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"Neither school closure, nor virtual learning, nor global pandemic will keep us from delivering the news."

Photo by Terri Moody



Freshman Kennedy Saunders adheres to the in-person instruction rules and regulations. Students and staff are required to wear masks, socially distance and follow one-way hallways.

CHPS: one of few school systems to offer learning choices to students, parents

by Brookelyn Martinez and Madison Marchant

In March of 2020 a catastrophic event took place that seemed to stop the world in its tracks. A virus spread fast from country to country, causing people to go into quarantine for months on end to hopefully bring an end to the spread.

“During COVID I lost my happiness if I am being honest,” said Mercedes Randolph, 12. “I went through a depression for the months that we were quarantined and couldn’t really find a reason to be happy because there was nothing to do. I couldn’t work, see family or see friends.”

Businesses and restaurants had to find ways to operate without letting people in. Hospitals were packed, and health care workers took care of people the best way they could. The need for masks and hand sanitizer increased. Strangers joined together, while still social distancing, to

try to boost morale. Slowly, but surely, things started opening up; the spread was slowing down. Now it was just a matter of where to go from there.

Restaurants and businesses started opening up to the public while some places have yet to complete this stage. Then, came the questions of schools: would there be a school year, or would it all be virtual? Some schools chose to go virtual while others chose to go in-person. In this case, CHPS gave students the chance to choose what they did with their school year: in-person or virtual.

Photo courtesy of Timothy Gueusquin



The ninth graders had an in-person walk-through orientation. All students first met their teachers virtually.

“I am very proud of what we

accomplished because it definitely was not easy,” said Mrs. Kristin Janssen, principal.

Photo courtesy of Timothy Gueusquin



All students must get their temperature checked before entering the building.

“Everyone from food service to transportation to support services was involved in the process. Our parents, teachers, support staff, business partners, school board, central office and city officials all stepped up to make sure that we had a great kick off to our year.”

Neither choice would be close to how schools have operated in the past. In-person students are asked to arrive between 7:30-7:45 a.m. to go through wellness checks. They must also wear masks in the building. Then, students are told to go

straight to either their first block/second block or pick up a grab-and-go breakfast to eat in the classroom.

After that, the students participate in a Positive Action lesson from 8-8:45 a.m. The Virginia Department of Education has required all schools to have some type of social-emotional learning curriculum. CHPS chose to use Positive Action for students K-12. Mrs. Betsy Johnson and Miss Deona Guy, counselors, lead this segment every morning.

Photo by Brookelyn Martinez



Every morning when school starts, Mrs. Johnson and Ms. Guy present a Positive Action lesson.

“We understand that a shift in mindset and behavior will not happen overnight, but we hope that our Positive Action lessons encourage students to evaluate their own lives, thoughts and feelings,” said Miss Guy.

After Positive Action, teachers then begin class.

Once class ends, students have 10 minutes to get to their next class while the teachers sanitize their classroom.

At the end of the school day, classes are released at staggering times. Students then have the choice to get lunch, for which they have to fill out a form in the morning to receive.

Virtual learning is operating in a similar way. Students have the same class times that in-person students do. Virtual students are required to have their cameras on while they are on Zoom, but they do not need to have their audio on unless the teacher has asked for them to turn it on.

Lessons and assignments for in-person and virtual students are the same and are all loaded into Canvas. Virtual students can also receive a lunch, but they have to come at a later time to pick it up.

“I think it is important to know that we are still learning how to do virtual instruction,” said Dr. William Sroufe, CHHS

Superintendent. “Our administrators, teachers and staff are working countless hours to make the most of this school year.”

These are not the only changes that have been made. Before COVID-19, the library was a place students could go before or after school to check out books. Mrs. Kathleen White, media center specialist, would help students and teachers check out books, help with research and give instruction on how to use databases and numerous other tasks; however, the library cannot be fully used for its original purposes.

“Right now the library is not open for student checkouts,” said Mrs. White. “The library is being used as a classroom this semester.”

Mrs. White is eagerly waiting for the go-ahead for students to check out books and will let the student body know as soon as it gets approved.

