the majority of the funds for these projects. The first phase of fundraising occurs when the school seeks out an architect to design future plans for buildings and determine the cost. This procedure helps the school decide what they want to do and what they can do. Next, they conduct a feasibility study to determine how much money they can bring in over a period of time for this

Giving an Education



**HIES
ENDOWMENT**

\$23 Million

particular project. At this time, the finance committee interviews large donors and foundations to see how much money they would be willing to give and what projects they would donate to. After that, a campaign is announced for a project and donations are solicited from the school community as a whole. When deciding what to prioritize, financial feasibility sets the tone. Ultimately, the school will pick the project it will be able to fund. So, the desires of the large donors have the biggest say in what projects are prioritized.

The city of Sandy Springs also must approve all projects, and the neighbors have a say, making projects such as sports stadiums much more difficult to accomplish. Above all, the financial committee must verify sure all projects are in line with HIES' mission statement, and try to reach as many students as possible with the benefits of projects.

Compromise is the setting of financial decisions. . "Getting different points of view would create an atmosphere where we can disagree but also knowing that at the end of this meeting there has to be an outcome," Barton says about meetings where finances are decided. According to Barton, disagreement and debate are the basis on which financial decisions are made.

One aspect of the budget that is increasingly getting attention is financial aid. If a school wants to consider itself socio-economically diverse, it must dedicate 10 to 12 percent of its budget towards financial aid. As of right now, Holy Innocents' dedicates about 10 percent of the budget to financial aid, and is looking to

increase the financial aid available for students. "So that's a priority to be diverse and inclusive and equity and access becomes part of that" Barton says. In years past, only about seven percent of the budget was allocated towards financial aid. "So we've definitely increasingly made financial aid the priority so that we can be were so economically diverse because we think there's great value in that," he says.

Barton also spoke of the importance of the message the budget distribution gives off. "How we pay teachers, how much we allocate to our professional development, becomes huge. So we are able to attract , retain the best teachers." Barton mentions that creating a welcoming learning environment is another top priority for the school's money. "We recognize in having a campus that looks nice and functions well and is a safe place for kids and a healthy place for kids is important. So not only do we build this building but we solve a lot of money and why we can keep it afloat again," he says. The budget committee tries to keep the students' best interest at heart, recognizing the vulnerability present in learning communities. "Culturally, schools are an emotional place," Noland says. Furthermore, they are open to clarify any confusion surrounding the school's finances. "'I'll happily answer any questions people have," he says.

According to Noland, Holy Innocents' may be a business, but it is a human business. Students and faculty take priority, and bettering the school is the ultimate goal. "We are in the business of giving an education, and that's what makes us different," Noland said



SERVING THE SE

Davis Brown for tassel turner



NIORS

SARAH KALLIS, editor-in-chief
photo courtesy of Leanne Weaver

When Senior Katie Brown began speaking of her experience having him as a study hall advisor and he would tell her to “get something done”, Davis Brown knew he had been chosen as the Class of 2018 Tassel Turner. Brown continued to talk about her teacher’s dedication and understanding of students, confirming the idea that Brown was tassel turner in the minds of everyone in the chapel.

Brown was honored not only by the award, but also by the emotion in the speeches made, as he bases his teaching philosophy in helping students grow as people.

“Getting good grades is great and stuff, but I want to see you learn who you are, challenge who you are, and grow as a person,” Brown said.

Brown was presented with his first opportunity to help students grow as people when he taught his first class at HIES three years ago. “I jumped in it, terrified,” he admitted about his decision to take the job.

As Upper School Ethics teacher, Brown was faced with the challenge of teaching students to be respectful of others while allowing themselves to be vulnerable. He encouraged this by “trying to just set a tone of really being empathetic and really being intentional with our words.” Brown continued, “At the end of the day, I want us to see both sides of the story”.

Overall, the lesson Brown wanted students to take from the class was to see potential in those different than them. “Love makes a difference, and love changes things, and love wins, what does it look like for you to love that person?” he said.

However, Brown is sure to hold himself to the same standards he holds his students to in the classroom. “It requires vulnerability on my part. If I’m asking people to do something, be something, I got to ask that of myself,” he said. “I don’t care about the right answer. I don’t care about two plus two equals four. I care about why you want to be here.”

Brown makes his mark outside of the classroom as well, encouraging students to enjoy their high school experience. “When people buy in, that’s when the culture starts to change. People are excited to celebrate each other, people are excited to honor each other,” he said.

Hoping that the community will work together to create a positive impact, Brown wishes students would “lean into the school and accept it as it is,” overlooking imperfections that seem to be at “every single school”.

“We let all these little things dictate not only how we feel about ourselves, but also how we feel about the school,” he said.

He is eager to see the potential HIES has unfold, as he will continue to develop the Servant Leadership course. “We’re in a unique place of setting an identity and figuring out who we are,” he said.

