

THE AUGUSTINIAN

100 YEARS OF SAINTS!

“Tolle Lege”

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Mr. Vignol Retires After 39 Years at Saints



Mr. Vignol has been one of Saints' most beloved teachers for 39 years.
Noah Villafana ('23)



By Henry Barwick ('26)
STAFF WRITER



By George Burrell ('26)
STAFF WRITER

This year, Saints is saying goodbye to one of its best and longest-serving teachers: Mr. John Vignol. He has not only left an indelible mark on this school in his 39 years but also on the students he has taught.

Mr. Vignol grew up in East Los Angeles, California and went to high school at San Gabriel Mission High School in San Gabriel, California. He went on to study at the University of San Francisco and eventually earned his Master's Degree in Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary. He began his teaching career in 1976 at Saint Luke's Elementary School in Temple City, California, teaching every subject except math. So yes, altogether, he's been teaching for the past 47 years.

After three years, in 1979, he started teaching religion and history classes at

Villanova Preparatory School, an Augustinian school in Ojai, California. Since it is a boarding school, it was difficult to be a teacher there because of the responsibility of watching over students all hours of the day. In addition, the students were not well behaved, and drugs were a serious issue at the time.

In 1984, Mr. Vignol accepted a job at Saints as an Old and New Testament teacher. It was an easy transition for him, going from one Augustinian school to another.

Mr. Vignol only planned to stay at Saints for a few years, but, as we know, he has remained here for much, much longer. Only two other current teachers, Mr. Cudal and Dr. Rey, have been teaching at Saints longer.

For those who have not had Mr. Vignol as a teacher, his style of teaching is one to which many college students are accustomed.

“His style of teaching is what prepared me the most for college.” Mr. Theilacker, current Saints teacher and Mr. Vignol's

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Saying Goodbye to the Faces of Saints



Ms. Bayer (left) and Mrs. Garcia (right) will be greatly missed by the Saints community



By Ben Nault ('26)
EDITOR

With heavy hearts, Saints will be saying goodbye to two members of the office staff.

Ms. Estrella Bayer, secretary for Student Services, and Mrs. Rebecca Garcia, Administrative Support Assistant will be leaving Saints after 47 years of service between them.

Ms. Bayer has been the face of Stu-

dent Services for the past 31 years. Her monumental contribution to campus life makes it hard to imagine life at Saints without her.

For Saintsmen past and present, it was truly an honor to have known her and yes, even learned from her. Here we take a look back at a career of sacrifice and love for both the school's students and staff.

Every time you walk into Student

Services, regardless of the time of the school day, Ms. Bayer would be there, available to help with whatever you need. If you are running late and need a tardy slip, who do you go to? Ms. Bayer. If you need to notify someone in case of a planned absence, who do you tell? Ms. Bayer. If your parents need to take you out for a “doctor's appointment,” who do you see before you leave? Ms. Bayer. She was the point person for so

many aspects of school life. Whoever will be replacing her would be filling big shoes indeed.

Yes, Ms. Bayer is also known for, shall we say, straightening out misbehaving students. This, however, is a positive. Students who needed to learn how to show respect received a quick lesson in manners from Ms. Bayer. It built character. “Some of the boys that

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Sports Spring into Action



By Ben Nault ('26)
EDITOR

As some Saintsmen plan to make the academic comeback of the century, even more are working tirelessly to bring more and more sports championship banners to this school. Six sports in particular are standing out among the rest, primarily tennis with an undefeated season.

Tennis's astonishing 22-0 season and second league title win in a row has sent a message about how this tennis team is shaping up. According to Assistant Head Coach Tim Golden, the key to success this year has been "bringing everyone together as a team. The players have developed a strong camaraderie and are invested in each others' successes."

Tennis isn't known for being the most team-based sport; despite having only a maximum of two players per team playing at a time, Mr. Golden sees them as a true team because the boys "are yelling and cheering for each other from across the courts louder than the other team is."

"In doubles, you definitely need strong chemistry to work together," Coach Golden said. "We have had off-season workouts for our players to get to know each other and get better at being teammates. A lot of our team is also junior heavy, which means a lot of these pairs have been playing with each other for a year or two." Junior Luke Abrom and sophomore Javier Guillot went undefeated as a pair and ended up winning the Western League Doubles Championship.

The tennis team had a lot of matches, and they played a lot of non-conference matches just to gain more experience, something that prepares them for future league and CIF games.

Coach Golden also said, "The players on this team have gotten better as the year goes on. They became more strategic and consistent in their approaches, understanding strengths and weaknesses. These guys are setting the scene for us to explode in tennis, and we are hoping to go back to back next year, starting a new era of Saints tennis."

Volleyball won their league as well, going 18-7 through the whole season. They went 9-1 in League, dominating the competition. This team is filled with players who push each other to be their most competitive selves. The players have also shown amazing teamwork that will be a key asset for more wins as CIF starts up.

"There is great leadership on this team with people like Patrick O'Leary and Andy Boeh being our senior captains," head volleyball coach Janene Palafox said. "They act as role models, and the boys follow their lead. They are also very dedicated, and always arrive early to help set up for matches."

"Volleyball is a sport where good team chemistry is necessary, as it takes everyone on the team to contribute in some way to win," Coach Palafox said. "Everyone has been playing their part and everyone has gotten playing time. The reason we have won the League and qualified for CIF is because these guys are putting in the work to succeed as a team."

The future years for this volleyball team also look bright as we have a very young team. "We will be losing some great leadership in Patrick O'Leary and Andy Boeh, but on top of being a fun team this is also a young team who is ready for more years of success to come."

Track and field is going into their CIF run, ending League play 6-0. This is the fifth time in a row that the Saints Track and field team has won League, and their league finals will determine who gets to



Senior Patrick O'Leary led the team in kills.

Denis Poroy, San Diego Union-Tribune

go to CIF.

Head Coach Ryan Segura said, "The fact that we won league five times in a row sends a message; that a phenomenal group of athletes didn't just win it from their freshman to senior year, but that new people are working hard to replace those stars that leave our school for their own pursuits. This success isn't just due to one group of athletes, but it is also due to new people coming in and working hard to help the team succeed."

Track and field isn't like a lot of other sports, as "it is an individual sport in a team environment," according to Coach Segura. "You can have the best performance of your life in your specific event and the team as a whole still might not win. You have to rely on the rest of your team to do their part. If everyone does their part to the best of their abilities, we will win."

He continued: "That is something that distinguishes Track and Field from other sports. You have individuals working together for the bigger team. With this, you also have people striving to get better to beat their personal records, working hard to improve their own performance so the team can succeed as a whole."

Baseball's performance has been fantastic this year, and as their league season winds down, we are looking ahead to the CIF schedule that will be announced soon. The baseball team has carried an impressive 16-9 so far, and they are looking good for CIF.

The baseball season consists of a lot of different games going into different categories; league, non-league, and various tournaments that happen throughout the year.

Head Coach da Luz said, "These tournaments and especially the non-league games that happen before the season help the team prepare for league and CIF play."

Our league is one of the most competitive in San Diego, and so no one really knows where Saints is going to be lined up for CIF until the last couple, or even the very last game that Saints and the other teams in their league play.

"There are lots of moving pieces with baseball, and we are constantly reloading our arsenal of players," Coach da Luz continued. "Whenever we get another year of Saints ball up and going, there are a lot of adjustments that need to happen. A lot of people need to step up to do their part in their position or even in a new position they need to fill."

Varsity baseball moves very fast, so these players need to be ready for the challenges that will be thrown at them along the way. "Our team this year is pretty sophomore-heavy. We have a good mix of veteran players and younger guys, and now everyone on the team is looking more 'veteran-like'. That is to say, we aren't making rookie-type mistakes anymore."

"Baseball is a game of failure and learning from the mistakes. Our overall goal is to make three benchmarks: 1, win the league. 2, win regionals. 3, win State. This team has been battle tested early in the season, and they have learned from mistakes made then. If they continue playing how they have and improve even more, we will win."

Lacrosse's season has also excelled, having a 12-7 record on the season. According to Senior Captain Jack Elgas, "It feels great to be a part of a winning culture. The team has great chemistry and it will continue to grow as time goes on." According to Jack, "When things go good and we keep winning, everything just clicks. The team is a lot more coordinated and is playing like a team should; taking advantage of every opportunity and taking responsibility for mistakes as a team."

This year the lacrosse team is very sophomore-heavy, and according to Jack, "They stepped up to fill in roles that had been emptied, and we have consequently become more rounded offensively and defensively."

"A lot of the team is similar to last year's team, but the guys know each other better and they also know how to work together as one unit even more than they did last year," Jack said. "It has to do with maturing, team chemistry, and

bonding evolving within the team."

This team will hopefully continue to win, and they will get better in the years to come.

Golf has a strong history here at Saints, and this season they have made large improvements since the beginning of the year. They are currently 7-12 overall and 2-6 in western league. This year, we lost the top five of the seven guys on varsity, but the coaching staff and players have been working hard to improve the team throughout the year.

Head Coach Tom Isaak brought this up, stating, "Our team has been working hard to replace the people that we lost, and we are improving every round we play."

There are some amazing players on that team, and some of the underclassmen are also contributing greatly to their successes this season. Sophomores Lucas Younes and Emilio Gallego as well as Freshman Austin Lambeth have been a big part of this rebuilding team, as they stepped up to contribute greatly to the late season wins.

Another reason this team is getting better is the community they are building. The team got to know each other a lot better throughout the season, as they played with each other more and some of the upperclassmen gave rides to the underclassmen.

"This team is very fun to be around," Head Coach Tom Isaak said. "I have a 'dinner indicator', where if you are high on that indicator it means that you are a fun group to be around who works together. Not only that, but they want to be around each other of their own will off of the course. This team is high on that indicator list."

The golf team collectively lost in their CIF Play-in by one stroke, but five of the six varsity athletes are competing in the CIF Individual Qualifiers on Wednesday May 10.

All six of these sports are looking to bring banners back to our great school, and we wish all of them luck in the CIF season.

