



GeoPrism

A Global Studies Journal



HIGHLIGHTS: ChatGPT Editorial on Africa; International travel; NCS Taiwan; Surveys; Gaming; Music; Profiles; 3 STATE CHAMPIONS!!!

The future of NCS should be in Asia, Europe, the Americas and Africa

We asked ChatGPT to write an editorial that congratulates the Global Studies Program for all its successes while also encouraging the school to focus more on Africa. The NCS global studies has never sponsored a trip to any country in Africa, despite the numerous Africans who have come to study here. While we appreciate that this may not happen soon, there are several other ways the school can incorporate African culture into our curriculum or daily lives. For example, we can add courses centered around African history. AP is currently developing a course for 2024 called “AP African American Studies.” This would be good to add to our curriculum, as it will make African Americans feel like they shouldn’t only have to wait for Black History month to be celebrated. Another way in which our school can incorporate African culture is through food. It would be greatly appreciated by the few African students present to enjoy food from our homes and see our peers enjoying it as well. Although the following editorial is generic, it draws very good points that NCS should dedicate more effort into understanding Africa and understanding its intricate and interesting culture and history. We edited the formulaic response.

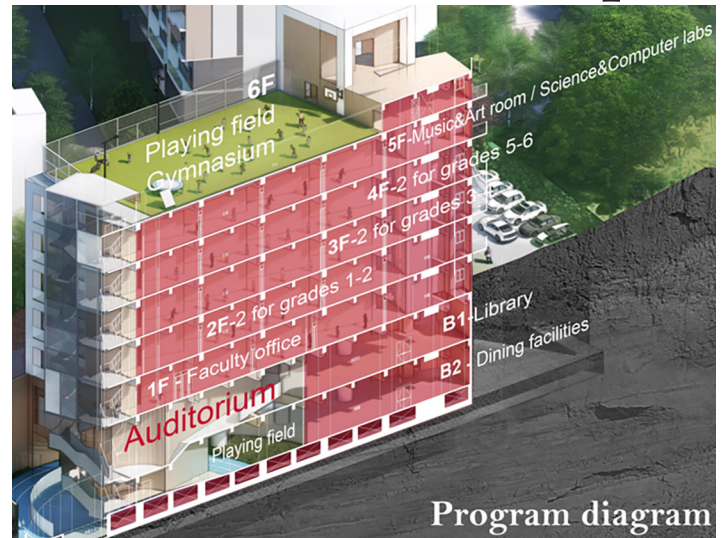
As students of this esteemed high school, we are lucky to be exposed to a world of diverse cultures and ideas through the school’s global studies program. From exploring ancient civilizations to learning about contemporary global issues, this program has enriched our understanding of the world and helped us to become more globally aware citizens.

However, as we celebrate the successes of this program, it is important to acknowledge that there is still work to be done in terms of providing equal attention to all regions of the world. One area that could benefit from more focus is Africa.

By increasing the attention given to Africa in our global studies program, we can work towards breaking down these barriers and fostering a greater appreciation for the continent and its people. This could include exploring the history, culture, and current events of various African countries, as well as inviting guest speakers or organizing cultural events.

In addition to benefiting our own education, giving more attention to Africa in our global studies program would also help to promote greater diversity and inclusivity within our school community. By learning about and appreciating the unique perspectives and experiences of African people, we can become more empathetic and compassionate individuals, better equipped to navigate an increasingly interconnected world.

In conclusion, while we applaud the efforts of our school’s global studies program, we call for a greater emphasis on Africa in order to promote greater understanding and inclusivity. We believe that by working towards a more comprehensive and balanced global studies program, we can prepare ourselves to be responsible and informed citizens of the world.



Architectural image of North Cross School in Taiwan courtesy of Nicki Dabney.