Multiple classes in the Tech Center have had to face some changes, too. Chef Shane

Logan teaches Culinary Arts 1 and 2. Though some of his class has not changed, his students are missing out on events in which his previous students participated.

"We won't be able to do catering events or run the Creative Cafe," said Chef Logan. "Eventually, we are hoping to be able to serve food again."

Another program in the Tech Center that is affected is Mrs. JoAnn Moody-Parham's nursing program. Mrs. Moody-Parham's classes were very personal and "hands-on"

types of classes. She plans on implementing a rotation for her students to practice skills in the lab while following social distance guidelines. She is trying to give her students the full experience, but there are some "unknowns" beyond her control.

"I am glad to see so many students still interested in this career field, and although the distancing protocols make my courses a bit difficult to operate, I am happy to be helping them with this career beginning," said Mrs. Moody-Parham.

As changes come to the school day, they also come to all the school events. The fall sport season has been moved after the winter sport season. Clubs will have to operate through Zoom this year. Right now plans for dances and spirit weeks are unknown; however, Pink-Out Day still occurred on Oct. 8.

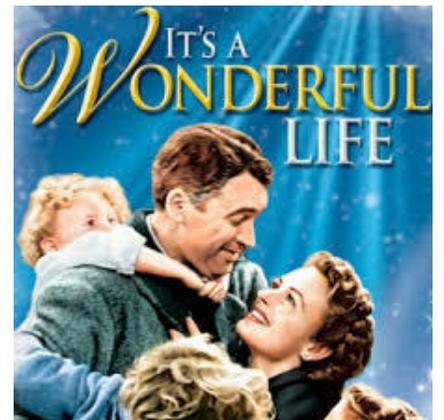
Students, staff and parents are facing a whole new challenge with the 2020-21 school year, but as Mrs. Janssen likes to say, "this too shall pass."

"It's A Wonderful Life"

What: a virtual production by the Colonial Players

When: Friday-Saturday, Dec. 4-5 at 6:30 p.m.

According to IMDb, George Bailey has spent the majority of his life giving everything to the people of Bedford Falls. On Christmas Eve, George's Uncle, Billy, loses a massive amount of money for their business while intending to deposit it at the bank. After the bank realizes the shortage of money, George realizes that he will be blamed for the company's loss and is sent to jail. Then, an angel, who goes by the name of Clarence, helps George with his mishaps. He also helps him gain his "wings" by showing him what Christmas would be like if he hadn't been born.



Students, staff stay productive during shutdown

by Jenna Mason

Over the past several months, everyone in the U.S. has been stuck at home with absolutely nothing to do. Most people had to figure out new ways to cope with having so much time on their hands.

“At first I thought we would go back to school after the two weeks,” said Natalie Jackson, 11. “I had no idea how big COVID was at the time.”

With so much free time, she ended up doing something very useful for the community.

“I’ve always known that I loved to sew, but I didn’t know how much I loved it until I started sewing masks,” said Jackson.

Photo courtesy of Natalie Jackson



Jackson started her own business by making and selling masks.

Besides going on runs with her aunt and uncle and walking their dog with them, Jackson deepened her love for sewing. It started to become a daily activity of hers. Then, Jackson sold the masks she sewed.

Photo courtesy of Phillip Page



Page spent a lot of his time skateboarding during quarantine.

Another student, Phillip Page, 11, did many things to stay busy over quarantine.

“Before quarantine hit, I had travel volleyball practice three times a week and worked out twice a week,” said Page. “After the quarantine hit, I started working out three days a week but could only play volleyball around once a week.”

Page started to play video

games a little bit more, but ultimately chose to skateboard and play volleyball to pass time. He also used his time to earn money by doing jobs around his neighborhood.

Not only did the students have free time, but also the teachers did. Mrs. Kate Garrett spent a lot of the quarantine with her family. She also found that outdoor activities and time at the river with her family kept her busy.

Photo courtesy of Kate Garrett



Mrs. Garrett kept her sons, Landon (left) and Lawson (right), busy during the pandemic shutdown.

