

**Personal Statement:**

I learned a lot this year. I finessed my interviewing skills and became painfully aware of how many times per sentence I say “you know.” Having conversations with so many different kinds of people has led me to file away certain things. One of the most helpful tidbits I have acquired is that people are much more likely to have meaningful conversations (and usable interviews) when I am personable and polite. When I interviewed members of Claremont Heir, the exchange was stilted at first. As a relatively new freshman speaking with seniors, I was nervous. I made the decision to jump right in and act like I knew what I was doing; it worked. I am now close with several of the band members, all from being friendly.

The lessons I learned this year have improved both me and my writing, as well as increasing my workability. After my Class Act, my newfound confidence gave me the initiative to complete the bulk of “Johnnycake kicks off the year with fall play ‘Much Ado About Nothing’” while being in tech week of that very same show. After “Three minutes on stage, three years in the making” was published, I balanced basketball practice and the beginnings of rehearsal for a new show with a few attempts at videography. I repurposed my “dive right in” formula and filmed the Student-choreographed dance dress rehearsal with my phone after being asked to help carry some video equipment to the theater. Later, I filmed the boy’s soccer game against HCYA the day I learned how to properly use a camera. I get a sort of thrill from spontaneous projects. In a school with bountiful extracurriculars (and a fascinating world with so much to see), I want to do everything. Although time consuming, I consider very little of what I do to be work because I enjoy it so much. My mom always tells me to find a job that makes me happy and pursue it — this way, I’ll never really work a day in my life. I hope I find a career like that.

I am most proud of the story “High oak allergen count leaves students feeling a-pollen.” I’ve had severe allergies since childhood. Though I’ve outgrown my asthma and inhaler, I haven’t forgotten what it’s like to see every day through a film of watery eyes and fear interrupting class with explosive sneezes. Hearing others’ anecdotes and recounts of their experience was something I felt connected to. Final edits aside, I wrote that story in under an hour. I hit my stride. I was able to report on something that I cared about, and I gave it my all. This passion is something that I hope I have brought (and will bring in the future) to The Review.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Stories:**[All I want for Christmas is... Antibodies](#)

The Omicron spike in late December incited a flurry of confusion and fear. Hear insights and personal experiences from students and faculty in “All I want for Christmas is... Antibodies.”

[Students in choir, orchestra, band advance to TPSMEA All State](#)

Each year, St. John’s most talented musicians audition for All State, a competitive showcase for students in band, orchestra, and chorus. Juniors Isabella Gidi and Brayden Mi share their journeys to success.

[High oak allergen count leaves students feeling a-pollen](#)

I am personally afflicted by some nasty pollen allergies, yet this year I found a bit of solace — not from alleviation of my symptoms but shared suffering caused by the highest allergen count in over six years. With this story, I sought to educate the unfamiliar and provide some levity for the congested.

[Three minutes on stage, years in the making](#)

SJS-famous class of ‘22 band Claremont Heir enthralled the student body with a lively performance at this year’s Upper School Music Assembly. Read here how the band has grown to become a school sensation.

[Students battle stigma against East Asian media \[ISUU page 13\]](#)

Certain forms of East Asian content have become acceptable to enjoy through a stringent and often oppressive process of admission into popular culture. The Review wondered why and decided to investigate. Through 94 pages of transcribed interviews and hours of research, we uncovered the answers to cultural phenomena like why only certain anime make it in America.

**Multimedia content:**[High oak allergen count leaves students feeling a-pollen \[animation\]](#)

The St. John’s campus fills up with truckloads worth of pollen, a hyperbolic demonstration of the unwelcome yellow film’s impact on the student body. To make the animation, I drew each frame and put it together online, adjusting size and FPS.

[Wardle's Wordle takes over the world \[animation\]](#)

A wordle board shows a string of guesses like “craze,” “words” and “world.” I used a similar process to the one above.

[Video: Review vs. Quadrangle dodgeball match highlights](#)

Some smack talk from The Quadrangle, our yearbook, reignited the long-standing rivalry between St. John's publications. The Review and "Quad squad" faced off in a dodgeball match for supremacy. Reflective of their work off the court, The Review annihilated the competition.

[Student Choreography Showcase returns to in-person format, features original dances \[video\]](#)

After several years of pre-recorded shows, the Student Choreography Showcase (STUCHO) took us on an emotional journey with numbers choreographed and produced by dancers. Performances included "Grief" and "If I Were a Rich Man."

[Video: Boys' soccer defeats HCYA 1-0](#)

On January 18, the Mavs fought hard and beat HCYA. Watch highlights of the game here.