Inside the Issue

1. Eason Zhou designed the cover to illustrate the home nations of students in the dorm. All came for education at a little dot on the map.
2. An editorial created by ChatGPT.
3. Africa through the magnifying glass. Illustration by Rabia Ferron.
4. Massoki Maka describes her life of flying internationally.
5. Rabia Ferron dreams of being a doctor and creating a clinic in Niger.
6. Nhi Le compares and contrasts two schooling experiences in America
7. Antonio Mack writes about the trip to Argentina.
8. Aadeetri Pandey reviews the weddings of two faculty members.
9. Brock Miles and Massoki Maka depict new leadership in the dorm.
10. GeoPrism interview with Director of Intl. Programs Nicki Dabney.
11. GeoPrism interview with Global Studies Director Ryan DeMarco.
12. Lunar New Year celebration food and festivities.
13. Lunar New Year table tennis competition.
14. An international student applies to six colleges and gets into five!
15. An Anglo American returns to England for Winter Break.
16. Lam Do makes a case for the benefits of playing video games.
17. Jiale Qin describes favorite game: Counter Strike Global Offensive.
18. Didi Dibetle reveals the appeal of Amapiano, a South African genre.
19. Spanish guitarist made music like “Mama Mia” at Muses at Bay.
20. Rabia Ferron profiles her friend Isabel Mendez, volleyball player.
21. Tristan Lange reports on Hannes Hammer’s life at VT.
22. Anne Bradley Cullen previews the tennis team’s new No. 1 player.
23. Veronica Weston announces the arrival of Rocio Criado on the pitch.
24. Indoor track stars won three individual state championships.

GeoPrism

A Global Studies Journal

Founded in 2017, and based in the Journalism elective, GeoPrism is the official student-led publication of the Horace G. Fralin Program for Global Studies at North Cross School in Roanoke, VA. GeoPrism: A Global Studies Journal is produced by the staff of the Willis Hall Herald and may be published in magazine form once or twice per year. GeoPrism welcomes letters, commentary and submissions of original content that adhere to the Herald’s dedication to factual journalism. Letters and other content must be signed and may be edited for length and style. GeoPrism does not guarantee publication of outside submissions. The Herald won Gold Medals from Columbia Scholastic Press Association in 2012 and 2015. Submit letters to willishallherald@northcross.org

VOL. VI
NO. 1
FEB. 2023

NORTH CROSS
SCHOOL
4254 COLONIAL AVE.
ROANOKE, VA
24018

WWW.
WILLISHALLHERALD.
ORG

Editor-in-Chief.....(Kenya?) Massoki Maka '23
 Editor of Photography and Design.....(Beijing, China) Eason Zhou '24
 Senior Editor for Graphics.....(Hanoi, Vietnam) Dat Bui '23
 Business Manager.....(Salem) Brock Miles '24
 Features Editor.....(Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam) Nhi Le '25
 Sports Editor.....(Cave Spring) Tristan Lange '26
 Arts and Entertainment Editor.....(Roanoke) Aadeetri Pandey '26
 Staff Artist.....(Montreal) Rabia Ferron '26
 Staff Writers.....(Floyd) Rowan Anderson '26,
 (Roanoke) Anne Bradley Cullen '26
 (Hanoi, Vietnam) Lam Do '26,
 (Pretoria, South Africa) Didi Dibetle '24,
 (Franklin County) Antonio Mack '26,
 (China) Jiale Qi '26,
 (Vermont) Veronica Weston '26
 Advisor.....(California) Robert Robillard

Africa



Life up in the air for an international student

By Massoki Maka

As someone who has spent a fair amount of time on a plane, I can easily say that traveling is not an effortless task. To get to Roanoke from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia takes me almost 20 hours (not including layovers): From Addis Ababa to Dubai is a five-hour flight, then from Dubai to Washington, DC is 12 hours and lastly the flight from Washington to Roanoke is one hour. My longest flight ever was Qatar to Washington, DC which was 15 hours.

Before I moved to Roanoke, I still had to travel between Ethiopia and Kenya because my parents reside and work in Ethiopia but I went to boarding school in Kenya. I had to catch a 1 hour, 45-minute flight every six weeks for half-term breaks and end-of-term holidays.

Traveling for recreational purposes can be super fun. For example, for Thanksgiving break I traveled to Houston, TX, where I played Topgolf (which I'm not very good at) with my cousins and enjoyed a delicious Thanksgiving feast.