Team Feature: It's Going Swimmingly



Senior Brendan Brooker coming up for air mid-race. Courtesy of...



By Michael Luzi ('25)
EDITOR

Welcome to The Augustinian's Team Feature article! This month's sport is swimming. The Saints swim team has always impressed the Saints community with multiple undefeated seasons and CIF championships, and this year is no different. The Saints swim team is led by head coach Brian Prezlock.

At the high school level, there are five basic types of swim meets that happen in a season, the first of which is called a dual meet.

It is the most standard event,

where two teams that are in the same conference compete against each other in multiple relay, individual, and diving competitions. (Examples of relays include the 200 meter free relay and the 50 meter breaststroke relay). Each team puts three swimmers into each individual event and three swimmers into each relay event.

The second type is a conference relay. Although similar to other competitions, it only consists of relays that may not be seen in a traditional dual meet.

The next type of swim meet is a true team meet. Teams from the same conference are allowed to compete in four individual and relay events, and every

competitor scores. Then, the winning team is qualified to go compete in the True Team State Meet.

The fourth type of meet is an invitational. In an invitational, teams can compete across conference lines and swim against new competition. There are typically multiple heats (a race against multiple swimmers) in these meets.

Finally, the last meets of the season are the championship meets. Just like an invitational, the championship meets consist of multiple heats. Every swimmer on the team will go to one of the championship meets. The top team that wins every meet will take home the season trophy. This season, Saints did exactly that and won the CIF championship.

Meets are scored on a scale of 170 points. There are a total of three relays, and the top three places are scored. There are 14 points available for each of the relays, totaling up to 42 points. In individuals, the top five swimmers are scored. There are 16 points available for each individual swim event totaling up to 128 points.

This season is Coach Prezlock's second season as the head coach for the swim team. Coach Prezlock was the assistant coach for the 2021 season, and last year was his first year as the head coach of the team. Last season, the team finished with a 5-3 overall record, with five of the Saints swimmers being named All-Eastern Conference.

This season, the team went undefeated and won the Eastern League Championship, which is the first time the team has done this since 2009. They finished in 2nd place in the Christian Invitational, 7th overall in the City

Conference meet, and 13th overall in the CIF San Diego Section meet.

"Our team goals go beyond winning the Eastern League and a CIF Championship," Coach Prezlock said. "I want the boys to learn the ability to persevere, the value of hard work, and the importance of a positive mindset. This team will build strong foundations for young men looking toward a successful future."

There are many star players on the swim team this year. One of the most notable stars is team captain Royce Acosido. Acosido was one of the top swimmers in the 50 meter free relay and the 50 meter breaststroke relay.

"Leading the team with my co-captain Royce was an amazing experience. The team's work ethic and commitment to improvement helped us get closer as a team," senior Elijah Walulik said.

Another standout is junior Andrew Bier. Bier is one of the best swimmers on the team for the breaststroke relay and the 200 meter free relay.

Junior Joseph Nguyen also stuck out among the team for being the best swimmer in the individual medley event.

Finally, senior Max Martinez had the fastest 500 meter free relay and the fastest butterfly relay among the swimmers in the team.

"We did really well in CIF this season with our senior star swimmers leading the charge," sophomore Levi Claire said.

The Saints swim team has shown their dominance in California once again this year. With the help of Coach Prezlock, the team will continue to dominate in years to come.

Chess Puts Saints in Check



By Jonah Villafana ('25)
STAFF WRITER

Picture the scene: You're sitting in Mr. Vignol's class, listening to his lecture on letter writing in the ancient world, buried libraries containing countless treasures, and powerful ancient kingdoms, when suddenly it's time for a break. You wonder what could fill this precious time before returning to the mental struggle of school, and as you glance around, everybody else is playing the same game: chess. This timeless game of old is making its return among teenagers everywhere, including at Saints. Everywhere you look – in the hallways between classes, during lunch break, you name it – people are playing it. Why the sudden change? In this modern world where video games reign, how did the ancient game of chess come roaring back as a popular pastime?

This largely unexpected and unprecedented revival of chess was made evident during January of this year, but it has steadily been gaining popularity since the pandemic struck in 2020. This can be attributed in no small part to the successful Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit*, which tells the powerful story of an orphan girl who struggles to become the top chess player in the world.

Another possible explanation for the rise of chess is the comical personality of the best chess player in the world, Magnus Carlsen. His crazy antics and unexplainable shenanigans appeal to people everywhere, and the hilarity of his actions alone have drawn many people to the game. But the most



likely cause for the sudden resurgence of chess is the increase of chess content online, which has grown dramatically since 2020. Chess streamers such as Levy Rozman and chess grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura have popularized chess on Youtube, Twitch, and TikTok, explaining why chess has become so prevalent, especially among teenagers. The simple and entertaining way that they depict the game has led many people to give it a try.

At Saints, the growing popularity of chess is reflected in every class. Chess.com has become one of the most used websites this semester, and Saints-men everywhere could be seen casually playing a game whenever given the chance. Chess.com has even had

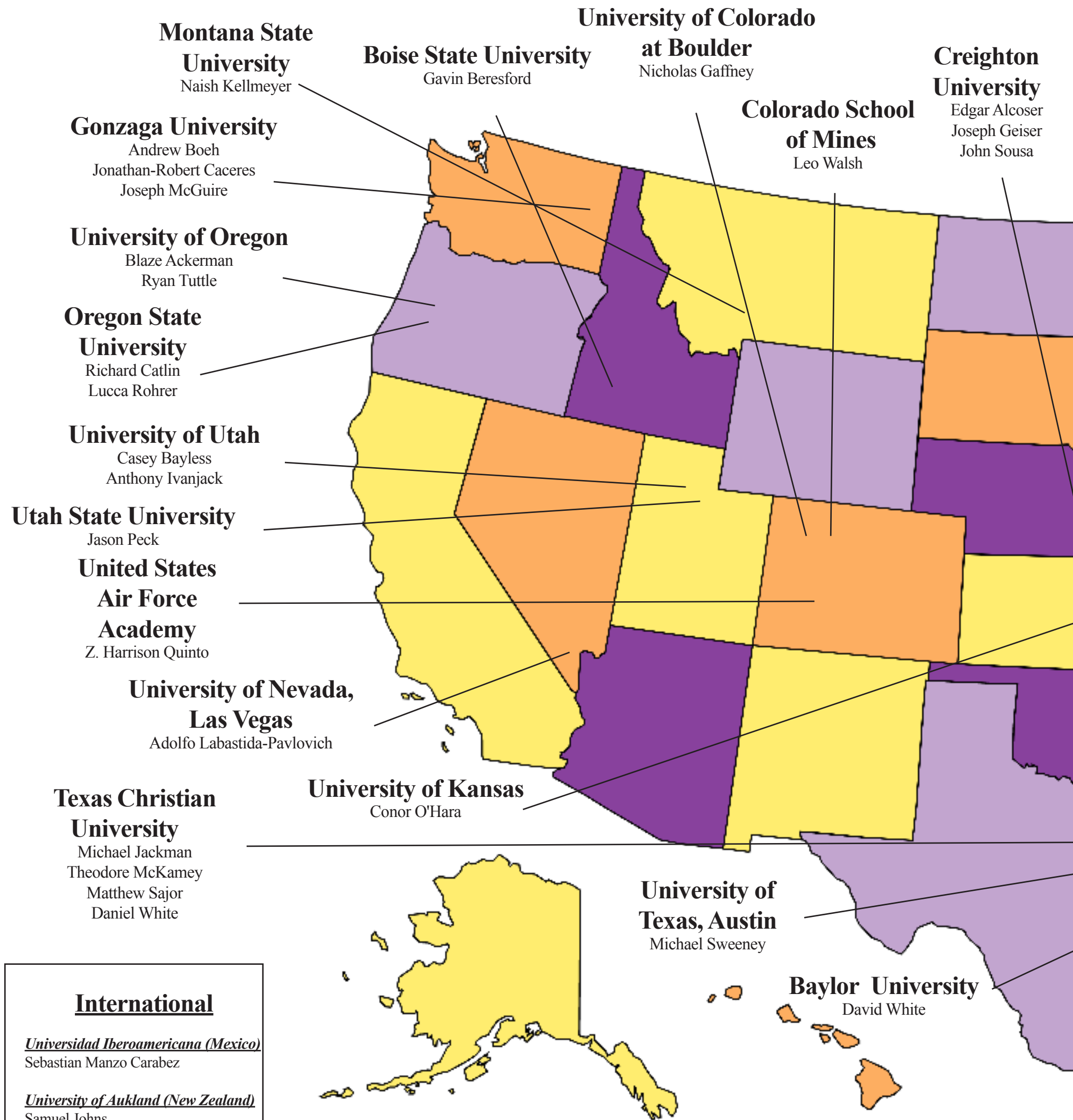
to update their servers in order to accommodate the influx of new players. Names of chess grandmasters like Magnus, Hikaru, and Levy are commonplace now, and everyone is familiar with hilarious quips ("Sacrifice THE ROOOOOOOOOK!!!!") and other popular clips.

The chess tournament that recently took place at Saints exemplifies how chess has come into the spotlight. Students from every class have participated in over-the-board competitions in the library beginning in March and running into May.

The tournament has seen fierce competition at every level—both in grade and skill—but the overall tournament has been dominated by the

sophomore class, most notably Gregory Leong, Alexander Clem, and Jonah Villafana. At the time of this writing, the winner has not been decided, but it has come down between Leong and Villafana. Both are prominent members of the Chess Club, which meets every Friday at lunch in Mr. Pradel's room on the first floor of Mendel Hall.

Members of the Chess Club are able to test their skills against other players, as well as improve their skills by playing higher-level competition. The Chess Club hopes to gain more members as the popularity of chess increases, and hopefully more tournaments can be organized in the coming years.