But Brown firmly believes that “at the end of the day, I think we all really want the same thing,” he continues, “People want purpose. We grind and hunger for purpose and mission”.

He hopes to instill purpose into his students by helping them find it themselves. “I have my purpose and understanding, and with that I want people to have the same thing,” he said, “I want people to see that I’m buying into their lives. That I really do care”.

Brown was drawn to education because he cares about helping those younger than him find their purpose. “I have a heart for students. I really love pouring into the younger generation,” he said.

At the end of the day, Brown cares immensely for those around him, particularly his students, and hopes they know that.

“I’m not a perfect teacher, but I know I can love kids well, or at least I can try to,” he said.

I entered the Holy Innocents' Episcopal School Journalism program certain of only one thing: I wanted to write. I believed I was talented and experienced from my middle school newspaper. Unfortunately, I suffered a rather large ego-knock when I learned that there is more to journalism than 150-word recap of the softball game. I was thrown into a world of foreign Adobe programs and multi-dimensional articles. I struggled, to say the least, but I grew from it. Journalism taught me that the best way to learn is through action. I spent five hours one night attempting to make sense of Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator after pretending I was familiar with the programs to look good to my advisory. No one else on staff knew how to use Photoshop or Illustrator, so I was on my own. After navigating the program, I was able to use that knowledge to teach others, and establish a design curriculum that the C&G still uses today.

However, the biggest roadblock proved to be what I was most confident in when I started: writing. Though I understood the basics of writing, my work had to be very edited, and I was limited in the type of articles I did. So, I improved. I learned from each edit, figured out how to pitch an article properly, and mastered the skill of interviewing in an unconventional way. Most importantly, I learned the art of sticking through something even when it's hard, a skill I will use through my entire life.

The most important situation in which I was able to apply my perseverance occurred during my junior year. After a battle of several months with an eating disorder, I found myself ready for recovery. But, I soon found that recovery was not one decision; it was a series of decisions every day for months on end. Though it was hard to make that connection at first, I had been in situations where the odds were stacked against me before in my journalism class's newsroom. The stakes were higher this time, but I had a similar feeling of running towards a goal that I couldn't see. It felt like running up against a wall for a long time, but I kept going, kept improving, and kept finding new paths to recovery. Throughout the process, I was told that it could take several years. I distinctly remember a conversation with my mom, where I told her it would take four months for me to recover.

And it did.

I was fully recovered almost exactly four months after I started treatment.

I remember similar willpower during my freshman year of high school, where I felt like I would never have an article published. Despite this, I told myself that I would be editor-in-chief my senior year.

And I was.

Although perseverance was the most important life skill I learned, I also had the opportunity to learn from others many times. I was honored to represent Holy Innocents' on the High Museum Teen Team in 2016. I was lucky enough to be with a group of amazing people who had life experiences that I will never experience. I learned an incredible amount from them, and became a much more open person. Talking to them also made me re-think how I interviewed. I learned a lot from my conversations, and both the person I was talking to and I seemed to enjoy them, so I wondered, how could I apply that to interviewing?

I found my chance soon. When I interviewed an immigrant teacher in fall of 2016 for the election edition of the C&G, I had prepared questions. Yet, I found myself so engaged in the conversation that I decided to ditch the plan after question two. From then on, my interviews have been exclusively conversational. I have one prepared question always: Can you tell me

about yourself? That's it. From there on, it is a complete wild card. The conversation goes where the interviewee wants it to. Through this method, I have found that I have gotten more organic answers. I specifically remember a recent interview with a student, where I asked him to elaborate on a previous answer. He started with a very sterilized response, trailed off, and said, "You know what? That's B.S. Let me tell you something actual." I firmly believe that if I had grilled him with a set list of questions, I would have gotten the "BS" answer, but I didn't. I got an emotionally honest and raw answer about his regrets in his life.

My interviewing style is a perfect example of journalism showing me how to break the mold, and embrace unconventionality. I truly feel like I have a voice because of journalism, and it has taught me to be confident in myself and take risks.

Like my college decision.

About a week ago, I had narrowed it down to two colleges: The George Washington University and Georgia Tech. George Washington presented me with the opportunity of an excellent traditional journalism education in a prime location. Georgia Tech offered me a program I could mold however I wanted. I had met with the director of student media at Tech, and he was impressed by the work I was doing with the C&G. He mentioned that Georgia Tech does not have a news magazine, but said he believed I was an excellent person to establish it.

Once again, I was presented with a choice between conventionality and independence.

Journalism has taught me that conventionality is overrated and perseverance is key. My decision soon became obvious.

So, I'm proud to say that next year, I will be working to establish a News Magazine at Georgia Tech, using and teaching the lessons I've learned as a writer, designer, and editor-in-chief of the C&G in the project and throughout my life.