However, I must admit that traveling often has many disadvantages.

Firstly, I don't get to see my family often. This is because we live so far apart and this requires extra travel. This is especially saddening because I enjoy the company of my sisters and parents.

Secondly, traveling is tiring; not everyone enjoys spending an entire day on a plane. [Most people consider international travel a luxury, but for me it is a necessity.]

Thirdly, screaming children. As soon as we reach an ear-popping altitude



This photo was taken by me on my way home from DC to Addis Ababa in June 2022.

all the kids start screaming. On my way back to Addis Ababa for summer vacation, a little boy sitting behind me kicked my seat for eight out of the 12 hours we spent getting from Washington to Dubai. The things you can't control are the most aggravating things about traveling.

Petty inconveniences can ruin an entire trip. For example, having to keep your suitcase beneath a certain weight and having to pay \$75 to \$100 even when you're only half a pound over the limit. Additionally, traveling is very expensive whether it be domestic or international. For most international students, tickets home cost around \$800-\$1500.

Furthermore, I think entrusting your life to a stranger pressing buttons in a metal bird in the sky is also pretty daunting.

But, living in the sky has many perks!

Firstly, I get to experience something extraordinary. Being able to catch flights with ease is a blessing.

Secondly, I get to meet new people in the sky and make new friends. I normally start conversations with the people I'm next to just so I can learn a new person's story. I'm probably never gonna see them again, which makes the experience even more enjoyable. Finally, getting from one place to another efficiently; I can't imagine driving from America to Africa, so thank God for planes.

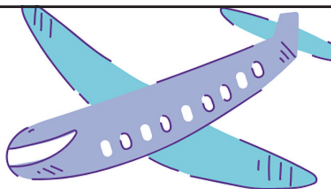
Unfortunately, I am very familiar with not seeing family because of travel. My mom works for the United Nations and my dad works for the African Union- which means that I might call my mom and she's in a different country without telling me. I am used to coming home from school and seeing my nanny preparing a suitcase for her.

I thoroughly enjoy traveling back home. Although the journey takes around 24 hours, I get to layover at really cool places! The coolest places I have ever had a layover are: Qatar, Colorado and Dublin. I think that international travel can be very insightful. When I went home for the recent winter holiday, I visited my mom's home town called Kisii. I met new cousins and their names were Nathan, Kevin and Reagan. Unfortunately, I was the oldest cousin, the next oldest cousin was 11. It was a fun experience.

I recommend international travel to everyone. It's a great way to learn about the many cultures present in this world and brings people together.

AIR TRAVEL

13 percent of American adults say they have never flown in an airplane.



PASSPORTS

Only a third of American adults say they have a valid and unexpired U.S. passport (37%) – about the same percentage as those who have never had a passport at all (38%). Another one in five Americans (20%) have an expired or invalid passport.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

There were 948,519 international students studying in the United States in the 2021/22 academic year.



My dream to bring modern medicine to Niger

By Rabia Ferron

Every time my family travels to Niger, I seem to always be one of the main people to catch malaria, but what can I say the mosquitos love me.

Growing up in a family that is from West Africa gave me a lot of opportunities to go visit my family in Niger. So after going there a few times, I know the culture, food and even how the people live. Even though I am not currently living there, everyday I live the exact same way like I would have if I were living there just without as much family as I do there.

My family is originally from Niger but later moved to Canada, where my brother and I were born. We moved from Montreal, Canada to Roanoke when I was 2 and my brother was 3 months.

We still visit Niger about every two years and every time I go, I am one of the main people who catch malaria. Malaria is a sickness that is caused by mosquitoes when they bite you, which causes you to taste bitterness in everything you eat or drink, have diarrhea and even feel nauseous. Since I have caught it all the times we have been, I know what it's like to be sick for a day or two in the hospital.

Niger has a few clinics but they are all mostly small and don't provide much care for people. Some have only one doctor in the whole clinic, so you have to come on only the days the actual doctor is there to have the best care.

