

# it's fun to be COUNTRY & COWBOY

jp delgado and his fellow campus cowboys  
redefine tradition, bringing a new perspective

by brandon torano

While most students at Columbus are focused on football games and classroom debates, **JP Delgado** is roping in a unique lifestyle. An experienced rodeo competitor, JP has been riding horses and participating in rodeos since the age of 10. "I've ridden horses all my life," said JP. "I do rodeos—team roping and tie-down roping. These are time-based events where you have to be the quickest at roping and decision-making with live cattle," said JP.

In Miami, where the country lifestyle is rare, JP embraces his individuality. "I stick out, but eventually, people will realize it's cool to be country," said JP.

Like JP, **Science teacher Chris Connell** is a campus cowboy. "When I first started working at Columbus, the students weren't used to seeing a teacher with a cowboy hat and cowboy boots, but now it is more common. **Nicholas Riley, 12**, likes to call himself a cowboy, too. "I like to wear my cowboy boots outside of school," said Nicholas.

But it's more than just an outfit for these Columbus guys. "You learn how to respect people and care for others," said JP. "I know how to care for animals, drive an F-450 truck and tow a trailer. If you ask me, girls are attracted to my country style," said JP. "I simply like the lifestyle," said Mr. Connell. "Respect your elders, care for one another and honor your country. These are principles I feel my style represents, and I'm proud of that. I teach my sons to follow these principles, and they are growing up to be respectable individuals," said Mr. Connell.

JP has his sights set on blending his country style with his future goals. "I've won buckles and saddles," said JP. "It doesn't end here. I want to attend rodeo college in Texas, study engineering, and make a brand for myself," said JP.

**Here He Comes.** "Last year, I competed in the High School National Finals Rodeo in Rock Springs, Wyoming, one of the most prestigious events in the sport," says JP. "I've won buckles and saddles," says JP. **On the Weekend, Craig Connell, 12**, enjoys fishing and spending time outdoors. "This lifestyle allows me to immerse myself in nature and relax," says Craig. **Respect**, "It's all about God, country, family and fishing," says **Science teacher Chris Connell**. *photos by jp delgado and craig connell*



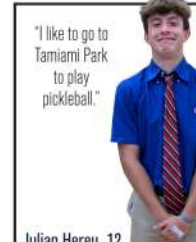
His signature belt buckle is a testament to his rodeo success, and he wears it to school with confidence. "No one says anything to me," says JP Delgado, 11. *photo by jp delgado*

## SECRET SPOTS

this is where it's at



Ryan Dominguez, 12



Julian Herreu, 12



Marco Lopez, 11



Mathew Rios, 12

## RIDING FOR THE RUSH

from south carolina trails to miami's  
off-road spots, anthony cerra, 12,  
embraces the thrill of dirt biking

by preston backweg

For **Anthony Cerra, 12**, dirt biking isn't about trophies or pulling off daring tricks. It's about the thrill of the ride. Splitting his time between Miami and his family's home in South Carolina, Anthony finds peace in nature, whether he's hunting whitetail deer or tearing through rugged trails on his bike.

"I've been dirt biking since I can remember," said Anthony. "It's all about the rush. I understand that with a wrong move, I could be in a dangerous situation, but that's part of what makes it exciting."

Anthony thanks his dad for introducing him to the sport, teaching him the fundamentals and how to ride safely. "My dad taught me to dirt bike, so he would teach me how to do it here in Miami. I do it just for fun," said Anthony.

Dirt biking isn't about competition either. It's about being in the moment, surrounded by the raw beauty of the outdoors. Whether cruising through South Carolina's rugged trails or exploring Miami's off-road spots, Anthony's passion for the sport is simple: it's just pure fun.

**Muddy**, "Since I was a young kid, dirt biking has been my favorite activity and a great way to bond with my dad," says Anthony. **Get Dirty**, I ride a Husqvarna 125 TC 2018, so I have to trailer it to South Carolina," says **Anthony Cerra, 12**. *photos by anthony cerra*



**So Dirty**, At River Ranch, **Juanpablo Espinosa, 12**, rides his ATV down a trail. "On this trail, there is a body of water, so it's a fun way to clean off," says Juanpablo. **In the Keys**, Juanpablo holds a mahi. "I went with all of my uncles, step dad and cousins, which was a Christmas gift from my uncle," says Juanpablo. *photos by juanpablo espinosa*



## LIFE IS BETTER OUTDOORS

from riding atvs to fixing up a boat, juan  
pablo espinosa embraces the great outdoors

by matthew fernandez

After a four hour drive, getting to River Ranch didn't disappoint. "We converted an old shipping container into a mini home that fits six people, so my family can stay in there. My step dad put floors, windows, electricity, water, insulation, dry wall and air conditioning to make it comfortable," said **Juanpablo Espinosa, 12**.

But it's not all about comfort for Juanpablo. "There is always something new to see and do. Plus, it's more exciting than sitting on my phone in my room. My step dad owns a property up in River Ranch, so I get to go there when we have a break from school. We get to fish, go mudding, ride trails and spend time with family. My family just got into traveling to River Ranch for the last two years. I get to learn not only how to fix up a john boat but also ride ATVs," said Juanpablo.