“Since I have two small children, the biggest challenge was keeping them occupied and in a routine,”

said Mrs. Garrett. "I didn't want them to know that anything was wrong or worry."

Brothers, Mr. Brennan Hoffer and Mr. Braden Hoffer, spent a lot of time together over the hiatus. The brothers went back to their hometown in Pennsylvania and spent most of their time

with their family.

"Since football is postponed, I've just been sort of hanging out," said Mr. Braden Hoffer, JV football coach. "It is always nice to have free time on your hands, but, then again, I miss it for sure."

To help pass the time, the brothers would often fish,

hunt and play *Call of Duty* together.

Many people struggled to find new activities or ways to cope with so much time. Now that school is back in session, people are using their time to learn and see their peers and teachers again.

Tsiptsis teaches across curriculum

by Chloe Russell

"I hate the pandemic," said Mrs. Marsha Tsiptsis ESL (English as a Second Language), Algebra I and English 10 teacher.

Photo courtesy of Marsha Tsiptsis



Mrs. Tsiptsis has experience teaching English 10, Algebra 1 and ESL classes.

With the continuation of the pandemic, students and staff are having to learn differently. For ESL students in Mrs. Tsiptsis's class, virtual learning has created some challenges.

Mrs. Tsiptsis worries about her students trying to learn in such a new environment.

Mrs. Tsiptsis, who speaks English as her primary language, graduated from Old Dominion University and Grand Canyon University.

Mrs. Tsiptsis has 21 years of teaching experience with 20 years spent as an Algebra teacher. She would have ESL students in her Algebra classes; Mrs. Tsiptsis saw a need for helping students who were struggling and asking for help.

Mrs. Tsiptsis loves building connections with her students and watching them succeed.

During her free time, Mrs.

Tsiptsis watches TV, reads and recently started participating in 5Ks, so she is doing a lot of walking.

With two grown children, Mrs. Tsiptsis is waiting on her first grandchild and thinks there might be twins. Mrs. Tsiptsis currently gets to love on her grand dog Peyton, a Golden Retriever, which she says is "enough for anyone."

Mrs. Tsiptsis follows the logic of Dr. Seuss in her daily life.

"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind," said Mrs. Tsiptsis, quoting Dr. Seuss.

Bright news shines in dark times

by Meghan Thomas

Through all the negativity of COVID-19, many teachers and staff have found light in the darkness through new family members, weddings and more reasons to celebrate.

Mrs. Morgan Lingenfelter, an English and yearbook teacher, set her wedding date two years ago, for Aug. 8, 2020. Her plans of having a destination wedding in Maine came to a halt when Maine's governor instituted a mandatory 14-day quarantine for any out-of-state visitors.

"We knew this would not be possible for all of our guests," said Mrs. Lingenfelter, "so we thought we would have to postpone the whole thing."

Mrs. Lingenfelter's boss at the restaurant where she works part-time offered to close for the morning that her wedding day was planned. They were able to have a smaller ceremony with their closest friends and immediate family.

"I was having an out-of-body

experience; it was like everything and everyone faded away except us," said Mrs. Lingenfelter.

Photo courtesy of Morgan Lingenfelter



Mrs. Lingenfelter and her husband held a smaller wedding than they originally planned with close friends and family.

Much like Mrs. Lingenfelter, Mrs. Stephanie Curnalia, an English teacher, had to change her original wedding plans. Mrs. Curnalia was able to have a smaller, but still elegant, wedding in her husband's parents' backyard.

"The entire day was wonderful and fills me with so much happiness when I think about it," said Mrs. Curnalia. "The best part about

the wedding was marrying my best friend."

Mrs. Curnalia explained how this experience taught her to expect the unexpected, as well as how the love and support of your family is irreplaceable.

Both Mrs. Knowles, Paraprofessional III/ Universal Learning Lab Facilitator and VVA mentor, and Mrs. Lesly McBride, marketing teacher, DECA advisor, and Cooperative Education coordinator, recently had grandchildren.

