

Colonial



COURIER

November 2022

Photos courtesy of LifeTouch



CHHS held its first Homecoming Dance after the COVID-19 pandemic on Oct. 15. Freshmen through juniors experienced their first ever Homecoming Dance. The night was filled with dancing and laughter, and everyone who went made unforgettable memories. Jacinto Castillo, 12, was named the Homecoming King during a pep rally, and Lily Zheng, 12, was crowned the Homecoming Queen during halftime of the football game.

Colonial

COURIER



Faculty Advisor: Mrs. Terri Miles Moody



Editors

Editors-in-Chief:

Riley Bridgman

Jenna Mason

News Editor:

Heather Claytor

Video Production Manager:

Gavin Jarvis

Staff Writers

Eliza Chiodo

Ethan Greenwald

Hendrix Harris

Piper Howison

Lamoni Jordan

Mehki Leon

Grace Newton

Alyssa Reynolds

Julianna Sheridan

Savannah Stephenson



Mason awarded with September Senior of the Month

by Riley Bridgman

Jenna Mason, 12, thought she was calling Mr. Mike Nelson, principal, to come up with ideas for the students of CHHS to get involved and have fun. After answering the call, Mason got told she was chosen as the September Senior of the Month.

"I was surprised because I didn't think I would be the very first one," said Mason. "After that I just felt really honored. It was like the teachers really think I deserve this, so it was really honoring."

Mason has been a part of many clubs and activities since she moved to Colonial Heights her freshman year. Some of Mason's most meaningful and rewarding club leaderships and activities were being SCA president and editor-in-chief for *Colonial Courier*.

"I was SCA president, which was really meaningful to me because I was the president as a junior, which has never happened before," said

Mason. "I just really wanted to give the students what they wanted."

Though being SCA president as a junior was very special to Mason, the most special leadership role to her is being the *Colonial Courier* editor-in-chief.

Photo courtesy of Jenna Mason



Mason's dream job is to be a journalist at The New York Times.

"The most important role was being editor-in-chief of *Colonial Courier*, which is the school newspaper," said Mason. "It was so important because it made me realize what I actually wanted to do in the future. It made me learn about a lot of people and history at our school, and if I hadn't done it, I wouldn't

have learned about any of it."

Mason plans to apply early decision to Virginia Tech and wants to double major in multimedia journalism and secondary education. If she becomes a teacher, she wants to teach 11th or 12th grade English. Her second option is Randolph-Macon for the same majors.

Though Mason has had many club and leadership roles, she also went through many hardships throughout her high school career.

"The biggest challenge I faced during high school was being new," said Mason. "I moved here the summer before ninth grade, and it was just a lot. It was a lot smaller than my school was, and I had grown up with everyone from my old school, so I didn't know anyone here. It was really hard to talk to people and actually find people I connected with, but I ended up doing it."

Even with Mason being a new student, she created relationships with many

Photo courtesy of Jenna Mason



Mason likes to spend time with her family, especially her older sister, Ashley, and her nieces Julia (left) and Halle (right).

teachers that have inspired her.

“Three teachers that come to mind are Mrs. Moody, Ms. Roberts, and Mrs. Smith,” said Mason. “I’ve learned very different things from all of them. Ms. Roberts taught me how to just keep pushing and get through the right times. Mrs. Smith taught me how to be true to myself and how to actually like who I am. Mrs. Moody taught me so much. She taught me how to be a leader and how to be kind to people even though it’s really hard sometimes.”

The relationships and inspiration with these teachers is not just one way. Her teachers have also been inspired by her.

“I think Jenna is a super dedicated and active student here at CHHS,” said Mrs. Samantha Smith, Spanish/ESL teacher. “She is involved in a variety of activities. When she gets involved, she gives it her all. She always goes above and beyond.”

Mrs. Smith admires Mason’s dedication and commitment to go beyond what is expected of her.

“In class one day we started comparing all the students to insects and what their insect personality would be, and then the next day she came in, and she had made a poster with all of us with our insects,” said Mrs. Smith. “She just always goes the extra mile.”

Mason’s dedication and success is noticed by many teachers and students, but what motivates Mason to succeed is the happiness she gets from it.

“I think the happiness from success motivates me because every time we do things, like publish a new issue, I’m really happy about it,” said Mason. “Every time I get a good grade, I am really happy because I studied and it shows my hard work.”

Mason states that she is excited to graduate and start a new journey, but she will miss the relationships she has made and the experiences she has had.

“High school is a very hard place, not only because of the workload and expectations people have for you, but also just because of the absurd experiences you have here,” said Mason. “I know I will get more experiences in college, but it’s something about having those experiences in high school that makes it something I will miss.”

Burchard honored as October Senior of the Month

by Jenna Mason

"It was very encouraging that my hard work was paying off and that I was closer to getting my college paid for," said Grayson Burchard, 12, about receiving the honor of October Senior of the Month.

Starting from a young age, Burchard has always been an active member of the school and community. He grew up going to church, and throughout high school he has participated in multiple extracurricular activities.

In high school Burchard has been a part of SCA, FCA, the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council and much more. Outside of school he is active in his church and is a competitive gymnast who practices 16 to 20 hours a week; he is also the team captain since he is the highest level gym athlete and the oldest.

"Gymnastics has taught me dedication and grit, and I have enjoyed practicing and competing over the years; I have been able to travel as

Photo courtesy of Grayson Burchard



Burchard has been inspired by many teachers at CHHS, but one of the most inspiring was Ms. Sarah Crinkley, science teacher.

far as Arizona for competitions," said Burchard. "I am also heavily involved in my church. I have made friendships that will last a lifetime, and my faith has helped me push through hard times, and I owe the credit for all my accomplishments to God."

One of the most challenging aspects of being an excelling student and an athlete is balancing homework and everything else he's involved in.

"It was challenging at times to balance my schoolwork with my other activities," said Burchard. "It has helped me

learn vital time management skills that I will be using for the rest of my life. Making sure I do not overwork myself has been important, and I have always tried to get enough rest."