Since I was a little girl my dream has always been to become a doctor, because I love helping people. When I was younger, I remember my dad burnt his hand, and where he got burnt formed a big bubble [blister]. So knowing my interest of always wanting to be a doctor, he called me over and asked if I would be able to pop the bubble that had formed on his hand. Of course I said yes because at that time that was my first step to my medical career. After I popped the bubble, I gave him a princess Band-aid and felt so proud of what I had just accomplished. As I got older, I never let go of my dream of being a doctor. However I did debate my different options of which doctor I wanted to be. When I was around 6 years old, I thought a doctor just meant that you can do anything without being a doctor for a specific care. But when I got older, I realized there were all types of doctors, so I started juggling my options. First I wanted to be a general practitioner so I could do all the things. Then, around 9 years old. I wanted to be an OBGYN, and around 11 or 12 years old I decided I actually wanted to be a pediatrician.

I am still only 15 years old and have a long way ahead of me, so I could change my mind at any time.

So now how does having a family from Niger, being born in Canada,



IN DAHOMEY: On the left is my mom's sister, me, my sister and my mom. In the middle is my dad, my cousin and the doctor in my family my grandma, who is a doctor, in green with glasses like me. On the right is my aunt holding my sister in her arms and my brothers next to her.

I will chase my dream of becoming a doctor with the people I love near and dear.

also called the Harvard of Canada. I want to go there because McGill has lots of resources to get me to my dream and that is the place me and my three cousins who want to be doctors all want to go.

Being in the U.S. is a dream for many people in Niger, because they see the U.S. as almost a paradise on Earth. So if I can be here to study, get good grades and go to McGill, then that will get me even closer to my dream. But now I have said I want to be a doctor, go to McGill, change lives with my cousins, but what really is my dream?

My dream is to build a huge hospital in Niger, where everyone is welcomed, no matter what their situation is. Yes, it's true, some people are very sick or very poor there, but you will never look around and see someone who is not grateful for what they have already. So, whether they are very ill or just have a cold, rich or even poor, my dream is to welcome and help anyone and everyone. So one step at a time, I will chase my dream of becoming a doctor with the people I love near and dear. One step at a time I will help save lives and I am sure my grandparents will be proud, because I will be the only other doctor after them in my family.

Plus, we can't let the mosquitos win. That is my dream.

coming here and wanting to be a doctor all connect?

Well here is how. Niger is a small country in West Africa with a population of 26.466 million people. Countries like Niger a lot of time are forgotten by other countries for support, so few people know about it.

Niger is definitely a place to visit though because the culture, food and even people are so amazing. So my love for this country makes me want to help in every way I can to make it a more known and loved country by others.

My hope is to keep up with the good grades and that will take me back to my hometown of Canada, so I can go to school at McGill University which is in Quebec, Canada. But why McGill? There are

so many other schools of medicine? Well McGill University is the 54th best university in the world and is

also called the Harvard of Canada. I want to go there because McGill has lots of resources to get me to my dream and that is the place me and my three cousins who want to be doctors all want to go.

REPAIR

PHONES & TABLETS

WE CAN
FIX IT
NOW!



WIRELESS REPAIR & CELL PHONE SERVICES



WE REPAIR
PHONES
& TABLETS



WE BUY
PHONES NEW
USED OR BROKEN



WE UNLOCK
PHONES

540-467-6633

Northland to North Cross

This is my second year in America, but each year has been a whole different world coming from Vietnam

By Nhi Le

Where were you last year? I have received this question so many times now that I can answer it fluently without being conscious.

I am an international student from Vietnam. I'm currently a sophomore. This is my second year in the U.S. but my first year at NCS.

Last year, I was in a boarding school called Northland Scholars Academy in Dunbar, Wis. It was a totally different experience. The school was in the middle of the forest and isolated from the city. It took 15 minutes to drive out of the woods, 45 minutes to go to the nearest Walmart, and three hours to go to the mall.

Northland is a tiny school. Last year there were only about 50 students in the whole school. However, the campus is gigantic; there are many abandoned buildings [it used to be a Bible college]. The facilities are pretty old and didn't function properly. Especially in the winter, the temperature can drop to 2 degrees Fahrenheit. It's not rare to wake up in a cold room and find out your heater stopped working without a reason.