International

Universidad Iberoamericana (Mexico)
Sebastian Manzo Carabez

University of Auckland (New Zealand)
Samuel Johns

San Diego Area

California State University,
San Marcos
John Paul Russell

Cuyamaca College
Constantino Edoardo Carolo
Lopez-Duarte
Robi Rizokk

Grossmont College
Evan Kondan

MiraCosta College
Joseph Griffin Medina
Matthew Mercado

Point Loma Nazarene
University
Christopher Cesena

Corey Conroy
Jaden Matingo
Kevin Patzi

San Diego Christian College
Raymond Moran

San Diego City College
Diego Jimenez

San Diego Mesa College
Kerler Alonzo Arellano
Luke Attisha
Brenden Brooker
Alex Davis
Alexandro Fimbres Villaseñor
Donaldo Gutierrez Gomez
Cole Murray
Finnley Page
Juanpablo Valladolid

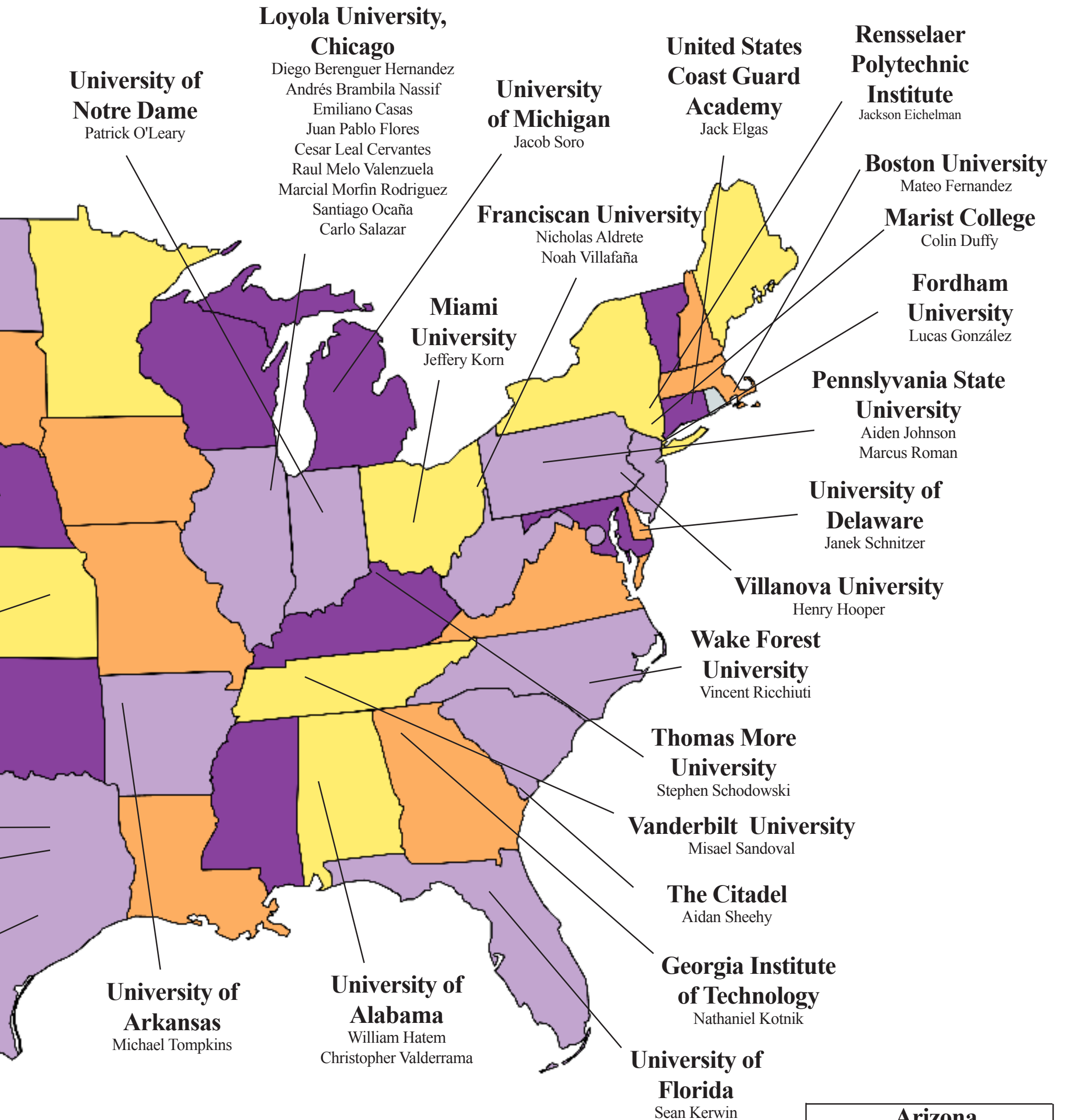
San Diego State
University

Royce Acosido
Angel Aguilar
Colin Alcantara
Joseph Dela Cruz
Gabriel Felix
Elias Gutierrez
Ricardo Laborin
Xavier Magat
James Root
Nicholas Salem
Thomas Salem
Francis James Sara
Kent Vu
Elijah Walulik
Nathan Wilson

Southwestern College
Brandon Cruz

Steven Dagostino
Francesco Gagliardi
Nicholas Jaimes
Alejandro McKay
Daniel Muñoz
Oscar Valencia Espinosa

University of San Diego
Donovin Bocalan
Salvatore Brunetto
Daniel Delgado-Gallegos
Alejandro Esparza-Martin
Eli Estevez
Jesus Garcia Franco
Dylan Kelley
Theodore Main
Logan McKerring
Joel Rodriguez Sigala
Evan Shamon



**Loyola University,
Chicago**

Diego Berenguer Hernandez
Andrés Brambila Nassif
Emiliano Casas
Juan Pablo Flores
Cesar Leal Cervantes
Raul Melo Valenzuela
Marcial Morfin Rodriguez
Santiago Ocaña
Carlo Salazar

**University
of Michigan**
Jacob Soro

Franciscan University
Nicholas Aldrete
Noah Villafaña

**Miami
University**
Jeffery Korn

**United States
Coast Guard
Academy**
Jack Elgas

**Rensselaer
Polytechnic
Institute**
Jackson Eichelman

Boston University
Mateo Fernandez

Marist College
Colin Duffy

**Fordham
University**
Lucas González

**Pennsylvania State
University**
Aiden Johnson
Marcus Roman

**University of
Delaware**
Janek Schnitzer

Villanova University
Henry Hooper

**Wake Forest
University**
Vincent Ricchiuti

**Thomas More
University**
Stephen Schodowski

Vanderbilt University
Misael Sandoval

The Citadel
Aidan Sheehy

**Georgia Institute
of Technology**
Nathaniel Kotnik

**University of
Florida**
Sean Kerwin

**University of
Arkansas**
Michael Tompkins

**University of
Alabama**
William Hatem
Christopher Valderrama

Arizona

Arizona Christian University
Derrius Carter-Hollinger

Grand Canyon University
Zachary Aceron

Northern Arizona University
Justin Beck
Evan Coito
Hadyn Graulich
Jameson Mooney
Christian Ramers
Austin Turner
Derek Wentzel

University of Arizona
Raul Amaya Navarro
Charles Bingham
Eduardo Graniello
Tyler Haisha
Blake Jones
Neil Karpal
Luke Naimi
Calvin Shaw
Tanner Wick

California (Excluding San Diego Area)

California Maritime Academy
Casey Kammerer

**California Polytechnic State University,
Humboldt**
Chris Ireland

**California State Polytechnic University,
Pomona**
Noah Jones
Kaveh Yazdani-Bosdet

California State University, Chico
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California State University, Long Beach
Marcus Miranda

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Jorge Zavala Magaña

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Monterey Bay
Liam Kelly

Chapman University
Riley Scanlan

Loyola Marymount University
Nicholas Cianflone

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Jacob Pajimola

San Francisco State University
Kevin Clements

Santa Clara University
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Colin Behan
Luis González

University of California, Davis
Joseph Adema
Ty Woods

University of California, Irvine
Jurian Dixon
Julian Iacono
Jimmy Markowicz

University of California, Santa Barbara
Ryan Waters

University of La Verne
Maximiliano Martinez

University of San Francisco
Oscar Celaya Limón

University of Southern California
Caden Webster

The Debt Ceiling: Will It Be Raised Again?



By Liam Olds ('26)
MANAGING EDITOR

No one likes to be in debt – not to your parents, to a bank or anyone else. The pit in your stomach when you owe those \$20 is never a good feeling. While keeping that in mind, how would you feel if you owed \$31.46 trillion dollars? Not great?

This made-up sounding number is not one completely drawn out of the blue – it is the total outstanding debt currently held by the US government. This unimaginable amount is not even enough to satisfy the needs of the Treasury Department. The only reason this level of debt is not even higher is because the US has hit what is called the “debt ceiling.”

The debt ceiling is the maximum amount of outstanding debt the federal government can take on at once. The ceiling's maximum value is determined by Congress and currently sits at \$31.46 trillion. That means that the government is currently at its limit and cannot borrow any more money.

This is not a completely foreign scenario though – the government has reached its spending limit plenty of times in the past. Usually, when the debt ceiling is reached, one of two things happens: Congress suspends the debt ceiling and allows the Treasury to spend over that limit temporarily, or, more commonly, the debt ceiling is raised.

The ceiling was first implemented in 1917, but very little excitement occurred in the first several years of its existence; however, since 1960 the US has raised the debt ceiling a total of 78 times, in-



cluding the most recent in 2021. The alternative option, historically utilized far less often than the first, is the suspension of the debt ceiling. This path was seldom taken for the majority of the debt ceiling's history, but since 2013, this path has been taken a total of seven times.

The fact that the US has hit its debt ceiling is nothing out of the ordinary in and of itself, but things are different this time: this time, Congress is not raising the ceiling, nor suspending it. Instead, House Speaker Kevin McCarthy is using this opportunity to attempt to force Democrats to cave to his demands.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, McCarthy's bill would “leave more people hungry, homeless, and without health coverage; and make it easier for wealthy people to cheat on their taxes.” The bill would make cuts

in funding for schools, childcare, public health, environmental protections, college aid, and much more. In doing so, it would also disproportionately harm people of color, people with disabilities, and anyone with lower incomes.