Although neither was able to visit her new grandchild in the hospital due to COVID restrictions, they both felt emotional seeing them for the first time.

"We FaceTimed with them, and it was one of the best feelings in the world and, of course, I cried," said Mrs. Knowles.

Mrs. McBride believes there is no way to describe the feeling of being a grandparent.

“Witnessing the beauty of God’s creation of seeing your children become parents to their own children and, of course, the endless spoiling and constant love and grace,” said Mrs. McBride.

Photo courtesy of Lesly McBride



Mrs. McBride holds her new grandchild.

Along with weddings and grandchildren, many teachers worked hard to stay healthy during our break.

Even though gyms were closed, Mr. James Burnett, assistant principal, continued to workout throughout the break.

“I would run near where I live for cardio,” said Mr. Burnett. “For weight training, I had a couple of sets of weights at home that I would use, and I incorporated push-ups.”

Mr. Burnett made a commitment in August 2019 to get healthier, and his commitment helped him stay motivated.

“I had come too far along to let up because of COVID,” said Mr. Burnett.

Ms. Cassie Damon, a math teacher, said it was easier for her to stay healthy during our COVID break.

“I have a job at an essential business, so I was actually home less during the summer and spring shutdown,” said Ms. Damon. “It wasn’t hard because I was more active.”

Students also had bright moments during these troubling times.

Riley Bridgman, 10, won the state championship for swimming in February, before school closure. When she first won, she had no idea she would receive a state championship ring.

“Mr. Carsley was talking to my family, and he said something about sizing me for a ring soon,” said Bridgman. “I looked up to my mom and dad, and they said

they had never seen me so excited.”

Bridgman was supposed to be sized for her ring soon after school closed, so she would have it before the end of the school year. She ended up having to wait for six months to receive it.

Bridgman was allowed to invite as many people as she wanted to receive her ring. There to support her were her grandparents, parents, brother and her boyfriend.

Photo courtesy of Riley Bridgman



Riley Bridgman shows off her first state championship ring.

“I was very happy to finally be receiving it,” said Bridgman. “I was also nervous because I had no idea what the ring looked like or what was on it.”

Throughout the many hardships of COVID, many have stayed positive and have not let COVID ruin their happiness.

Synowski selected September Senior of the Month

by Jenna Mason

After many twists and turns throughout the years, seniors are coming close to the end of their high school careers. Tess Synowski, 12, has been selected as the first Senior of the Month, a recognition only 10 members of the Class of 2021 will receive.

“When I found out, I felt honored,” said Synowski. “It was neat to think about being one of the 10 students to be recognized as a senior of the month.”

While still applying for colleges, Synowski already knows that she wants to major in either kinesiology or health and exercise science. If Synowski chooses health and exercise science, she wants to go to physical therapy school after college.

One of the greatest, self-proclaimed challenges Synowski faces is herself. Holding herself to such high standards, Synowski sometimes finds it difficult to handle her disappointment when she doesn't do as well

as she thought she would.

“I feel every emotion about graduating,” said Synowski. She is “excited” about attending college, “nervous” about where she'll end up, “sad to be leaving such an amazing school” and “happy” to see what life has in store for her.

Leaving high school means leaving behind some of the traditions, too. Synowski will miss going to school events and being able to share the excitement and fun of those events.

Some advice Synowski has for freshmen is to be involved and stay positive. Trying new things like clubs and sports can get people new friendships and help them find new passions. There will be rough days, and staying positive is a key part in defeating them.

Not only has Synowski's high school career been about making new friends and creating memories, but also it's helped her find teachers who've inspired her

in many ways.

“Mrs. Crowder,” said Synowski. “She taught me that it's okay to need a shoulder to lean on sometimes and has helped me more than she'll ever know.”

Photo courtesy of Tess Synowski



Tess Synowski has gained a lot of inspiration and encouragement from staff members, including Mrs. Dana Barefoot, chemistry teacher, and Mrs. Kristin Crowder, gifted resource coordinator.