The beautiful sunset behind the dorm at Northland. Photo by Nhi Le

Furthermore, the school's educational program could be better. There are only five teachers, and each covers at least four subjects; some of their classes weren't their major in college. Therefore, the lessons were not well prepared and it seemed more likely to be a summary of the textbook than a lesson. Even though it was in the U.S., we were all international students. As a result, we learned other languages more than English. [The school does offer college-credit classes through a junior college in Michigan.]

On the other hand, since we were so small, we were really close to each other. We didn't have

much homework, and most of it was very easy, so we always had parties. Being in the countryside, I had a chance to enjoy the natural beauty that you cannot see in the city. We could do tubing, laser

tag, ziplining, hiking, kayaking, right inside the campus.

My experience in Wisconsin was not a pleasant experience, but it was such a memorable journey.

This year, I attend NCS as a sophomore, which has opened up a whole new world to me. My homework went from "write a paragraph about your experience in America," to "write a 500-word article for GeoPrism." School is much harder but also gives me a lot more opportunities for extracurriculars, college preparation, etc. The teachers and the faculty are very friendly and supportive.

Living in the Wilson International dorm is one of the best experiences. There are two to three students in each studio apartment. The rooms are very nice and the facilities are still new. There is one long table, two closets, one bunk bed, and one single bed. The dorm is right downtown. Therefore, it's convenient for my friends and me to eat out or just take a walk around downtown.

However, I have to say that the dorm faculty should make an improvement on the food, especially breakfast. We are tired of sugar donuts, bread and cereal.

[Northland] was not a pleasant experience, but it was memorable.

Comparing Northland and North Cross

	Northland	North Cross
Date of Founding:	2018	1944
Number of Students 9-12:	50	196
Number of International Students:	47	26
Number of AP courses:	None*	18
Number of sports:	1	15
Number of teams:	2	17
Number of arts programs:	1	5
Average snowfall:	60"	21"
Average winter temperature:	25F	48F

*NSA offers JC credits.

Students enjoy December summer in Argentina



GOLDEN HOUR: Above: Chase Daniel '23 enjoys a moment with his Argentine hosts. Upper right: Suvi Hansen '26, Ned Tower '24, Nadia Hosni '24, and Daniel join students from Scuola Italiana gearing up for Argentina's very own zip line extravaganza. Right: Tower Hosni and Hansen experience sunny days under the rays of summer in Mendoza, Argentina. Photos provided by Chase Daniel

By Antonio Mack

As part of the Global Studies program, students venture out of the country seeking new and more diverse environments in hopes of new experiences.

After hosting Argentine students earlier in the fall, Suvi Hansen '26, Chase Daniel '23, Ned Tower '24 and Nadia Hosni '24 visited Escuela Italiana, NCS's sister school in Mendoza, Argentina, for about the first two weeks of December.

During their stay it was a very spe-

cial time in Argentina because the national soccer team was making its way toward the World Cup final, one of the most electric events in the world. Unfortunately, the students left while the tournament was going.

I asked Tower how it would have felt to be able to watch Argentina win the World Cup. Tower, part of the 2021 state champion soccer team said, "It would have been a dream come true."

Furthermore, I asked Daniel what is it like being in a completely dif-

ferent area.

"It really helps to show how different people are," Daniel said, "and how beautiful the world is."

Hansen said that "realizing how diverse the world is" made her appreciate her lifestyle, because most people don't get the opportunity to explore the world, especially representing their school.

All four of them agreed on loving the weather.

I asked Nadia Hosni what was the highlight of her trip and she said, "The beautiful landscape and meeting all types of new people."

Argentine students may return to NCS in April, while NCS students will probably visit in our summer, to avoid conflict with our school time.

"It really helps to show how different people are," Daniel said, "and how beautiful the world is."