As high school comes to an end, seniors tend to look back on all of the memories that they've created. Burchard believes that his memories are mainly made out of the relationships he's created with the people around him.

"Meeting people and becoming friends with people are the most valuable memories I have from these past few years," said Burchard. "Yes, the picnics, dances and other events were amazing, but they would not be anything without the people around me. They have made my classes fun, and they will be what I remember the most about high school."

Keagan McNulty, 12, has known Burchard since the fifth grade. Throughout those years he has gotten to know Burchard very well, and he has

even looked up to him because of everything he's accomplished.

"He is a role model in and out of the classroom," said McNulty. "You will not see Grayson ever putting anyone else down or even in a bad mood. He is a great contribution to our school and our community. He is involved heavily in many clubs and goes to gymnastics practice five days a week, which I know isn't easy!"

For knowing someone as long as they've known each other, there have been a multitude of memories that have been created throughout the years.

"He is such a great person to be around and have fun with," said McNulty. "I have enjoyed many memories with him, whether it was making our physics newscast or having a game night with his family. He really is a fantastic friend, and I am grateful to have known him for this long. I know whatever path he takes, he will be very successful, and I just hope to be one of the reasons he got there!"

Something else that seniors do as they near the end of their high school career is reflect on themselves when they were a freshman.

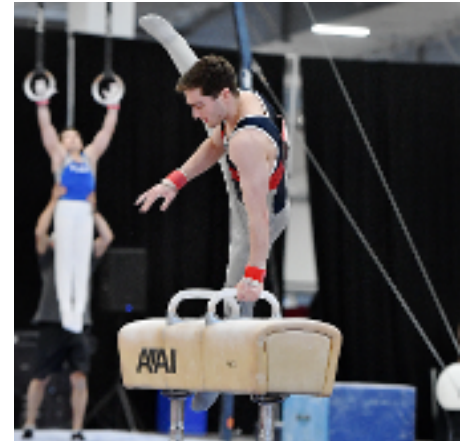
"I have achieved far greater than I had hoped for when I started ninth grade," said Burchard. "Physically, I have become much stronger, and I have done well in my sport. Mentally and emotionally, I have grown in that I have overcome many challenges that have come my way, both related and unrelated to the pandemic. Most importantly, I have grown in my faith, which keeps me grounded in what I believe and true to my morals."

Graduation can be exciting for everyone, but nerves come along with all of the excitement.

"I am excited to graduate, but I am also nervous about my college decisions," said Burchard. "The decision is daunting, but I have faith that God will put me wherever He needs me. I am very excited to graduate, but I think it is important to make the most of the time we have now in high school."

Burchard has not yet decided on what college he wants to attend after high school, but he does know that he wants to get a pre-med degree studying biology or another science field.

Photo courtesy of Grayson Burchard



Burchard created many memories throughout his high school career, but what he will remember most are the friendships he created.

Through all and all, Burchard is going to remember high school for the people who were there with him. The most important part he is taking with him are the relationships he's made throughout these past four years.

"The thing I will miss most about high school is the people," said Burchard. "Like I said before, the memories I have made and events I have been to are only memorable because of the people who have been there with me."

Ellenburg commits to Marymount University

by Heather Claytor

“Committing made me feel like everything I have done to get there was well worth it,” said Gray Ellenburg, 12, baseball catcher.

Ellenburg will be attending Marymount University in Arlington, Va. He will be going to college to play baseball and will be majoring in business management.

“I decided to commit there because I thought that was where I was going to get the most playing time and it just fit me in general,” said Ellenburg.

Growing up in Colonial Heights, Ellenburg started his passion for baseball when he was six years old. Inspiration came from his dad, who motivated him to begin playing for travel teams along with attending many camps.

“First, I joined my travel team; that was a while ago, but that was just a kind of jump start to where I needed to be,” said Ellenburg. “Then, they put me online, and I started going to Perfect

Photo courtesy of Gray Ellenburg



After attending camps, joining travel teams and sticking with baseball since he was six years old, Ellenburg's biggest accomplishment has been committing to Marymount University.

Game, Junior day, and then PR camps just to kind of get my name out there.”

Along with playing on travel teams, Ellenburg has spent all of his middle school and high school years playing school baseball. He has played all different levels, including middle school, JV and varsity.

“Gray is an incredibly hard working student-athlete,” said Mr. Brennan Hoffer, AP U.S. History teacher and head varsity baseball coach. “He understands the importance of performing at a high level in the classroom and as a

baseball player.”

Working hard on and off the field, Ellenburg has achieved much success as a Colonial. Ellenburg was awarded First-Team All Region and All-Metro as an Honorable Mention.

“Gray has always been a really good friend to me, and he always picks his teammates up whenever they are down,” said Mason Warren, 12, a friend and a teammate of Ellenburg's. “He is a natural born leader.”

Creating those bonds with his teammates has motivated

Photo courtesy of facebook.com



Ellenburg to be the student-athlete he is today.

“The best memory I think we’ve ever made was waking up every morning for baseball workouts and driving down Conduit blasting music at 5 in the morning,” said Hunter

Photo courtesy Gray Ellenburg



Having his teammates there for him since the beginning has encouraged Ellenburg to be the student-athlete he is today. The varsity baseball team has formed into a family that supports and pushes each other to become successful students and athletes.

Santilli, 11, a friend and a teammate of Ellenburg’s.

Even through difficult times, Ellenburg always had his friends to rely on. Making those memories and working together has created a family within the team.

“He is involved in clubs and sports and is a very well rounded member of our student body,” said Ms. Sarah Crinkley, biology teacher. “He is encouraging to those around him and is a very hard worker!”

Putting in the time and

Photo courtesy of Gray Ellenburg



Throughout his baseball career, Ellenburg has played outfield and catcher, but he is mainly a catcher.

dedication, Ellenburg is always trying to better himself, whether that be academically or athletically. He also participates in many different clubs and school events.