“I think I have grown a lot as a person since freshman year,” said Synowski. “I have a better perspective on what really has true meaning to me in life, and I've learned to let myself grow after facing a challenge and gained a greater desire to push myself to achieve my goals.”

Seeing double: a second Hoffer joins faculty

by Madison Marchant

“My favorite part about being a teacher is getting to know my students and see them on a day-to-day basis; making an impact on their lives is why I am a part of this profession,” said Mr. Braden

Photo courtesy of Braden Hoffer



The Hoffer twins, Braden (left) and Brennan (right), both coach football.

Hoffer, new English 10 and 12 teacher. “It is such a rewarding career, both on a daily basis and in the long run. In fact, there is nothing more rewarding than hearing from other former students regarding their future endeavors and successes.”

This will be Mr. Braden Hoffer’s fourth year teaching.

His first two years were at Mountain View High School in Stafford, Va., and last year he was at Colonial Heights Middle School.

Outside of school, Mr. Braden Hoffer enjoys hunting, fishing, golfing, playing the guitar, reading and playing PS4. He is also a big sports fan. His favorite teams are the Pittsburgh Steelers, Pittsburgh Pirates and Penn State Nittany Lions.

Along with being a teacher, Mr. Braden Hoffer is a JV baseball and JV and varsity football coach. When he taught at Mountain View, he was the varsity baseball coach. He coached baseball last year with his brother, Mr. Brennan Hoffer, APUSH and US History teacher. His brother was the reason he moved to Colonial Heights from Stafford, Va.

“I have worked with my brother since I was young,” said Mr. Brennan Hoffer. “It was great just to have him down here with us in Colonial Heights, now it will be even

better that he has bumped up from CHMS to CHHS.”

In the four years that Mr. Braden Hoffer has been a teacher, he has made some good memories.

“I would say my favorite memories all involve interacting with my students and participating in school activities: watching some of my former players walk across the stage at

Photo courtesy of Braden Hoffer



Along with football, both Mr. Braden and Mr. Brennan Hoffer coach baseball.

graduation, playing the faculty versus staff basketball/volleyball games and organizing a winning attire clothing drive at my former school with the community service club that I organized,” said Mr. Braden Hoffer.

Mr. Braden Hoffer’s least favorite part about teaching is the pressure of standardized

tests. He said that it takes away from the enjoyment of educating the students.

Each of Mr. Braden Hoffer's teaching positions has

brought him fulfillment.

"I enjoy teaching wherever I am -- I enjoy the content, the students and the long hours coaching -- however, I do

think that teaching at the high school will be more fulfilling for me as an educator and better align with where I see my career going," said Mr. Braden Hoffer.

New health teacher enjoys 'close environment'

by Chloe Russell

As students start off the 2020-21 school year adjusting to the hybrid learning environment, they are also adjusting to new teachers who have been added.

Photo courtesy of Misty Gunder



Mrs. Gunder has always been into sports and coaching, this year she continues as her first year here.

Mrs. Misty Gunder, Health/PE and weight training teacher, has been a teacher for 14 years and taught at Manchester Middle School before starting her new job CHHS.

"I went to Colonial Heights, and it is a close environment," said Mrs. Gunder.

Since the start of the pandemic, teachers have had to learn different ways of teaching; unlike last year, the pandemic has spread and created some challenges.

"I feel like it has been overwhelming for some as being stuck makes an impact on your overall health," said Mrs. Gunder.

Mrs. Gunder just had her first previous student drafted to the WNBA and has played and coached many sports.

"I have always been into sports and love physical activities," said Mrs. Gunder.

Some of the sports Mrs. Gunder played in school are basketball, softball, track and cheer.

Mrs. Gunder's inspiration to teach came from her keyboarding teacher Mrs. Cathy Bailey.

"She showed much compassion for students to learn," Mrs. Gunder said.

Mrs. Gunder enjoys the company of working with other teachers: it provides great collaborations and ideas and builds unique teacher relationships.

Mrs. Gunder's most frustrating difficulty about teaching to her is occasional lack of communication from students to teachers. According to Gunder, communication is a very important skill in school and in learning.