"Interest in our international trips to Iceland and England and exchanges to Argentina and Costa Rica are at waitlist status—a sign that our students are eager to live out all that they have been learning in their world language, history, and STEM classes."
 - Head of School Armistead Lemon

Two weddings are better, especially in Britain

By Aadeetri Pandey

They first met in May of 2018. At that time, Hannah Ewing's best friend was coming to visit from London, so Ewing decided to throw a party.

At the time Ewing worked at Cision where she was a Senior Account Executive. She did data analysis for clients, measuring the impact that they were having in the media, and how many people were reading news stories about them, and if they were reacting well or badly, etc. She later got her masters degree titled Material Culture and Public Humanities from VT. Mark, a colleague of Ewing's, invited a doctoral student at Oxford, Tim Naginey, because Mark was American and so was Naginey. They later got engaged on Valentine's Day of 2021.

What is strange is that they got married three times and had two weddings.

Wedding number one was when they were officially married. It was more of a legal ceremony because Covid was delaying the wedding, and there were many travel restrictions. They decided it would be easier to legally marry in the States, so when time came and Covid was no longer as big of a threat, they could travel back to the United Kingdom. Only Dr. Naginey's mom and son came because borders were closed.

They had their first formal wedding in Oxford last summer. They got married at the chapel within Corpus Christi College of Oxford University. This is the college that Dr Naginey was part of. They were only allowed to get married there because he is an alumni of the college.

The ceremony was more traditional. The venue had a medieval style to it. The ceremony was also more closed off and small. After the wedding, the married couple, along with the guests, walked to the reception, which was in the Oxford University Museum of Natural History.

"There were all the museum displays everywhere," said math teacher Dr. Mike Koss, who was invited to attend the wedding with his wife, English teacher Nicki Dabney. "There were giant dinosaur skeletons that had been reconstructed and all sorts of exhibits to take a look at."

The guests also had access to a dance floor. They chose the spot because Ewing loves history and the museum had a science element to it so it was the perfect spot.

The second wedding was much more laid back. It was in the United States outside on the Shenandoah River.

"It was really representative of them because it was outdoors near the water," Dabney said, "and they both really love hiking and being in nature."

The reason they had the second wedding is because Naginey's grandparents couldn't attend the one in the UK because they were older and it was harder for them to travel. Ewing and Naginey wore the same dress and suit for each wedding.

Ewing said, "We wanted Tim's grandparents to get the whole experience."

Two weddings in two different countries are bound to have similarities and differences. A few similarities were the first dance song at the wedding in the UK, was the



The couple married at Oxford last summer. Their reception was held nearby at a museum of natural history. Images courtesy of Ewing and Naginey

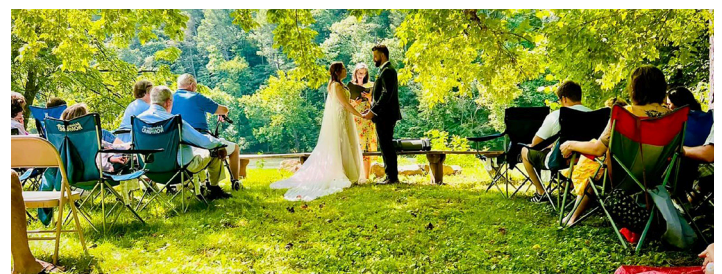
same song they used to walk down the aisle in the US. In both weddings they had a reading from the poet Robert Burns because Ewing is Scottish. They then read a verse from the Bible.

Some of the differences were that in the wedding in the UK they had to sign the wedding certificates in front of the guests in the middle of the wedding ceremony.

"The speeches in the UK are very strict," Naginey said. "Typically, traditionally, only the father of the bride, the groom and the best man give speeches. ". So it's only men who give speeches at the reception in the UK, which is strange."

"We didn't do that," Ewing said. "We kind of battled it for the record."

The couple married also held a ceremony near Luray Caverns. Image courtesy of Ewing and Naginey



English teacher Josh Kier takes over the dorm

By Brock Miles

This is English teacher Josh Kier's first year taking over the dorm as Executive Director of Wilson International – the name of the company that owns the dorm.