“I am excited about his commitment to Marymount,” said Mr. Hoffer. “I will be sure to monitor his success moving forward. I am very proud and cannot wait to hear from him about school and baseball at the next level.”

White verbally commits to Bluffton University for baseball

Photo courtesy of Charlie White



After playing baseball for so long, White has created many bonds and relationships with his teammates and coaches. Some of his closest teammates are Ashton Davis, 12; Zachary Miller, 12; and Craig Wooden, 10.

by Eliza Chiodo

Deciding where a senior wants to go to college is a hard decision for most. However, for Paul "Charlie" White, 12, this decision was easy.

"They had everything I wanted in a school," said White.

White verbally committed to Bluffton University in Bluffton, Ohio, to play baseball. White wanted a small school in the country. Bluffton is a Division III school that has an undergraduate enrollment of around 700.

White has been playing baseball for over 15 years. He

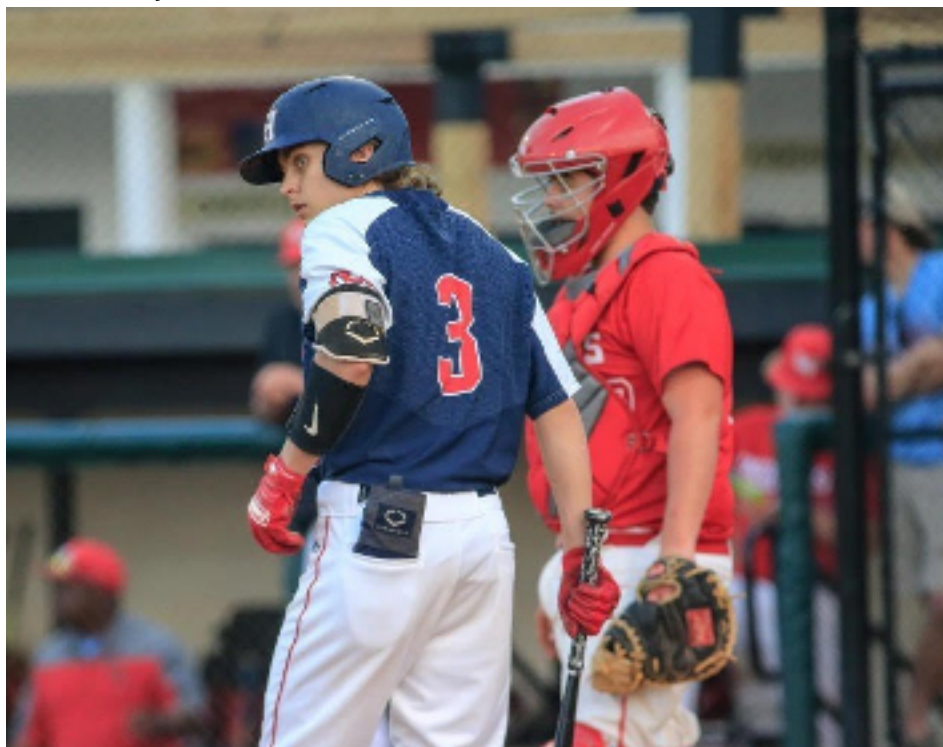
knew at the age of 10 that he wanted to play baseball at the collegiate level.

Out of all the baseball teams he has played on, White said the CHHS varsity baseball team has been the most influential because "all the coaches and players were super helpful and supporting."

White is described as an incredibly hard-working student-athlete by Mr. Brennan Hoffer, head varsity baseball coach.

"Over the years, I have seen Charlie grow into a very responsible, resilient young man," said Coach Hoffer. "He works really hard and has faced a challenge, and overcame a challenge that would have led many people to quit. Not Charlie. Charlie put his head down, got to work and has blossomed into a collegiate athlete – he is a player I am proud to coach, and I look forward to what he will be able to accomplish in his senior season. I am excited about his future at Bluffton and will be looking

Photo courtesy of Charlie White



During his sophomore year of high school, White got into an accident while fishing and permanently blinded his right eye. Throughout the hours of practice, he has shown to prosper through his most difficult times.

forward to hearing from him about school and baseball at

Photo courtesy of Charlie White



Over the past 15 years, White has played multiple positions in baseball. The position he's stuck with the most is shortstop.

the next level."

After playing for years in Colonial Heights, White has gotten very close with this teammates, especially Zachary Miller, 12.

"Charlie has worked to achieve a huge goal in life for after high school," said Miller.

White states that the recruiting process is frustrating and time consuming but also very rewarding.

"Don't let something in your past define what happens in your future," said White, who lost sight in one eye during a

fishing accident that occurred during his sophomore year. At the time, a medical professional told him that he would never play baseball again or drive a car.

White is described as being fun to play with.

"He is outgoing, hardworking and a good role model," said Craig Wooden, 10, Colonials baseball teammate. "His determination to keep playing even after his injury inspires me."



Metwaly adventures from Egypt to CHHS

by Julianna Sheridan

Imagine dropping everything and moving across the world. Noor Metwaly, 9, a transfer student from

brother who attend CHHS.

“My sister and brother are from here and both graduated from here,” said Metwaly.

leaving her family and friends.

Mrs. Casey Crow, English 9 teacher, believes that Metwaly is doing a great job at settling into CHHS.

Photo courtesy of Noor Metwaly



Metwaly plays in the midfield position in field hockey. Coach Wayne Moody has been impressed with her skills as a beginner to the sport.

Alexandria, Egypt, came to America during the summer of 2022.

Metwaly took a long flight from Egypt and landed in Turkey, where she then had a flight from Turkey to Virginia. What brought Metwaly to America was her sister and

Metwaly wanted to come to America, specifically Colonial Heights, Va., because her sister, Yomna Metwaly, and brother, Abled Metwaly, had new and exciting experiences at CHHS.

The hardest part about leaving Egypt for Metwaly was

“She’s doing great,” said Mrs. Crow. “She seems to have made friends and joined the field hockey team.”