McCarthy's plan is also only to extend the deadline by which the debt must be settled by one year so that he may pose a similar ultimatum next year.

Though McCarthy's actions are completely against the interests of the Democratic party and would result in the regression of many Democratic priorities, the offer is not easy to ignore. This is because if President Biden refuses to cave in, McCarthy and Republicans are threatening to allow the government to default on its debt.

Defaulting on a debt is basically admitting that you can't, or won't, pay back

a debt on time. The current deadline is June 1.

Now, defaulting on the country's \$30 trillion debt is about the last thing that anyone wants; people relying on social security payments would be hung out to dry, government employees and military members wouldn't see their paychecks, the stock markets would take massive hits, and jobs would be lost.

A May, 2023 CNN article, “5 Ways a Debt Default Could Affect You” explains, “If the default lasts for about a week, then close to 1 million jobs would be lost, including in the financial sector, which would be hard hit by the stock market declines. Also, the unemployment rate would jump to about 5% and the economy would contract by nearly half a percent, according to Moody's.”

At the moment, President Biden is faced with the impossible decision between submitting to McCarthy's bill and erasing decades of Democratic progress or refusing to McCarthy's conditions and attempting to call his bluff. This could either result in Speaker McCarthy backing down for fear of defaulting on the debt, or he could in fact go through with it and allow the nation to default on its debt with catastrophic consequences.

This is a defining moment for the United States as it threatens to affect the future of politics and the economy for decades to come. It is a near guarantee that one party will get their way in the end and the other will have to work hard to regain lost political ground. Politics aside, the last thing anyone needs is for the country to default on its debt in an already financially trying time.

Carlson Tucked Away, Lemon Squeezed Out



By Omar Jaibaji ('24)
STAFF WRITER

Tucker Carlson's last show on Friday, April 21st appeared to go on as normal. He discussed Hunter Biden, attacked Joe Biden on his immigration policy, and, in possibly his most controversial move of the day, ate pineapple pizza.

The show had a successful 2.65 million viewers, and Carlson ended his show with the comment “We'll be back on Monday.”

As such, it came as a shock to many when on Monday, it was announced that Tucker Carlson and Fox News had agreed to part ways. Further suspicions were raised when, moments later, it was revealed that Don Lemon of CNN had

been let go that same day.

A great deal of theories have popped up as to why the two had been cut from their respective networks. As the exact details to why they were fired are still unclear, it can be reasonably assumed that they were both attempts to cut costs and save face after some controversies the two figures have faced in recent months.

Fox News had recently settled a lawsuit brought by voting company Dominion who argued that they had been defamed by broadcasts made on Fox News and cost them a humiliating \$787.5 million.

Key evidence for the case was brought from Tucker Carlson's internal messages, in which he acknowledges that former US President Donald Trump lost the 2020 election immediately after

the final votes had been tallied – despite stating the opposite opinion on his show.

Furthermore, there were scathing criticisms of Fox News' internal policy, which hurt the public image of the media giant when it was first reported. Tucker Carlson has survived other controversies which could have cost him his career, but the Dominion lawsuit, and the threat of a new lawsuit from a former producer appears to have been the last straw.

Rupert Murdoch and his son Lachlan Murdoch, the billionaire owners of Fox News and multiple other media corporations, made the final choice to cut Tucker Carlson Tonight, the highest rated primetime program across all of cable news.

On the other side of the political aisle, Don Lemon is a much simpler case. In-

roduced at CNN in 2006, he became one of its most recognizable figures during his tenure, and for a time, hosted his own prime-time show, Don Lemon Tonight. In 2022, however, Don Lemon Tonight was canceled as part of a broad restructuring of CNN, and Lemon was made a co-host for a new morning show.

Following this, Lemon was hit with a series of controversies regarding comments he had made about women, from claiming that male soccer players made more money than their female counterparts because it was “more interesting,” to claiming that Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley was “past her prime.”

Other media sites noted that Don Lemon appeared to clash frequently with his female co-hosts, from screaming and yelling, to making insulting or derogatory comments. He has gone as far as to rip up the notes of colleague Kyra Phillips and sent her threatening messages in an apparent jealous rage. It is these recent actions that appear to have led to Don Lemon's downfall.

Despite being dropped from two of the largest media corporations in existence, their careers are likely to continue onwards. While it would be fascinating if the two were to join together and create a new bipartisan media company, providing an alternative to the largely biased mainstream media, this is unfortunately quite unlikely.

In actuality, both men will most likely find future success elsewhere, possibly even in the form of a podcast, which is subject to much less regulation and corporate oversight in comparison to mainstream media.

A few days after being fired, Carlson published a video on Twitter, criticizing mainstream media debates as being

SEE ANCHORS, pg. 7

Saintsmen Debate: TikTok Ban

Why the TikTok Ban is Necessary



By James Burrell ('26)
STAFF WRITER

TikTok, created by the Chinese internet technology company ByteDance, has a pending ban by the US government on the grounds of collecting sensitive user information and overall security concerns. This is nothing new – Facebook and Instagram, both products of Mark Zuckerberg's Meta, were sued by the US government for appropriating delicate information and were fined a whopping \$725 million to settle the 2018 lawsuit.

A ban on TikTok is no new endeavor either; in September 2020, former US president Donald Trump sued the social media company for accessing clipboard content (when you copy and paste text or websites) on iOS devices.

This, however, did not follow through because banning TikTok was seen as a violation of the First Amendment – specifically the clause regarding the right to free speech. While this may be true, it missed an opportunity to catch the social media company stealing private information.

TikTok is harmful to the average person on many levels – one being the collection of individual data, but also the addictions people face by being on the site. In fact, the algorithms used when creating the “For You” tab on TikTok are closely related to gambling addiction.

It's the process of getting quick videos, where some can be funny and others, not so much. The same is true for gambling – sometimes you win big, sometimes you don't. It's obvious this is bad – it's only now that people are realizing it and are actually taking hold of it.

The lawsuit filed against ByteDance by the US government is similar to the one a few years ago, with a few key differences, mainly that TikTok has



already been removed from government devices in over 30 states.

This ban is not just occurring in the US either – it's happening all over the world. Canada, the United Kingdom, India, France, and more have already taken the steps to fully remove TikTok. All of these countries have banned it because of privacy concerns.

Furthermore, the app is just one of countless examples of the Chinese government's effort to spread disinformation and hateful content in Western culture. ByteDance has been accused of pushing hateful and politically divisive content to its users, many of whom are children.

In China, the TikTok app available for download is called “Douyin,”

and it provides only a fraction of the experience that regular users get worldwide. For example, Chinese children can only access the app for 40 minutes a day, and the content is more focused on STEM-based learning and patriotic posts.

This disparity has resulted in a steep decline in the mental health of many American teenagers who report feelings of isolation and depression. With phone addiction at an all-time high, it is time for the government to step in and take control of one of the most divisive and polarizing influences for the American youth.

Some may say that removing a social media app like TikTok is in violation of the First Amendment.

However, there are many other social media platforms people can use to spread information as an alternative. It is possible that the ban on TikTok will allow similar social media apps to fill its place, with practically nothing changing for the 150 million current users in the US.

There is so much evidence that TikTok should be banned from the US. The real question is, why haven't we done it yet? We need to take the lead from our fellow nations, along with the evidence we already have of security issues. There is no doubt in my mind that TikTok will be banned. It's simply a matter of time. Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

Why We Shouldn't Ban TikTok



By Griffin Cappiello ('24)
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

It's no secret that lawmakers from countries across the world are gearing up to restrict access to the short-form video app, TikTok. The US, Canada, and various countries in Europe have all cited threats to international security as the primary factor in prohibiting the use of the app. But why?

TikTok, owned by the parent company ByteDance, has access to the private information of its users, such as location information and other sensitive data. This is not uncommon, as many other social media applications have access to similar data.

The issue with TikTok, however, is China. ByteDance is a Chinese company and many government officials in the United States fear that the personal information of Americans could potentially be sold to the Chinese government.

China has laws that require Chinese companies and citizens to provide data to the Chinese government for intelligence-gathering purposes. If China had access to sensitive data on American citizens, there's no telling how they could use that information – it just can't be good.

Despite the apparent concerns for national security, it simply does not make sense to ban TikTok.

First of all, there is no legal precedent for such a ban. The government has never

before attempted to ban an entire digital forum in which users can share their views. The ban would likely face legal issues over First Amendment rights, as banning the platform can be viewed as an attack on the freedom of speech and expression.

While national security is important, the government simply cannot censor the 150 million Americans that use TikTok on a daily basis. It sets an incredibly dangerous precedent, similar to that set by the Patriot Act after 9/11, in which the government gained emergency surveillance powers. And while the Patriot Act allowed the government to investigate a legitimate threat, a ban on TikTok based only on the fear of the possibility that American data might be sold to China is by no means the same level of a threat.

Additionally, a ban on TikTok would be largely ineffective. The ban most likely would not affect users who already have the app downloaded on their phones, but instead would prevent new users from potentially downloading the app.

Even if the government somehow managed to prevent current users from accessing the app – most likely by convincing phone companies, such as Apple, to remove TikTok from their app stores – determined users could still find a way around the ban.

In India, where TikTok is banned, use of the app is still common through the use of VPNs. Americans access streaming services in restricted locations through

similar means. So while law-abiding citizens and businesses would no longer be able to use the app, those willing to take the risk to circumvent the ban would have a fairly easy time doing so.

Finally, there are much simpler alternatives to the problem than fully banning the use of TikTok. The federal government, along with many states, has already restricted the use of the app on government devices. This could even go so far as to prohibit the use of TikTok on the personal devices of government employees.

The government could also further its investigation into the data collection practices used by TikTok, and release that information to the general public. Americans that dislike those practices and do not feel comfortable with their data being gathered would then have the personal choice not to use the app.