As we know, the dorm provides a place for students who attend North Cross (and Roanoke Catholic) to stay if they are not locally from here or from somewhere else around the globe.

We had the privilege to interview Kier in class, and he shared with us a lot of interesting things about himself, his family and his new position in taking over the dorm.

Multiple times he told us that this new role for him has been challenging, especially trying to balance this dorm work, other roles he has at NCS, and his family life. His wife is the director of the Middle School.

"It's a different challenge when we're both being pulled different ways," Kier said. "But it's been fun and we're both committed to making it work. So it's changed but we're still a cohesive family."

Although this is a different and challenging role for him, he told us that his new role brings joy to him. For example, when we asked him about the specific students in the dorm right now, he complimented them by saying they're "social, responsible, really well-behaved."

We asked him about his vision for the dorm next year. He told us those goals are still a work in progress due to a lot of new personnel in leadership positions at the dorm including him. Although, he did mention the number one thing right now that he wants to do a better job of next year is integrating the international students with American culture. His ideas consisted of connecting international students with students already at NCS and/or possibly doing something along the lines of taking the dorm students to somewhere on the weekends that will help with the learning of American culture.

Before Kier took over this new job, he was an English teacher. Kier can still be found in the classroom teaching the electives Public Speaking, Shakespeare, and Localism. Kier noted that he misses teaching a lot, and that the dorm and the classrooms are two very different environments.

"For me, the joy of teaching is walking students through the really difficult task of creating assignments that they are not necessarily academically



FORMER CAR SALESMAN! *Wilson International Executive Director Josh Kier brings a wide array of skills to the dorm staff. Photo by Eason Zhou*

equipped to do," Kier said. "And I don't do any of that in my electives. It's a very, show up, do the work, get the grade, and you're done. So I enjoy it. I like being in front of the class. I like talking about ideas. And that had been an awesome [outlet] for me. It's been an awesome [opportunity] for me to still have that right to talk about intellectual things in front of the classroom."

He also shared with us some things about his past, like how he got to where he is today. For example, he mentioned that the two things that

keep him going are his family and faith. He told us that he is very religious and that his dad was a preacher. We already mentioned his wife Allie, and they have two daughters, Millie '30 and Elise '35, who both go to North Cross. He told

us about his education, that after high school he went to Covenant College, where he said he was a bad student and ended up dropping out. After that, he sold cars at the place which is now called Priority Honda. He then decided to enroll at Roanoke College where he did a lot better, loved it, and graduated in 2013. A fun fact about him is that he loves classic country music.

(Transcription of the interview will be online.)

"I like being in front of the class. I like talking about ideas."

Alumna moves to dorm to work with students

Annie Elwell '15 plans fun events and serves as a mentor.

By Massoki Maka

Annie Ewell is the new dorm matron who lives on the girls floor. Elwell tries to make the dorm fun with fresh activities for the 30 students.

After graduating in 2015 from North Cross School, Elwell pursued a degree of Sports and Recreation Management and a minor in Sociology from James Madison University. After that, she found her way back to Roanoke and NCS. She worked with summer programs. Now she is Director of Residential Life.

"Since Annie lives on our floor, she spends a lot of time with us, also he understands us very well," India Lopez '23. "She is always looking to help us, not only with stuff for school but also with our personal lives which makes her very kind."

Elwell joined the dorm on a midyear hiring with her dog Bo, who is always barking at residents.

"Annie brings a lot of fresh, young spirit to the dorm," said Boaz Atia '25. "She works very hard to change things for the better."

She hopes to improve the dorm by leading students out of the dorm.

"I'm always down for an adventure," Elwell said. "Skydiving, whitewater rafting, exploring haunted buildings."



RAIDER LIFE: *Annie Elwell "brings a lot of fresh, young spirit to the dorm." Photo by Marsha Elwell*

GeoPrism staff interviews Nicki Dabney about NCS Taiwan

Director of International Operations works with partner to open school

Considering you're spearheading this project, are you interested in becoming the head of the new school?