Counselor Guy joins the CHHS family

by Brookelyn Martinez

As former counselor Ms. Amanda Craft moves to another school system to take on an assistant principal position, CHHS welcomes a new counselor: Ms. Deona Guy. Ms. Guy is from Danville, Va., but now resides in Richmond. This will be her first year as a guidance counselor.

Photo courtesy of Deona Guy



"In a way, Colonial Heights chose me," said Ms. Guy. "I am from a small town, as well. Becoming part of the family here seemed natural to me."

"I am super excited to be here," said Ms. Guy.

She went to Radford University as an undergrad and then attended Virginia Commonwealth University as a graduate student. She holds a

Bachelor's of Social Work with a minor in Women and Gender Studies and a Master's of Education in School Counseling. One of her all-time favorite memories is her graduation from Radford university.

"All my family and friends were able to watch me walk across the stage to receive my diploma," said Ms. Guy. "It was one of the best feelings I have ever experienced."

When Ms. Guy was younger, she had no idea what career path she was going to follow; she just knew she wanted to work in a high school setting.

"After careful consideration, I was sure school counseling was the career path for me because I wanted to make sure I could have a direct impact on students and the people around me," said Ms. Guy.

Ms. Guy was also influenced by her school counselor. Ms. Guy thought she was "absolutely amazing" and in a way wanted to be like her counselor.

"She pushed me to my highest potential in all aspects of my life," said Ms. Guy. "She cared

about me as an individual, and I needed that at that point in my life."

Another influential person in Ms. Guy's life is her mother. She looks up to her mother because she is an example of the woman Ms. Guy wants to strive to be.

"I love how selfless, caring and nurturing she is," said Ms. Guy. "I am proud of the woman I have become, and that is because of her."

Ms. Guy has a few goals set for herself. One of those goals is to own a dog in 2021. Her biggest goal, however, is to establish rapport with her students and staff.

"Making sure to build meaningful relationships with my students, families and staff is something that I am looking forward to this year," said Ms. Guy.

Ms. Guy would like the students to know this about her: "I am so excited about my first year at CHHS! Please do not hesitate to let me know if there is anything I can do for you."

Mrs. McDonald returns to science dept.

by Meghan Thomas

"I'm excited to get back into the classroom teaching and into a regular routine of going to school and having a schedule," said Mrs. Lori McDonald, a returning biology and anatomy teacher.

Mrs. McDonald taught for six years at CHHS before leaving to stay home with her young sons, who are now 8 (Eli) and 9 (Owen) years old.

"My children are getting bigger and technically 'in school,' though they are fully virtual at their school," said Mrs. McDonald. "We saw the opening for a science teacher position and know the great 'family' that makes up Colonial Heights High School. It was easy to return to such welcoming arms, familiar faces and good students at CHHS."

Mrs. McDonald graduated from an incredibly small high school in Smethport, Pa., with a graduating class of only 87 students. She continued her education at Allegheny College in Meadville, Pa., and

then followed that with graduate school at the Edinboro University of Pennsylvania.

Photo courtesy of Lori McDonald



Mrs. McDonald is excited to get back to a teaching routine.

When Mrs. McDonald was young, she wanted to work at the post office; however, Mr. McCawley, a high school science teacher, helped her gain an interest in science.

"He was exciting, and you could tell, he just loved what he did," said Mrs. McDonald.

Mrs. McDonald believes it is important to learn about human bodies and the way they work, which can be studied in her Biology II course.

"Most of the time we don't really think about how the body works until we are feeling the effects of when our body systems are not all in sync and working correctly," said Mrs. McDonald.

After college Mrs. McDonald taught environmental education to fifth graders in Cape Cod, Mass. The students would spend a week on the cape and learn about plants, animals and the history of the life saving station.

Outside of the classroom Mrs. McDonald enjoys taking pictures, playing golf and documenting her family's travels.

Mrs. McDonald believes it will be interesting and challenging adapting her teaching method without paper.