In the most drastic outcome, the US government could force ByteDance to sell TikTok to an American company if it is going to continue to be used in the US. A similar outcome nearly occurred in 2020, the last time rumors began swirling around about a TikTok ban.

While the importance of national security cannot be overlooked, neither can the needs of the users who rely on TikTok to make a living. Content creators, small businesses, and independent artists all utilize TikTok to earn money through advertisements.

Banning TikTok would not only

harm these users and their families, but intrude on the rights of the millions of other users across the nation.

The fact of the matter is that banning TikTok is unconstitutional. The ban does not actually prohibit use of the app because of technicalities or backdoor methods of accessing it. There simply is no point of the government overextending its authority to do so – especially if there are much simpler alternatives.

ANCHORS
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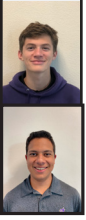
“stupid” and dishonest, and possibly hinted at a future project, promising he will return at some point.

For the average American, the loss of these media titans will have negligible impact on day to day lives, although some fans have commented that they will continue to follow the hosts rather than the media corporations.

The most valuable lesson to be taken from all of this chaos is the importance of Americans forming their own opinions and realizing that news outlets are not infallible.

Bias exists, and often is injected into mainstream media as a means of manipulating the truth. It is vital to make judgments based on independent research rather than blindly following the media narrative.

Senior Superlatives... for Teachers



By Ty Woods ('23)
EDITOR



By Griffin Cappiello ('24)
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

It's a common high school tradition for the graduating senior class to assign a set of superlatives to their classmates; that is, a list of those students "most likely to" fit into various categories. Saints occasionally participates in this tradition, but we at *The Augustinian* wanted to put a little twist on it. We will be assigning this year's senior superlatives to the teachers, from the most likely to run for president, to the best bromance.

Most likely to be a communist - Coacher



Everyone knows that Coacher is incredibly anti-communist, but have you ever stopped and asked yourself why? Sure, you might think it's because Coacher simply thinks that communism is an ineffective economic system and doesn't want any wayward youths to stumble down the wrong path into becoming a Marxist. But what if it's actually because Coacher wants to become the most communist person in the world? Coacher is a fan of George Orwell (he borrowed my copy of 1984 and thoroughly enjoyed it), so there's a fairly high chance he's read *Animal Farm*, too. He also recommends that students take trips to Costa Rica to "save the sea turtles," but maybe he's been making some side stops in Cuba along the way...

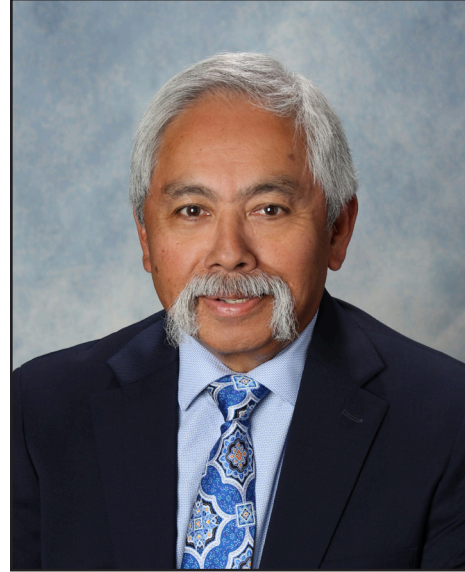
Most likely to win the lottery and lose the ticket - Mr. Wehbe



It shouldn't come as a surprise that Mr. Wehbe is the teacher with the highest odds of winning the lottery – after all, he has the most experience with probabilities. But what may shock you is that while Mr. Wehbe knows exactly which lottery tickets will end up being winners, he will lecture you on the dangers of gambling instead of collecting his winnings. The further he ventures into a rant on the importance

of healthy gambling habits, the more he forgets his ticket. Eventually, any evidence of the ticket's existence is removed from his memory, and his million dollars fade away into oblivion.

Most likely to win a Nobel Prize - Mr. Cudal



While you may suspect that Mr. Cudal's future Nobel Prize would come in the area of literature, you couldn't be further from the truth. One day, Mr. Cudal will win a Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine for discovering the elixir of life. Now you can probably tell where I'm going with this: Mr. Cudal's mustache clearly holds the secrets to eternal life – how else can he survive so many years of teaching whiny, smarty-pants freshmen English?

Best Rapper - The da Luz Brothers



The da Luz bros made up the slightly less well known San Diego counterpart to LA's NWA – SWA (Saintsmen Wit Attitudes). Their debut album, *Straight Outta North Park*, quickly shot to number one on the North Macedonian charts, launching the brothers into international fame. Unfortunately, just as quickly as the hype built up, it faded away, and SWA faded away into obscurity, occasionally coming out of retirement to play at various school events, like MORP or the VAPA assembly.

Most likely to get arrested - Mr. Lamerato



It is only a matter of time before Mr. Lamerato, affectionately known as "Daddy," is busted by the feds for his orphan money laundering scheme. Seniors can attest that his desk drawers seem to be filled to the brim with

cash, and he seems to have no problem buying thousand-dollar concert tickets to see some of the biggest names in music. Daddy makes it no secret that "money is not a problem," but we seniors know the real truth. He forces us to do his dirty "missionary work" while he sits back at his desk and magically transfers the funds to various offshore accounts. In fact, the wire transfers were traced back to the Gorge Amphitheatre, where he splurges on concerts over the summer when the FBI cannot track his movements in the classroom. The good news is that he cannot get away with this for much longer. With the proper authorities involved, the orphan-hating thief will be caught once and for all.

Most likely to win an Olympic medal - Mr. Vignol



The first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word "athlete" is obviously John Vignol. His legendary sprint in the 2020 Saints Turkey Trot Dash surpasses that of Usain Bolt. Mr. Vignol also continued his athletic dominance on the Saints Teachers Football Team last year, rushing for a head-scratching 39 yards and 2 TDs in zero games. And while "Johnny Rocket" continues his dedicated training for the decathlon in the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, his first gold medal will come from a lesser known winter sport that highlights his grace and poise: figure skating.

Most likely to run for president - Mr. Hecht



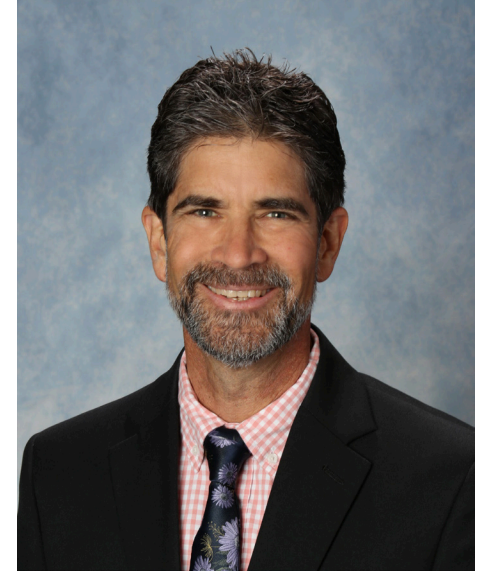
Mr. Hecht has two qualities that would make him a great president. First, he knows the ins and outs of running legal issues because of his time in Spokane, Washington working as the Director of Neighborhood Services and Code Enforcement. Second, he is always optimistic and knows how to talk to a crowd, even when that crowd is filled with freshmen. It's weird that Hecht hasn't run for president yet. Anyway, if he does run in the 2024 elections, he has my vote

Best bromance - Mr. Igleman and Mr. Carini



You've seen them before, hustling around campus, sneaking into classrooms, and pushing carts full of electronics into Mendel Hall. This dynamic duo truly represents the bond of Brotherhood. Whether it be glitchy zoom calls, a faulty projector, or an internet malfunction, Igleman and his trusty sidekick are there to diagnose and solve the problem in an instant. As far as we know, they could be earning a degree in particle physics with all of their secretive, but necessary, work behind the thick cables of the theater or monitors in the gaming lab. Their inseparable bond is a reminder to Saintsmen that as long as you have a faithful techie at your back, no challenge is too great.

Most likely to be a spy - Mr. Manley



Think about it. What does anyone actually know about Mr. Manley? Some people say he likes math, others will point to his dedication as an actor, still others will say he is an avid birdwatcher. But what if these are all elaborate ruses designed to throw us all off his trail? One minute, he's your mild-mannered pre-calculus teacher; the next, he's diving out of the window of an exploding plane with some sort of secret computer chip in his hand.

Funniest - Mr. O'Beirne



Now this one is actually true. If you go and look in the 1984 Saints yearbook, you will find that the senior Saintsmen voted none other than our very own John O'Beirne to be the funniest of the class.

Grammar Ruins My Life



By Liam Olds ('26)
MANAGING EDITOR

There are two things in this world that women like more than anything else: Taylor Swift and proper grammar; however, at the hands of our very own Mr. Cudal, I'm learning the two are, unfortunately, mutually exclusive.

I know that popular music has the tendency to bend the rules of grammar from time to time, but all too often, artists go too far— it's lines like this from Taylor Swift's "Fifteen" that cause the real havoc:

"Somebody tells you they love you, you're gonna believe them."

The issue isn't the word "gonna," it's the use of "them." Gonna is accepted as informal or colloquial language, but the egregiousness of the error in using the pronoun "them" is unforgivable. "Somebody" is singular and the pronoun should agree with the antecedent "somebody" in gender and number. "Them" is plural and should be replaced by either "him" or "her."

This would have never bugged me before coming to Saints and taking Mr. Cudal's Honors English class. In simpler times, I could have gone on with my day, enjoyed the sunshine, and maybe even met a girl (unlikely, but still...). Instead, I'm sitting in front of my computer complaining about Taylor Swift lyrics.

At least I'm not the only one who took issue with T. Swift's grammar; the line was used on the SAT as an example of bad grammar. I'm just making jokes here, but that's just wrong to publicly do our girl like that. I mean, we all know that the College Board is evil, but man, that's next level cruelty.

Grievances against the College Board aside, my lighthearted enjoyment of music isn't the only thing that has been damaged by Mr. Cudal's class: Pronouns? No

longer fun.