“Metwaly struggles with her English a little bit, but she is working very hard with trying to improve as much as she can.”

Mrs. Crow is also proud of Metwaly for how hard she is trying in her class.

“She is very dedicated, wants to get all A's and wants to really excel as much as possible,” said Mrs. Crow. “I quite frankly adore her. I think she is an amazing student.”

Teaching Metwaly might be a bit different than teaching other students who were raised in an English-speaking country. Metwaly knows she must put in more effort than other students because she is

still learning the English language.

“Yes, teaching her is a bit different, but in a positive way,” said Mrs. Crow. “She tries so hard, and it is really refreshing; sometimes I notice things in her writing that other kids don't get wrong because of her background, and I try to be really sensitive about that.”

Photo courtesy of Noor Metwaly



Metwaly likes to visit the Mediterranean Sea and get in the water. She plans to go back and visit this summer.

Metwaly not only excels in the classroom, but also on the field hockey field at the midfield position.

“She is really shy,” said Officer Wayne Moody, Tech Center SRO. “Since she is new to playing the game, she will have plenty of time to learn and grow. She can handle the ball really well for this being her first time playing.”

Photo courtesy of Noor Metwaly



Metwaly likes to visit the store Khan Al Husseini. She would shop for lanterns from this store to decorate her room.

Officer Moody thinks Metwaly is a great addition to the team. He said that he loves that the other girls on the team get to learn and ask questions about how her life is different now than it was before.

Metwaly thinks that people should get excited and talk to get more comfortable at a new school. Metwaly had the courage to move across the world and adapt to a whole new environment.

“People should turn their anxiety into excitement, talk to people and join clubs,” said Metwaly.

Jackson twins express their different talents in fine arts

by Hendrix Harris

Throughout CHHS, students are using different creative outlets and arts as a form of self expression. Sophomore twins Slade and Seth Jackson are among the many students who express themselves through their own personal mediums of art. Whether it be through Slade Jackson's photography, or Seth Jackson's music composition, both boys concur that their talents are "a great way to express yourself without words."

Slade and Seth Jackson both have their own reasons why their hobbies speak to them personally.

"I get to be in my own space," said Slade Jackson. "I use it as a way to truly see what the world has to offer. That's the joy of being a photographer."

Slade Jackson has had many successes in his photography career, taking photos for school sports, such as volleyball and marching band. On top of that, he has shot

Photo by Alyssa Reynolds



The Jackson twins have been involved in the arts for their whole lives and are now starting to establish themselves in their niche.

for family events, including two weddings. Slade Jackson has made his mark on the world by capturing memories that will last a lifetime.

Seth Jackson has found his form of self expression through composing his own music.

"Music itself is very beautiful," said Seth Jackson. "Since I grew up in a family that was heavily involved in the band, I had the opportunity to listen to a lot

of different kinds of music."

"Music is a way to communicate without having to express it in words. Even if someone doesn't understand you, your music can still speak to them," said Seth Jackson. "Even if you aren't speaking to anyone, you are still being heard."

Seth Jackson has found lots of inspiration for his music through his family, stating that his older brother John Jackson, 12, is his biggest

Photo by Slade Jackson



The picture above is one of the photographs Slade Jackson is most proud of.

inspiration when it comes to music composition.

“I look up to my brother John the most because he is great in the band and has taught me a lot about musical composition,” said Seth Jackson.

Whether it be through photography or music

composition, both boys are taking initiative to follow their passion and express themselves through their talents.

“Slade does photography for literally every event,” said their older brother, John Jackson, 12. “Whether it be volleyball games, football

games, or church events, he takes every opportunity he can get.”

John Jackson also commented on the potential of his brother, Seth Jackson.

“Seth plays the piano like he’s Mozart, and over the years of practice he has become really good at it,” said John Jackson. “He already plays the piano so well by making stuff up off the top of his head, and now that he’s writing down his ideas, he’s becoming even better.”

Photo by Hendrix Harris



Slade and Seth Jackson have shown many of their talents in a multitude of ways. The biggest way is by Slade Jackson being the videographer and photographer for the girl's and boy's volleyball teams.

McKenzie deep dives into an adventurous hobby

by Grace Newton

Most people have a typical, common hobby, like basketball, drawing, or music; however, Ashton McKenzie, 12, took up a very interesting hobby.

McKenzie took up the hobby of SCUBA diving at the age of 14. Mrs. Jona McKenzie, McKenzie's mother, was the one who initiated the idea for the both of them. The both of them started their SCUBA diving journey sometime in 2019.

McKenzie recommends that anyone can start SCUBA diving if they enjoy exciting experiences.

"I recommend it if you enjoy the outdoors," said McKenzie. "It is a very rare and exciting experience."

McKenzie also recommends SCUBA diving for people willing to go through the hard work. He also stated that the certification is hard to obtain since the process has several steps to it.

"They start you with book course work, two classes,

Photo courtesy of Ashton McKenzie



McKenzie has traveled to many different places to SCUBA dive. Some of the places include Florida Springs, Bonaire, Virginia Beach, the Appomattox River and Lake Phoenix.

then confined water skill teaching and lastly open water dives," said McKenzie.

According to McKenzie, one of the hardest parts about the SCUBA diving certification was just generally staying on

top of the course work.

Mr. Tracy Boyd, biology teacher, described McKenzie as "intelligent, outgoing and not quiet."

"I believe he is one of the

Photo courtesy of Ashton McKenzie



The person McKenzie has SCUBA dived the most with is his mom. He and his mom SCUBA dived together in the waters of Bonaire, an island belonging to the Netherlands that is off of the coast of Venezuela.

most intelligent students I've ever taught," said Mr. Boyd. "Ashton also assisted other students with school work that they didn't understand."

Mr. Boyd also talked about what he has learned from McKenzie.

"We talked a lot about his diving experience," said Mr. Boyd. "Ashton knows quite a bit about SCUBA diving. I hope to be a certified SCUBA diver one day. Maybe he can teach me!"