"It is certainly going to be an interesting school year, but we'll all have fun, do our best and remember this year for years to come," said Mrs. McDonald.

Melanson brings 'fresh, young perspective' to science

by Riley Bridgman

Ms. Kaylie Melanson, a new Environmental Science and Biology II teacher, “loves that everyone is so optimistic and

Photo courtesy of Kaylie Melanson



Ms. Melanson saw from the start of her time at CHHS that Colonial Heights is an incredible area and has amazing students, test scores and staff.

so willing to help.”

“This is my first year teaching in the public school system,” said Ms. Melanson.

Ms. Melanson taught at The Faison School for Autism. She taught there for a little over a year. She taught children from 16 months to 6 years old.

“Ms. Melanson brings a fresh, young perspective to the science department,” said Ms. Kristin Crowder, Gifted Resource Coordinator.

“Because she just graduated from college, she can be an asset to a variety of departments as we try to make sure our students are prepared for their college experience.”

Ms. Melanson has plans to continue her education.

“I plan on getting my Master’s degree in Education in the next five years,” said Ms. Melanson.

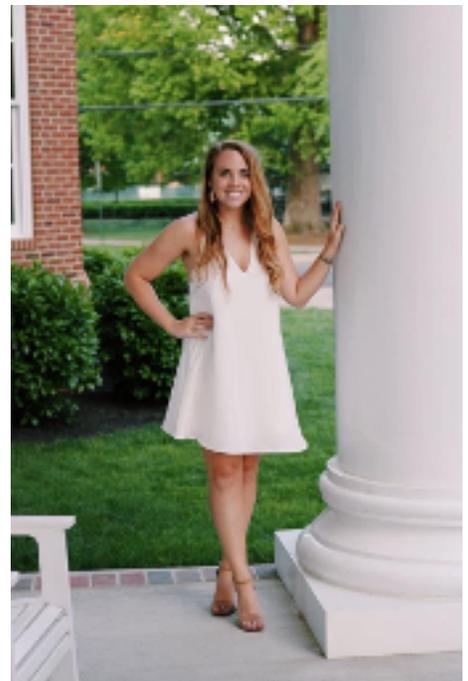
Ms. Melanson attended three different high schools. She went to Salem High School in Virginia Beach her freshman year, Bayside High School Medical Academy in Virginia beach her sophomore year, and Great Bridge High School in Chesapeake for her junior and senior years. For college, she attended Randolph-Macon College and received her Bachelor’s degree of Science in Biology, and a minor in Psychology.

Besides teaching, Ms. Melanson “loves to travel when I find the time, shop, spend time with my family

and friends, work out, try new foods and watch football.”

Ms. Melanson likes the football team, Dallas Cowboys, and the baseball team, Boston Red Sox. Her family has three Miniature Schnauzers named Pixie, Bailey and Tucker. She plans to own her own puppy in the future.

Photo courtesy of Kaylie Melanson



Ms. Melanson majored in biology at Randolph-Macon College, where she graduated in June 2019.

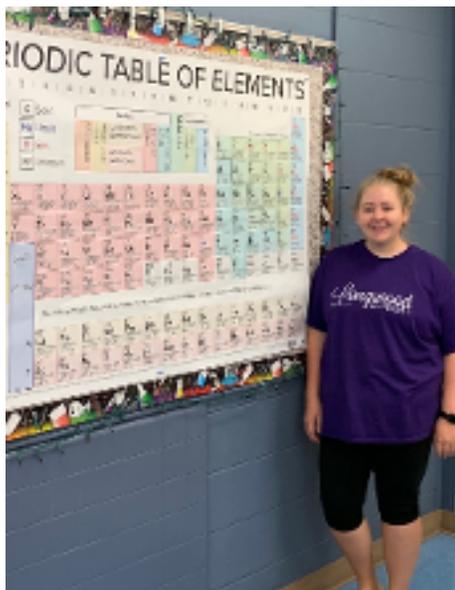


Mitchell hopes to spark interest in science field

by Jenna Mason

With new bonds being formed in her life, Miss Allison Mitchell was able to find her way to CHHS to teach chemistry.