I spend far too much time out of my day pondering the usage of "who" vs. "whom." Any sentence that contains one of these dangerous pronouns must be meticulously studied until I'm sure of a solution. No, this is not a joke. I often have to pause and think the sentence over in my head and decide if the extra "m" is necessary before even writing it down in a notebook that no one else will see.

It's a testament to Mr. Cudal that my entire thought process is now occupied by his teachings, but I'm starting to worry about my other classes. I'm beginning to miss important information after getting hung up on a dreaded who/whom. I'm getting pretty quick with it but still not quick enough to get down the right formula for cellular respiration.

Alright, my academics and hobbies are in the crapper; at least I have my social life, right? Wrong.

What few conversations I would have (already limited by my lack of socialization) are now death traps. I'm plagued with the language of these hooligans I've come to call friends, many of whom haven't had any grammar lessons yet. I'm trying to stick with them, and I'm doing everything I can to refrain from correcting their dangling modifiers, but I can't keep biting my tongue. I'm starting to worry about scarring.

Now I must speak directly to Mr. Cudal: Thank you very much for all of the insight you've provided. I feel like I have a much better command of the language and I will be better prepared moving forward in life. Alas, it must end. My academics, my hobbies and my meager attempts at socialization are all being ruined. My life has officially been corrupted at the hands of Grammar herself.

VIGNOL
continued from page 1

former student said.

Mr. Vignol teaches mostly by lecturing, not by writing notes on the board or on a slide presentation. He doesn't rely on any notes as his knowledge is truly encyclopedic. Listening to him teach is a wonder to behold.

"Mr. Vignol knows so much about so many areas," senior Patrick O'Leary said, "and he inspires his students to develop the same curiosity and open-mindedness. More than any other teacher, Mr. Vignol taught me to question my own beliefs and accept how much I still have to learn."

Even alums continue to talk about him. He is the kind of teacher who made your academic life miserable at times because of the rigor, but the one you would come back to a decade later to thank him for preparing you for college and life.

"Mr. Vignol was not only one of the most influential teachers in my time at Saints...he is one of the most influential people in my developmental years," said Saints graduate Matt Nault ('98). "I remember lessons he taught me as a student at Saints, and draw on them to this day. He made me a better thinker and a better man."

During his time here at Saints, Mr. Vignol has not coached any athletic sports, but has coached both the Academic League team and the now defunct Academic Decathlon team. In 1984, the year he began teaching here, Mr. Vignol was the assistant coach of Academic League. In the late 1980s, Mr. Vignol became its head coach and has been ever since apart from a brief five year break.

One of Mr. Vignol's favorite moments during his tenure at Saints was when the Academic Decathlon team won their first league title in the Small Schools Division.

Some of his greatest achievements at Saints were establishing the Honors Phi-

losophy class in 1985, along with creating the Intercession trip to Italy with Fr. Bob Gavotto in the early 2010s. He went on the trip to Italy every year, up to and including 2020.

When Mr. Vignol is not teaching at Saints, he teaches at the Diocese of San Diego in the evenings. There, at the Diocesan Institute, he educates new deacons, incoming clergy members, and others who are interested in deepening their knowledge of the Catholic faith.

Mr. Vignol decided that this year was the year to retire because he "started to feel the pressure of a daily routine," and "doesn't have enough stamina to do this on a daily basis."

The things that he will miss the most are teaching and giving knowledge to students and watching them grow. During his retirement, Mr. Vignol looks forward to sleeping in. He has no specific plans, but wants to continue his hobbies of reading and playing history-based strategy video games, about which he says, "I like destroying civilizations, not creating them."

Overall, Mr. Vignol has held his place as one the most resplendent and brilliant teachers in the history of Saints.

"Mr. Vignol was, is, and will continue to be my mentor teacher," said Mr. Bachynsky. "Whenever I have a tough theological question, he is one I run to. So much of my theological knowledge was shaped by our countless conversations. The mental gymnastics were a delight. He always had time for me, and I hope to continue picking his brain after his retirement. Get ready for some phone calls, John!"

It's no exaggeration to say that Mr. Vignol is a legend. To a kind teacher, a walking encyclopedia, and a friend, Saints says goodbye. Thanks not only for imparting thousands of students with knowledge, but for teaching them how to think. Be assured that Saints will be thinking about you, Mr. Vignol, for many years to come. May God bless you for a fulfilling retirement!

Editors' Choice: Mr. O'Beirne's "Art"



By Patrick O'Leary ('23)
EDITOR

The history of art is a history of eras. The Classical Era. The Medieval Era. The Renaissance. Every couple hundred years, the world undergoes a collective rebirth; we discover that every image we've ever experienced pleasure looking at is actually an insult to the eyes, and we go about the tiresome process of reprogramming our brains and exterminating the so-called "artists" who brought this filth into our presence.

You think anyone wanted to look at boring kings and castles once they saw the Mona Lisa? Absolutely not. Suddenly mysterious women and smirking were all the rage. And when Monet came along with Impressionism, everyone just had to have ponds and lily pads in their backyards. He single-handedly created the occupation of landscape architect.

Artists like these are often so influential that they signal the onset of a new era, and in rare instances, the birth of an era can be traced back to a single work.

Among all the inspired works at the recent St. Augustine Art Show, only one had the potential to start an entire movement.

Of course, I can only be referring to "Art" by our very own Mr. John O'Beirne. Whereas many artists strive to work within the confines of art, O'Beirne seeks to embody the soul of human expression. He is not merely artistic — he is art itself.

In his first and most recent work, O'Beirne captures the truest essence of humanity. Lesser artists like Leonardo da Vinci and Vincent van Gogh got too held down focusing on the features of humans rather than their core. All the



John O'Beirne's masterpiece itself.

"fingers" and "eyes" and "faces" distract from what humans really are: a head, arms, torso, and legs that may or may not be attached to said torso.

O'Beirne's simplistic depiction is reminiscent of ancient cave drawings, giving a primal and timeless quality to his work. The skill and focus required to access such clarity can only come from an assistant principal, well accustomed to making himself clear.

fanciest art supplies available? Of course not. Not on a carpenter's salary. Most of the time he had no choice but to use a pen and Post-its to write down his commands. He couldn't afford stone tablets like his dad...

Clearly, O'Beirne's masterpiece is a commentary both on the humanity of divinity and the divinity of humanity, understanding that although we are all faceless miscreants on the surface, we are all drawn by Christ and therefore have the dignity that comes from our divine authorship.

This is a hefty message to be contained in a single Post-it note — it took Michaelangelo the entire ceiling of the Sistine Chapel to say the same thing. But just as a great storyteller can say a thousand words with just their eyes, so too can O'Beirne sum up all of the human condition with just six strokes of a pen.

We have on our hands the beginning of a new era of art. Well, not exactly. That implies that this era is on par with those that came before it, and no one in their right mind would look at "The Starry Night" and think it even belongs in the same building as "Art." No, this is no mere era — it is the end goal of all of existence. "Art" by John O'Beirne represents the peak potential of human capabilities, the truest essence of art.

With that said, it is no surprise that the editorial staff has selected O'Beirne's "Art" as the Best in Show at the renowned Saints Art Show. Hopefully, his ability and passion will provide a beacon of inspiration for artists at Saints for years to come.

Griffin Cappiello ('24)

Also striking is the medium chosen by the artist. While more pretentious individuals would choose to work with "pastels" or "oil paints" on "canvas" or "parchment," O'Beirne chose the medium of the common man — a simple Post-it note, embellished only by a ballpoint pen. An expert critic like myself will instantly recognize this as a reference to none other than Jesus Christ.

Think about it. Could Jesus afford the

Slusher Steps Down After Life of Service



By Liam Olds ('26)
MANAGING EDITOR

One of the biggest sacrifices a person can make is to dedicate years of military service to their country, where there's a guarantee that you will face hardship and pain. That being said, devoting years of your life to teaching ignorant high-schoolers calculus is arguably more painful. No one would want to do both, right? Wrong, because this describes our own Mr. Slusher.

It takes a special man to pull this off with the level of success Mr. Slusher has achieved – that is why we're very sorry to see such an amazing man and a critical part of our campus depart.

Before becoming a teacher, Mr. Slusher served in the Air Force, serving for 23 years after entering as a second lieutenant in 1988.

"I originally chose the Air Force because I saw it as an avenue to see the world. The reality of being an engineer, sitting in an office was too bleak for me."

While in the Air Force, Lt Col (Ret) Slusher spent most of his time stationed in the US, being posted in six different states. He also spent time overseas in Germany, UAE, Turkey and Djibouti, participating in operations Desert Storm, Northern Watch, and Enduring Freedom. Lt Col (Ret) Slusher also ran Air Operations for the Bosnia Conflict out of Frankfurt, Germany. As a pilot, he flew the EC-130, Compass Call, a combat jammer and the C-141B Starlifter, a Combat Airlift aircraft.

"My fondest memories of the Air Force are every minute spent in the air. Flying is a complete joy and I was privileged to fly a great diversity of missions all over the world. I loved every minute in the Air Force."

Just when he was going to leave the military and retire in 2001, Lt Col (Ret)



Saints thanks Mr. Slusher for his years of service.

Slusher was called upon to teach calculus at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). When asked why he chose to teach calculus in particular, Mr. Slusher told *The Augustinian*, "It's just what I do. It's a language all of its own. It's a culmination of all that we've learned from Algebra on."

Mr. Slusher taught at USAFA for ten years until he decided to teach at Cathedral Catholic for a year. Since then, he came to his senses and decided to transfer to the far

superior school that is Saints in 2019.

According to Mr. Slusher, retiring after four school years is the perfect amount of time as he is now leaving with the same class with which he entered.

Mr. Slusher hopes to have instilled the leadership qualities he learned in the military into his students. He says this is one of the most important skills he learned from his service.

"Leadership is not just about being a mole in a hole, it's about stepping up and

being a leader," Mr. Slusher said. He believes it is vital for the students to become leaders as they advance in life and hopes he has aided them in that journey.