McKenzie also has impacted his peers. He enjoys talking with others about SCUBA

diving and teaching people how they get started.

Mrs. McKenzie said the positive impact of her experience is "quality time" with her son.

"We get to go on dive trips to amazing places and get to see other stuff that our family does not get to see," said Mrs. McKenzie. "We have to trust and rely on each other for our safety."

Photo courtesy of Ashton McKenzie



At first, SCUBA diving may seem scary and hard to many, but with enough practice and encouragement, any challenge that may come during SCUBA diving can be faced. With the right teachers and people to do it with, SCUBA diving can be a fun and exciting activity to have as a hobby.

Teachers return to CHHS to teach new generations of Colonials

by Ethan Greenwald

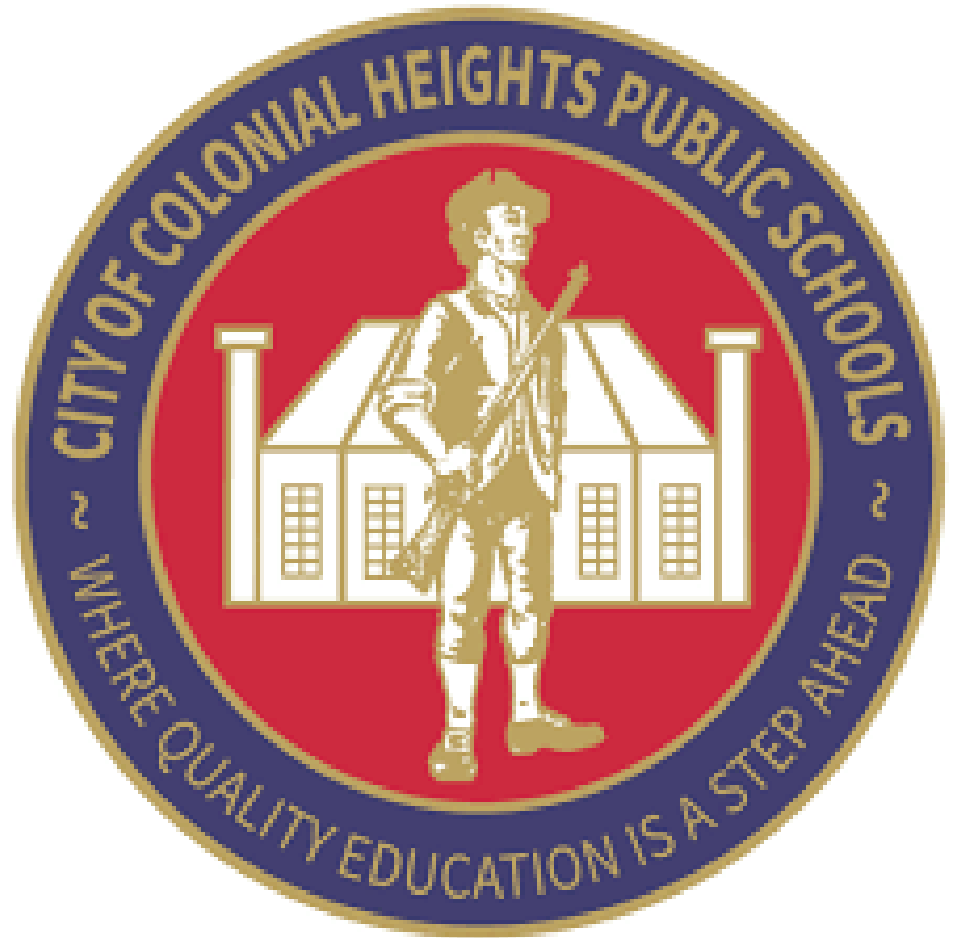
High school is often regarded as one of the most challenging parts of a person's life; however, some parts of high school are so captivating that they draw graduates back to the classroom to pursue studies in education and to become teachers. Some of these teachers are among the staff and faculty of CHHS.

CHHS has gone through many changes since some of them have been here, but there are aspects that have stayed the same, according to Mrs. Dana Barefoot, chemistry teacher.

Photo courtesy of Dana Barefoot



When Mrs. Barefoot graduated from CHHS in the 1980s, she wore a white gown. Now as a teacher, she attends graduation each year in a black gown.



Colonial Heights Public Schools are known for being welcoming and caring to its students and staff -- so caring, that many students who previously attended Colonial Heights schools have returned to teach future generation of Colonials.

"I still think it's got that close family feel," said Mrs. Barefoot. "That family feeling is what you make of it. I feel like I took full advantage of all other opportunities."

The abundance of opportunities is an aspect of this school that Mrs. Casey Crow, English 9 teacher, also enjoys. Everyone having opportunities to do something in this school is

part of the reason some students return as teachers.

However, that isn't the only reason why some of this school's former students decide to come back; some returned because they just knew that Colonial Heights was the right place for them.

"I just loved all my teachers," said Mrs. Crow. "I think this city has one of the best school systems."

Mrs. Crow also stated that what motivated her as a teacher were the teachers that she has looked up to. She isn't the only one who feels this way. Ms. Elizabeth Gates, English 10 teacher, had such a positive experience as a CHHS student that she decided to come back to teach.

Mrs. Samantha Smith, Spanish 4 and ESL teacher, is yet another CHHS graduate.

"I am very grateful to the teachers I had here and the things they have taught me," said Mrs. Smith.

These teachers came back for many reasons; however, it

seems to come down to the CHHS community and being part of it. Mr. Mickey Alderson, art teacher, and another CHHS graduate, said that the best part about his job is getting to teach art, with his motivation being his students.

Photo by Heather Claytor



Although Mrs. Smith wasn't originally from Colonial Heights, she moved here the summer before her eighth grade year and attended all four years of high school at CHHS.