Photo courtesy of Allison Mitchell



Miss Mitchell chose chemistry because she found it interesting in high school and wanted to learn more about it.

Miss Mitchell is from Emporia, Va. She graduated from Longwood University with a Bachelor of Science in chemistry with a concentration in secondary education. Currently she is working on earning her Master's degree with emphasis in education. She will soon be finished in May 2021.

Her career choice was inspired at a young age by her own teachers.

"I'd like to share my love of content to my students and hopefully inspire some of them to take an interest in the field of science," said Miss Mitchell.

In her free time, Miss Mitchell spends time at the beach, spends time with her friends and family, reads, tries new recipes, works on her schoolwork and travels.

Even though Miss Mitchell has only taught for one year at Cumberland High School, she has learned a lot throughout it and her student teaching.

"My one year of experience and student teaching experiences taught me to learn the ways your students learn best," said Miss Mitchell, "which might not be the same way that I learn."

Despite being a new teacher, she has had multiple rewarding experiences. One of the best experiences is

when Miss Mitchell sees a student, who has been struggling with something, finally grasp the concept.

When it comes to teaching, there are many difficulties and challenges for one to face.

"The most difficult part of teaching is when students with potential lack teamwork and empathy between others," said Miss Mitchell.

In five years, Miss Mitchell hopes to use her education career by teaching dual enrollment classes, perhaps at the community college level.

Not only does school impact students' lives, but it also impacts teachers' lives.

"[Teaching] has impacted my life because I know that I have had a part in [the students'] education, as well as getting to see them graduate and starting a new chapter of their lives," said Miss Mitchell.

Kochuba returns 'home' to CHHS

by Caroline Woodward

At the start of each school year, CHHS not only welcomes new students, but

Photo courtesy of Danielle Kochuba



Mrs. Kochuba loves teaching and helping students succeed in all that they do. She takes pride in knowing that she can influence her students in a positive way.

also new teachers. Mrs. Danielle Kochuba is a first-year Algebra I and SPED teacher who has returned to CHHS.

“Coming back here to teach feels like I am back to my ‘home,’” said Mrs. Kochuba.

Mrs. Kochuba graduated

from CHHS before earning her degree at Randolph-Macon College. She co-teaches Algebra I with Mrs. Rene Rush.

“Mrs. Kochuba has jumped in to help in every possible way,” said Mrs. Rush.

“Her bubbly personality and caring nature pairs well with her ability to assist students when needed. She is eager to help any student and makes them feel comfortable asking

questions.”

“I became a teacher to impact students' lives in a positive way and to help them any way that I can,” said Mrs. Kochuba.

Mrs. Kochuba’s favorite thing about teaching is becoming close with her students and co-workers and knowing that she can make a difference in her students’ daily lives.

“Knowing that I can help change a child or student's outlook on school or life is what inspires me to teach,” said Mrs. Kochuba.

Mrs. Kochuba loves meeting students and getting to know their different personalities.

“I hope to achieve lasting and positive relationships with all my students,” said Mrs. Kochuba.

Outside of school, Mrs. Kochuba is an adventurous and outdoorsy person. She enjoys playing golf, gardening and hanging out with her four ducks and two dogs, Snoop and Suki.

Pink-Out Day



In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Colonials wore pink on Oct. 8. Pictured from left to right, top to bottom: Ms. Melissa Lewis; Gracie Griffin, Ryleigh Hedge, Riley Bridgman, Brookelyn Martinez, Caroline Woodward, Heather Claytor, Madison Marchant, Meghan Thomas, Jenna Mason; Mrs. Jamie Wulf-Zaweski, Mrs. Laurie Melis, Mrs. Amanda Creasey, Miss Taylor Embrey, Ms. Tabitha Strickler, Mrs. Melissa Curry, Ms. Lee Legard, Mrs. Melissa Lewis; Kendall Ackerman, Hannah Mitchell, Ryleigh Hedge, Reese Whitmore, Kennedy Saunders, Bracie Bennett.