We asked Z. Harrison Quinto, appointee to USAFA, for his perspective. "One thing I learned from him was the virtue of patience. Math is difficult at times, especially calculus, but Mr. Slusher takes the time to sit down with his students and ensure that they have the answers to their questions."

With so much to love about Saints, Mr. Slusher said that it is the people—particularly the students—that he will miss most in his retirement. When asked to reflect back upon his favorite memory from his time here, Mr. Slusher depicted a scene from the graduation of the class of 2020.

This was the pandemic year so the ceremony was structured much like a McDonald's drive-thru. Students would drive up in their cars and make a loop through the faculty parking lot while staff members would be speaking about that student through a megaphone. Mr. Slusher thought of this moment in particular because of how cool it was to have every single student get recognized.

Many people enter their retirement without much of a plan. That's not Mr. Slusher. When he officially retires, Mr. Slusher plans on going out to his farm in Tennessee and building a house with his wife. The pair loves to garden and is planning on "homesteading." For those who don't know, homesteading is used to describe living a lifestyle that is self-sufficient in living off the land.

Mr. Slusher may have only taught at Saints for four years, but he's made a great impact and will be missed by all those who have been lucky enough to meet him. Saints wishes you luck with your homesteading and all of your future endeavors. We hope retirement treats you well!

Br. Morales Vows to Stay in OSA



By Griffin Cappiello ('24)
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On Saturday May 6, 2023, Brother Mauricio Morales made a life-changing commitment by professing his solemn vows to the Augustinian Order. His final vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience have officially made him an Augustinian for life.

We're glad to have had the opportunity to interview Bro. Mauricio. It has been edited for clarity.

The Augustinian: Firstly, tell us a little bit about yourself. Who is Bro. Mauricio?

Bro. Mauricio: Who am I? That's a loaded question. That would take me at least 20 pages to respond. In short, I am a person who is interested in philosophy and having conversations with people either about everyday life or even more interesting things like justice, social issues, politics, etc. I am quite a simple person with simple interests. I'm from Granada, Nicaragua, but I have lived here in the US for 15 years now. I love to read, especially philosophical novels and books.

TA: What inspired you to join the Order of St. Augustine? What led you to this vocation?

BM: Well, I have always been interested in giving myself for the wellbeing of others. Being a religious person does not exclusively translate to being very religious. Sometimes, it is all about living out the Gospel message: Loving God and your neighbor. In the Augustinians, I found a spirituality that encourages us to seek our authentic selves, and within that search, we find God and others.

TA: For those who may not know, what does it mean to take solemn vows? How is it different from simple vows?

BM: To take solemn vows is no different than taking your first vows. We take the same vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. However, the difference is that with Solemn Vows, the commitment is for life. I no longer have to renew my temporary vows every year. Moreover, I now have an "active voice" within my Province. What does that mean? I can vote on every matter of the Province. As a vowed religious in temporary vows, I only had a passive voice where I was able to comment and give my opinion on different matters.

TA: What does it mean for you personally to take these vows?

BM: To make solemn vows is a statement of intent. I intend, after a period of time in discernment, to live my life in search of God and journey with others on our way to Him. It means to commit to make things work, to live in community, and to serve God and the Church (the people) as best possible, and to spread the gospel message of love and forgiveness.

TA: What does the future look like for you as an Augustinian brother?

BM: Well, there is no certainty about how the future looks. I will be here at Saints for the following year, teaching religion and philosophy. I hope to continue to be engaged in social justice projects and some of my own personal projects such as writing philosophical papers. I think that my hope is to be truly present to others, and I try to do that one day at a time.

Chaplain's Corner

"In the image and likeness of God"



By Fr. Max Villeneuve, OSA
COLUMNIST

As our society moves away from the general consensus of Judeo-Christian principles and values, we find ourselves not in a society filled with more reason, but rather one filled with more dogmatism.

Karl Marx famously said that, "Religion is the opiate of the masses." It has been noted that we are now a society with less religion, and the masses are on more opiates! A culture without God is a culture that is cold, illogical, and unreasonable. Pope Benedict XVI called this the "dictatorship of relativism" and Elon Musk calls it the "woke mind virus." Whatever you want to call it, the fruits of a godless society are actively being borne around us now, and leave much wanting.

There is an important theological distinction between the gods of Paganism and the God of the Abrahamic faiths. It is a nuance that is easy for the Christian to miss, as we project our own ideas about God onto the pagan gods. The gods of paganism are gods who through myth and story act in irrational and, thus, very humanlike ways. They are jealous, broody, lustful, greedy, and so to the pagans: they are to be feared and placated. The pagans, though, related to their gods in an interesting way; for all their flaws, the pagan gods are reflections of humanity. We humans

are flawed, jealous, greedy, lustful, and broody. The gods of paganism are humanity's projection of itself into the divine realm. Our vices are incarnated as pagan gods.

The revelation of the Abrahamic tradition inverts this relationship. God is not our human projection onto the divine. We are rather "projected" by God, and we reflect His image and likeness. This is more important than we realize: while we have our flaws, we ultimately believe that no one person is irredeemable, and even the worst of us in some way can be saved. This is what allows the Christian to serve the psychotic homeless person, the convict on death row, the migrant in the desert, and, yes, even the sophomore who won't keep quiet in class or at school Mass.

Being made in God's image and likeness, we are always, like St. Augustine, capable of redemption, growth, and change. The gods of paganism on the other hand, encourage humanity to indulge itself in its own vices, never breaking free from them, but forcing humanity to remain subject to them. Let us give thanks for being created in God's image and likeness, and may we always see others as such as well—especially when it is most difficult to do so.

Saints Doesn't Dance Like It Used To



By Riley Scanlan ('23)
EDITOR

With a rich, one-hundred-year history associated with Saint Augustine High School, many traditions have helped keep the heart and the passion of the school alive. Events like Freshman Welcome Week have been around as long as anyone can remember, and every current student and alumnus can reflect back on those many great memories.

Yet, as we look into the atmosphere of Saints in its current state, what happened to its dances? While current students experience the joys of Homecoming and Prom, it is nothing compared to the weekly dance events held in the late 50s and 60s.

To understand where these beloved weekly dances have gone, we must figure out where they came from. Dougherty Gym was built in the early 50s and would become the social epicenter for all Catholic schools in San Diego.

As Saints was the only all-boys school in the area, it would be the host location for all dances where members from the four all-girls schools could come together. Because the gym was so new, however, the school needed to find alternative ways to enjoy the gym without causing any damage to its wood floors. This would prompt the infamous Sock Hops, welcomed into the Saints tradition.

The dance craze continued every week as the school moved into the late

50s and early 60s. These dances were special because they possessed an element of exclusivity. First, freshmen could not attend the dances until after Christmas, as they were required to be initiated into the school.

Deacon Richard Hardick, O.S.A., who graduated in 1957, discussed the behavioral system used at the time at Saints. Each student would have point values associated with their name. Students who lost too many points would be unable to participate in any social events on campus, including the dances. However, students who maintained near-perfect records could skip finals or other major tests for a class.

The dances at this time were also home to live music, put on most often by student bands around campus. The live music created an exciting atmosphere on campus, making the students far more excited as they awaited their dance.

Saints dances were an excellent way for students to meet one another. As the guys would ask the girls they met to the weekly dance, they had great opportunities to get to know students from their sister schools. As a result, relationships grew, and many Saints-men could say they met their wives at a school dance over the years.

But where did the dances go? Mr. Chris Cashman ('93) says that dances had moved to about once every month by the late eighties and nineties.

While less interested than students of the sixties, the students of the nineties still spoke very fondly of their

chance to meet students from their sister school and other surrounding schools in San Diego.

With only two Saints dances a year (per respective class), it's hard to imagine a world where students have the same opportunities to interact with students from the Academy of Our Lady of Peace as they had in the past.

Hosting numerous dances a year is no easy thing, though. With many liabilities and price increases, hosting the same number of events the school once did often seems complicated.

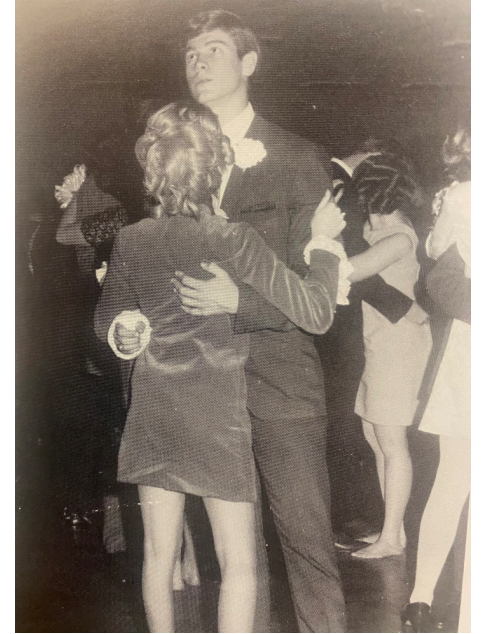
While today's students lack in the number of dances, it is still important to consider what they have now. The quality of dances has vastly improved from 60 years ago, and students are welcomed to wedding-like environments such as hotel ballrooms. Students no longer experience the simple sock hops at the school gym.

Much of this stems from students' shortened period for Freshman Dance Lessons. While today's students experience this annual tradition over a few hours after school one day, students of the past were forced into two weeks of dance lessons. Students would finish their two weeks with their dance to show off what they learned from their experience.

What does this all mean, though? School dances play a significant role in developing healthy social abilities for its students. With more opportunities to ask someone to a dance, students will feel more confident in themselves to go on a date or ask for that dance.

There are many benefits to welcoming students to more dances every year, as their ability to get to know so many more people will help them as they move on to bigger things outside of high school.

While interest may not be as present as with the students before, it is still vital for Saints to give its students the opportunities to grow socially. Not every dance needs to feel like a wedding, but adding an extra dance or two on the gym floor would be an excellent consideration for years to come. This is something that students and faculty should significantly consider adding for the social encouragement of its student body. A simple dance could go a long way.