Photo by Heather Claytor

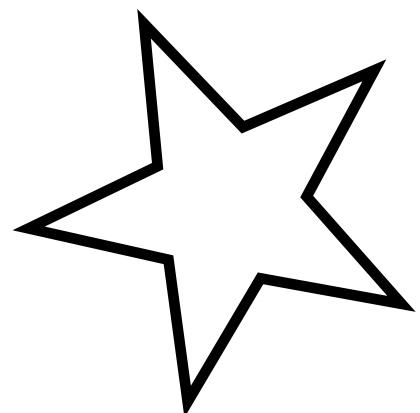
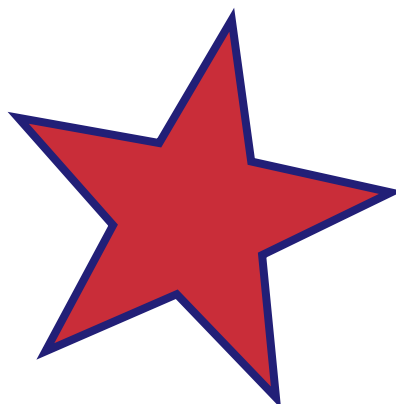


While Mrs. Crow attended CHHS, she played on the girl's field hockey team all four years of high school.

Photo by Heather Claytor



During Ms. Gates's high school career at CHHS, she had Ms. Tabitha Strickler, English 12 teacher, for her AP English class during her senior year.



Drama students creatively work together to produce One-Acts

by Piper Howison

In George Orwell's novel, 'Animal Farm,' the animals overthrow the farmer and seize control to create an equal society. They're meant to do what they've never seen before; will they be able to handle it, or will they end up just like the farmers they worked so hard to escape? Here's a hint: the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

Mr. Andrew Bryce, theatre arts teacher and director, took the viewers on a journey back to times in communist Russia with the play, 'Animal Farm.'

"I think that the themes of people who come into power promising one thing and then reverting back to exploiting the people who believed in them is a very common theme that we see throughout history," said Mr. Bryce.

This year's one-act fall play entertained the audience with two stories to view. The play was shown on Nov. 15 at 6 p.m. with free entry.

Photo courtesy of Gavin Jarvis



The fall play returns to CHHS after not having one since the fall of 2019 due to COVID-19.

The second play, completely separate from the first, was directed by, starred in and was written by Ryan Ramirez, 12. He presented the audience with a political satire about a presidential election.

"The first show will be 'Animal Farm,' followed by a short intermission, then closing with my play 'The One Hundredth and Twenty-First Presidential Debate,'" said Ramirez. "Also, there is no ticket fee. It's free to enter!"

All of the cast worked hard to make this show a new and exciting experience by showing something that the audience doesn't normally get to see.

"We're not treating it as reality, and we're not trying to hide the magic," said Mr. Bryce. "The audience will see actors jumping into different characters and set and costume changes on the stage."

Ramirez looked forward to presenting his work and seeing how his peers react and feel.

"The audience can definitely look forward to a lot of funny moments; that's why I really enjoy it," said Ramirez. "All of the comedy is still rooted into reality and being able to make a clear and concise message in the show."

Military enlistment process takes time, patience

by Lamoni Jordan

What makes a person want to enlist in the military? The reason could be different for everyone. Some enlist because they think it's what's best for their future, some want to serve and protect their country and some have a family history that carries on for generations.

"It's a family tradition, and it always had my attention," said Arriyah Carson, 12, who is planning to go into the U.S. Army.

Some students have always considered jobs in the military.

"I've always wanted to work

Photo by Alyssa Reynolds



Gabryela Wolfe, 12, is one of several students at CHHS who plans to enlist in the military, specifically the U.S. Army.

Photo courtesy of colonialflag.com



The six branches of the United States military are the Army, the Marines, the Navy, the Air Force, the Coast Guard, and the Space Force.

within the government, and the military provides the training and background checks I need to get there," said Gabryela Wolfe, 12, who plans to enlist in the Army.

Enlisting in the military is a process that might take some time. People should first speak with a recruiter to see which branch is best for them. The ASVAB test should then be taken to determine the candidate's strengths and skills. Then, the recruiter determines the best job for the candidate. The last step is a medical background check to assess the candidates well being.

According to Mrs. Mary

Vaughan, college and career specialist, the ASVAB is a standardized test that tests knowledge of topics, such as math, science, and language or English. The public library offers a test-prep. course that is available to anyone. Virginia Wizard provides a link that can help with preparation for the test. The ASVAB test results reveal the branch the candidate is best suited for. According to goarmy.com, passing the ASVAB is considered as a score of 36 or higher.

A very important requirement for joining the military is graduating high school and earning a

diploma. The requirement age for enrollment is 17. No legal issues are also an important factor in your enrollment. Tattoos are not permitted; however, this varies depending on the branch someone enlisting chooses to attend.

“Waiting for your recruiter to get back to you” said Maria King, 12, may be the hardest part about enlisting into the military.

Serving in the military requires a commitment that can last up to three years. Many people turn it into a career, which can last at least

Photo by Heather Claytor



Arriyah Carson, 12, is planning on following a family tradition of enlisting into the United States Army.

20 years or longer. Committing to a branch requires being discipline-ready.

“Grunts need to get more acknowledgment,” said Jose Hernandez, 12. “They risk

their lives every day, and train hard every day.”

An infantryman or foot soldier is referred to as a “grunt.” Grunts may also throw themselves out of helicopters or airplanes into landing zones that are occasionally under threat of attack.

The military offers so many specialized positions, like a combat engineer, helicopter pilot and tracked vehicle technician.

“If you want to join the military, start talking to recruiters early,” said Wolfe.

Interested in joining the military?

People to talk to:

Students who are interested in joining the military should contact Mrs. Vaughan, the college and career specialist. She is able to provide information on what to do and when to do it. Mrs. Vaughan would also be able to get students in contact with recruiters.

Recruiting offices in Colonial Heights:

US Air Force Recruiting - (804) 520-4361

US Navy Recruiting - (804) 526-8072

US Marine Corps Recruiting - (804) 504-0582

US Army Recruiting - (804) 520-4645

US Coast Guard Recruiting - (804) 771-8635



Everyone deals with loss in many different ways

by Jenna Mason

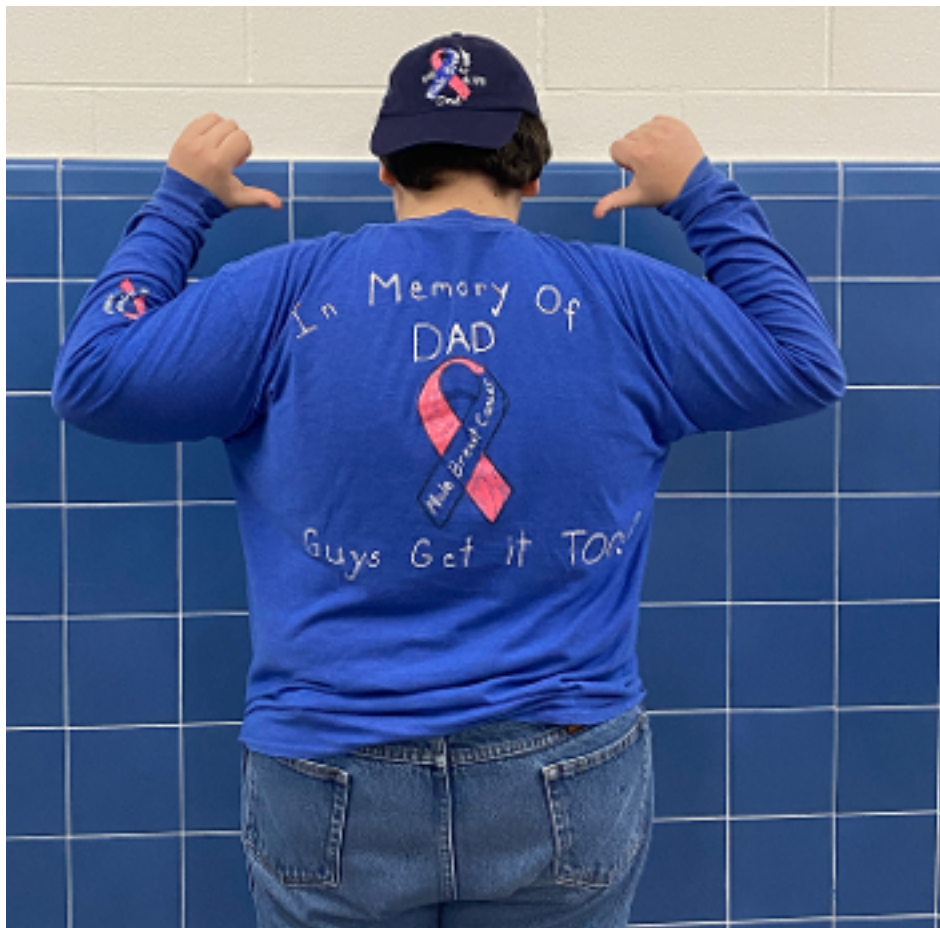
At one point or another in your life, everyone experiences loss. Dealing with loss can be extremely hard depending on whom you've lost, how old you were when it happened and how it happened. According to some students and staff at CHHS, grief can be dealt with in many different ways.

Mrs. Darby Wheeler, school counselor, learned that there are five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

"People can move through them very quickly, or they can get stuck in a stage for, you know, a long time," said Mrs. Wheeler.

These five stages can come in any order. Denial is believing that it didn't happen; anger could involve being mad at the world or at what you believe in; bargaining is when you feel helpless after you've experienced a loss; depression is an overwhelming sadness; and,

Photo by Jenna Mason



In loving memory of his dad, Roach made a shirt with his mom. After his dad passed from breast cancer, he and his mom worked together to create a shirt that shows support of men and women who have experienced or are currently experiencing issues with breast cancer.

finally, acceptance is being able to come to terms with it and move on.

One way that Mrs. Wheeler believes it's helpful to manage grief is by talking to someone. Whether it's students or teachers, talking to someone about how you feel is beneficial because it keeps you from ignoring your emotions.

"I think strategies that work are finding someone to talk to, whether it's friends or family, someone from church, a therapist or group counseling," said Mrs. Wheeler. "The important thing is not to hold yourself up and just wallow in being alone; you need to be talking to people and sharing how you feel."

Losing someone while you're in school can be an extremely difficult experience to get through. Someone who has been through that kind of loss and has grown as a person because of it is Connor Roach, 9.

"I think the one thing that really got back to me was being able to talk more and more and not be that quiet, shy kid anymore," said Roach. "It really taught me to have a new personality, to be more positive and to just be out there."

A way that started Roach's healing process was copying what his dad did. After his father passed, Roach started to act more like him to help keep his legacy and presence alive.

"I basically did everything that he would do to keep his memory going," said Roach. "Like, he had a Play Station 2, and I remember I played until the thing died. I ended up getting the PS4 like four years after it released because I was still on that Play Station 2 in honor of my dad."

Another kind of loss is the

loss of a mother. From a young age, we depend on our mothers, especially being a young girl.

"There has obviously been a big void in my life, but it's hard because I was so young," said Ellie Tuck, 12, whose mother passed away when Tuck was only three years old.

Growing up without someone who's supposed to be in your life can make childhood hard. You constantly have to see other people with the person you didn't have, and that can sometimes be extremely hard to deal with.

"There was never a straightforward healing process for me because it happened when I was so young, but knowing that she's in a better place and understanding that everything happens for a reason has helped me accept what happened," said Tuck.

Tuck believes that a strategy that's useful for accepting that someone has passed and still being with them is by facing your emotions head on.

"Acknowledging your pain every once in a while is very helpful," said Tuck. "I'm not great at opening up, but sometimes looking at old pictures of your lost one, and letting all your emotions out is very comforting in a way."

Finally, another difficult experience of loss is losing someone who you've been with all throughout your life up until adulthood.