BAYER

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come into my office's minds still need molding," Ms. Bayer said. She was truly an integral factor in the school's mission of transforming boys into men.

Ms. Bayer not only helps with students' everyday lives, but she also helps the staff in numerous ways. For one, she comforts anyone in a hard time. When Sra. Gormly faced an incredibly challenging period in her life, she credits Ms. Bayer with helping her get through it. "Ms. Bayer wrote me little notes almost on a weekly basis," Sra. Gormly said.

Ms. Bayer herself looks back with fondness. "Saints has always been my sanctuary," she said. "I love to see the 'living young creatures' that walk into my office with different attitudes. I love encountering different outlooks of Saints-men, and the young students' way of thinking. I also love seeing these young men's minds being molded for adulthood."

Mr. O'Beirne, the assistant principal for student services, greatly valued her work.

"Ms. Bayer is one of the most dedicated people on this campus. There are many specific times that pop into my head, but I feel like she does this most every day when she enters the grounds; she is always thinking for the good of the students and the school."

"Ms. Bayer has to deal with a lot, and she does it all with a smile on her face," senior Ty Woods said. "It's truly her love of the community that has kept her here all these years."

In her 31 years at Saints, Ms. Bayer has left a mark on countless Saints-men throughout the years. She is remembered fondly by alumni as an essential part of their Saints experience. Every single student who has come through Saints over the past three decades has been served by her.

Before Ms. Bayer came to Saints, she lived in the Philippines where she

volunteered for the poorest and most remote area in Manila. She would help a lot of people, but especially younger kids. She graduated from Universidad de Madrid with an Advanced Degree in Industrial Psychology.

Many may not know this, but she is also a phenomenal artist. There are many vases and works of art in the office, all done by her. Saints-men who attended the Saints Art Show may remember the beautiful vases on display, all of which were also painted by her.

Besides art, Ms. Bayer has some other hobbies that she would like to continue into retirement, such as gardening.

"I really want to continue gardening, and learn how to make different variations of plants. I will really miss the students, but I also look forward to what may come.

They call it the Student Services office, and Ms. Bayer has served so many for so many years. Thank you for your amazing work, Ms. Bayer, and good luck in retirement!

Mrs. Garcia is one of the most important people in all of Saints. She does so much for us, and it will be hard to say farewell to her after her 16 years of amazing service. Anyone who's made the trek out to the front office has probably encountered the lovely Mrs. Garcia and could attest to how easily she brings a smile to anyone she encounters.

Mrs. Garcia's job on campus is vital as she makes sure that all the teachers have what they need to succeed on a daily basis. Whether you borrow a pencil from Mr. Isaak (and consequently get into massive pencil debt), use one of those bluebooks that teachers only hand out when a really important test is about to take place, or use the printer in the library, Mrs. Garcia is behind it all.

As the staff receptionist, she is also very busy answering the phone whenever anyone dialed the school, and the first person anyone would see upon visiting the main office. No matter who the person, no matter what their attitude, they are always greeted with a warm voice and friendly smile. And this is why she was hired as the school's gatekeeper.

"One of the hallmark values at Saints is community, and no one expresses the hospitality of a welcoming better than Mrs. Garcia," Principal Horne said. "She helps everyone feel a part of campus life."

Let's also not forget her role as the supplier of subs. Every time a teacher calls in sick or announces they will be away, she immediately springs into action along with Mr. Hecht. That in itself could be a full-time job.

"It was truly one of the great honors of my time here at SAHS to work with Mrs. Garcia," Mr. Hecht said. "She made my life and the lives of everyone around her easier, and she will be sorely missed. I hope she comes back to visit us frequently."

When she was younger, Mrs. Garcia grew up with her 2 brothers and eventually, six brothers-in-law. Mrs. Garcia attributed why she's so comfortable working in such a male-heavy environment to her childhood and all the time she spent around her brothers.

Mrs. Garcia went to Rosary High School and graduated in 1975. During her time there, she was already taking jobs and managing stores to pay for her tuition. After high school, she took some night classes at Cuyamaca College while continuing her pursuits in business.

Before coming to Saints, Mrs. Garcia worked in business management, training individuals to become managers in retail. She also worked at a job that not many others wanted: working for the Sweetwater Union High School District in the maintenance and plan-

ning department—alongside 80 men! For many women, just hearing that would instantly make them consider rejecting the offer, but Mrs. Garcia took the opportunity.

"I understand [boys]... I really understand and relate to them. No matter how old they are, the young boy in them always shines through," she said.

When coming to Saints, this comprehension of boys proved helpful.

"My priority [while working there] has always been the students. "The person who hired me asked if I could be the buyer of all the inventory for the teachers, and I said, 'yes under one condition: that I get to purchase all the tools they need to be able to do their jobs in the classroom for the students, and if that's not ok, then I'm not the person.'"

Now that she's retiring, her plans are to settle into her house in Descanso (a community in the mountains east of Saints) with her husband Jesse. They both love exploring the outdoors, and one of their favorite things to do is ride their ATV's in any backdoor country area they can find. "Whenever we are away from [San Diego], we go and explore the backcountry. Be with wildlife, with the animals," Mrs. Garcia said.

When asked what one thing she wants Saints-men to remember, she said "Never forget [that] the family you make at Saints will remain family for life, and they can always count on anyone that crosses their paths if they are from Saint Augustine High School."

Thank you Mrs. Garcia for all that you have done for Saints, and good luck on your endeavors.



Everything Dr. Griffin, PhD, Learned His Junior Year



By Griffin Cappiello ('24)
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

And so, my fellow Saintsmen, yet another school year draws to a close. As I, Dr. Griffin, Ph.D, find myself pondering the many questions of our world, I have come to dwell on the past year and all the life lessons that were taught to me. With that, here is everything I learned my junior year.

Editors' Note: Somehow, Mr. Griffin has managed to get this one past us. He's written a sequel to his end-of-year "analysis" from last year, and, like last year, we will provide additional, more realistic commentary on his thoughts. Also, for the record, he used this exact same introduction last year.

The US definitely got involved in WWI because of the Lusitania. If there's one thing that I'll take away from Mr. da Luz's class, it's this. Sure, he claims that this wasn't the main factor at play, but that's exactly what he wants you to think. I'm on to you, Mr. da Luz. I know the CIA paid you off.

Editors' Note: Clearly, Mr. Griffin isn't going to do very well on that AP exam. He probably should have paid a little more attention to all those video quizzes and watched some Heimler's History. Honestly, even watching Hamilton would have given him more accurate historical knowledge than this.

"My default is to not like people." - James P. O'Leary IV Mr.

O'Leary's observation is incredibly astute. People tend to have the unfortunate habit of being rather obnoxious. The esteemed Mr. O'Leary may be onto something here. Perhaps I should take his words to heart and become a Buddhist monk, locking myself away in a monastery somewhere in Nepal.

Editors' Note: If Mr. Griffin is using this as his new life's motto, then perhaps that explains why he spends so much time alone in Mr. Bachynsky's room working on the newspaper. That's actually a fairly reasonable explanation.

Taylor Swift is the queen of my heart. She truly is a lyrical mastermind. Now, I know what you're saying: "Tell me why, Dr. Griffin, Ph.D. Why have you allowed yourself to become enchanted by her musical charm?" Don't blame me like that, but allow me to explain myself. This is nothing new, there's no invisible mystery going on, no treacherous subplot. Her music simply takes me to some sort of mystical wonderland. That's it.

Editors' Note: Well, we can't really judge. If this is what brings Mr. Griffin peace, then I suppose we can tolerate it.

Don't date theater kids. Did I say this last year? Yes. Is it still unequivocally accurate, and applicable to anyone and everyone? Also yes.

Editors' Note: Again, he's not wrong. Enough said.

Mr. Wehbe is weird. That orphan-hating madman. During class, he rants about the "value" of "statistics" (whatever that means). Outside of class, clearly he doesn't go to the gym as much as he claims if his bubble soccer performance is any indication. I think he needs to hit the weight room a little bit – even some cross country runners might have better biceps than him.

Editors' Note: Didn't he already write a whole article about this? He's just running this joke into the ground at this point.

Saint Augustine High School is a "one-sport school." Yes, a one-sport school that wins multiple CIF championships in the same year. No, wait, it was the same month. No, wait, it was the same day. Soccer won a rainy game against San Dieguito, and Jurian Dixon outshot a 5-star shooter. Experts are still investigating the effects of such dominance on opponents' mental health.

Editors' Note: Just take it easy...

I've had senioritis since freshman year. I'm sure you know the feeling. You simply just do not have the motivation to do anything. You forget to do your schoolwork, you don't turn in your newspaper articles on time, everything sort of just slides away. It's not fun. But it is an essential part of the high school experience.

Editors' Note: The phenomenon that Mr. Griffin describes is better

known as "depression." Maybe he just needs a hug.

The spring musical drives audiences to theatrics. Look, we've all seen the gate. Clearly, someone watched The Drowsy Chaperone and got a little "drowsy" themselves. Now I for one may not be a huge fan of theater kids (ironic, yes I know, considering I basically am one), but even I would never elect to commit such a hate crime against them. As they say in the theater business, the show must go on, and Mr. Blumer's crew continued with their run, despite the eyesore of a fence right in front of their theater.

Editors' Note: Having gone to see the musical, we completely understand. We all commit hate crimes in the heat of passion.

Bathroom photoshoots are a bad idea. Cameras do not and have not ever belonged in bathrooms. I don't know why people ever thought this was a smart thing to do, but they did and look where we are now, with purple circles on the door of every bathroom. But it's not the rule I have a problem with – it's the signs. I mean, come on. Did they really think we were bringing full-sized cameras into the bathrooms with us? We're not a Hollywood film production, or teenage girls taking pictures for our Instagram accounts. I just feel like a "no phones" sign would've been sufficient.

Editor's note: We don't condone any camera filming in the bathroom. Please don't do that.

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