"So I think the biggest effect loss has had on me is appreciating what I have now and being better at, kind of, living for today," said Mrs. Christy Major, government teacher. "Sometimes we get so wrapped up in, like, 'what am I gonna do, like, 10 years from now?' I think when you lose people you love, you start to just worry about today and living in the moment."

Mrs. Major believes that the hardest part of loss is acceptance because you start to realize that who you lost really won't physically be with you anymore.

"Probably the hardest loss for me was my dad. He died

10 years ago,” said Mrs. Major. “I think what bothered me most because I had had 36 years with my dad, but what bothered me more was that he wasn’t going to get to see my children grow up. So I had a hard time accepting that, and you don’t really have a choice because you have to.”

While Mrs. Major was healing, she realized that the biggest part of where she got her closure from was settling her dad’s assets and estates. She and her family had worked together to sell his

house and car, close his bank accounts and settle debts.

“All of those pieces were, like, mini, little closures that kind of help heal you over time,” said Mrs. Major.

Once the healing process has started, and well after it has finished, loss may bring something good to people. It helps people realize that they can conquer much more than they thought they could.

According to www.goodtherapy.org, grief teaches us to be patient, teaches us to live life every

day, creating memories that will comfort us after our loved ones are gone and teaches us about our feelings.

All in all, loss will come to everyone at one point in their lives. When it does happen, it affects everyone in different ways; if you’re unsure of how you’re feeling or what to do next, turn to people you trust, whether family, friends or educators. Something that you have to remember is that your lost loved ones are not completely gone, and that they’ll always be with you in one form or another.

Grief Counseling Hotline Numbers

source: <https://www.joincake.com/blog/grief-support-hotline/>

SAMHSA (800) 662-4357

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration offers free access to mental health crises intervention services 24/7. Although SAMSHA doesn’t directly provide crisis intervention counseling, they offer year-round mental health crisis support by connecting bereaved individuals to appropriate national hotlines, grief counseling service providers, and other local grief-related services.

Callers don’t need to be insured to receive a referral. SAMHSA’s volunteers will match callers with the appropriate services and local organizations to help those who can’t otherwise afford to pay for these services.

Crisis Text Line - Text HOME to 741-741 in the U.S.

Trained crisis intervention counselors operate this crisis text line 24/7. Anyone who finds themselves in crisis can text this number and receive the help they need via text chat. The service is genuinely unlimited to any problem or emergency, and it aims to help suffering individuals get through their immediate hardship.

Their counselors will talk with you to help you through your time of need, and then they’ll connect you with the appropriate support agencies where applicable for follow-up care.

COVID affects classes in drastically different ways

by Alyssa Reynolds

Over the course of the past few years, COVID has made drastic differences in the world as we used to know it. It has changed the way we are in public, including our schools, but which class was hit the hardest?

Photo courtesy of Rene' Rush



During the transition school year of 2020-2021, where there were students both in-person and virtual, there were events like flamingo flocking that took place all over Colonial Heights. This project recognized students for excelling in the classroom, sports and other activities.

Some people may say that the Class of 2020 was most negatively affected because they lost out on events like prom and graduation.

“Freshman year is when we left, but we still had Ring

Dance unlike the seniors of that year,” said Kelly Cain, 12.

Although that is a good point, it doesn't really focus on the amount of high school experiences that the Class of 2023 has missed out on.

We only had a semester of

This year, our senior year, we have finally gone back to something that most people would consider normal.

“I think we missed out on getting involved in our school,” said Keagan McNulty, 12. “I, personally, missed out on volunteering and getting involved in clubs. We have missed out on all of the fun of spirit weeks, normal classes, pep rallies and even dances. I am not a big fan of dances, but we should have definitely had more that didn't have set boundaries.”

Almost three years have passed since the Class of 2023 has had a normal high school experience; meanwhile, other classes have only missed out on one or two years of high school.

Even our education was interfered with. We lost out on a lot of ninth-grade classes, and then a lot of students went virtual for our tenth-grade year.

The in-person students were sporadically going

★
 ★
 O
 P
 /
 N
 /
 O
 N
 ★
 ★

virtual because of the spread of the pandemic throughout the school, and a lot of subjects were just hard to learn at home for many students.

March of 2020 changed our high school lives forever, and even though a lot of unfortunate circumstances have happened due to the virus, there have also been some positive parts that have come after everything and all the changes.

Everything is finally going back to the way it was before COVID, and the Class of 2023 will get to have at least one

Photo courtesy of Timothy Gueusquin



The schedule during the transition year was different than it currently is. Instead of the four by four schedule, there was an A-B schedule with two, 2-hour classes each day. The start time of the day was 8 a.m., and the time of release was 12:25 p.m.

Photo courtesy of Timothy Gueusquin



In-person students during the 2020-2021 school year practiced social distancing and wore their masks while at school. The masks stopped being required during the spring semester of the 2021-2022 school year.

traditional year.

“We will never have a normal high school career, but we at least have a normal

senior year, which we will never get back,” said McNulty.

Teachers who inspire students and staff

Mrs. Darby Wheeler, counselor



"She's a joy to be around. She is so sweet to any student, regardless whether or not they are in her counseling group."

Blake Underhill, 9

Mrs. Laurie Melis, Spanish teacher



"Mrs. Melis inspires me as a teacher, mother, and friend. She continues to value the relationships she develops here at school, especially with the students."

Mrs. Katherine Rudolph, Spanish teacher

Mrs. Misty Gunder, Health/PE 9 teacher



"She really cares about her students and their well being. She checks up on them to make sure they are good."

Shanii Lewis, 10

Mr. Mickey Alderson, art teacher



"He allows me to be me, and he gives me creative freedom, and he is supportive."

Jahnesa Jones, 12

Ms. Kristin Crowder, gifted resources coordinator



"Ms. Crowder is so inspired and driven. You don't often see teachers making a change and being so involved with the students, but Ms. Crowder is. Many students look up to her as a role model."

Ellie Tuck, 12