"Well, being head of the school would require that I permanently relocate there. And I think that the other element of this is that our partner has over 70 schools throughout Taiwan, so they really excel at sort of creating a model and then implementing it time and time again, in different locations. In the future, we will probably be creating more of these schools in other big cities in Taiwan. If it were just a one time stand-alone school, you could theoretically do something like that. And so I think, in the beginning stages, it's really important that you do make sure that the company or the organization's ideals are solid, and they understand the mission and philosophy. But I think for long term maintenance, you have to then just hire a staff that supports the vision and gets it and can implement it. So we've had conversations about me teaching there for a year, but it's a lot to sort of think that every new school can involve relocation of key personnel."

When will there be like an opportunity for students to travel to Taiwan or China?

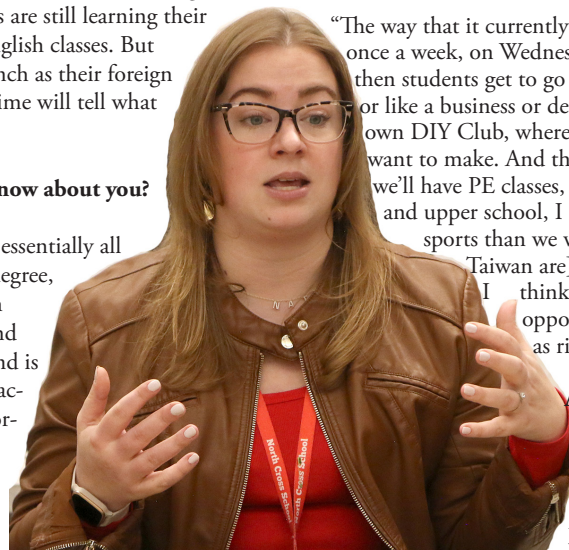
"Well, so China, we had a trip planned for 2020, and that was just before COVID happened, and so that trip got canceled. China has now opened its borders, but it's still having trouble dealing with COVID, since they're kind of where we were two years ago, so I am not confident that we will not be able to take students to China this year. In terms of Taiwan, it's a little bit easier for visas and the turnaround time. I think that we could probably take students there starting next year. But the other part of that is we won't really have a building ready for us until late 2024. So, we definitely will have opportunities for visits. But they might be a few years away. We will have our partners from Taiwan coming to visit us this summer, so that will be the first official visit."

How many foreign language classes are students able to choose there?

"So in these types of schools, it's actually really common that foreign language isn't offered, mostly because students are still learning their native language, and they're taking a lot of English classes. But they have decided that they'd like to offer French as their foreign language, so that's what we're starting with. Time will tell what that looks like at each level."

What is one thing that most people don't know about you?

"Maybe some students don't really know that essentially all of my degrees are in Chinese. My bachelor's degree, my master's degree, even my job as an English teacher came from teaching English as a second language, which is often referred to as ESL, and is more geared towards non native speakers. So actually, working in Shanghai was my first opportunity to teach a literature course in English, and while I really do like teaching literature, I didn't go to school to be an English teacher."



When will the school open?

The fall of 2025. We were hoping for 2024. They're done with the first three floors and currently working on adding a new floor each month. The building will have two basement floors, five classroom floors, and then a rooftop gym.

How big will the school be?

"Even though we're building this school from scratch, there's limited space that we can take in the area, which is part of the reason why we chose the hill, because we can get an increased number of floors. And so we're having to be smart about repurposing some spaces. For example, the driveway is circular, and that doubles like a track. And the school is going to be limited to one class per grade. So we're only looking at 240 students, from first grade through 12th grade with 20 students per grade."

What kind of APs and electives will students take?

"When we're starting in the fall of 2025, we're just going to have grades one, two, and three, and then we'll add six and seven, which is going to get the middle school going, and then that will kind of help naturally populate what will eventually be the middle school and the high school or the Upper School. We're quite a ways off from determining how many, you know, electives and advanced placement courses we can offer. Primarily, we have to think about the number of students and how many teachers we can hire, and are currently having conversations about hiring faculty. Finding teachers who can teach across departments will be important, but we're not really at that stage yet. We won't begin hiring until 2024."

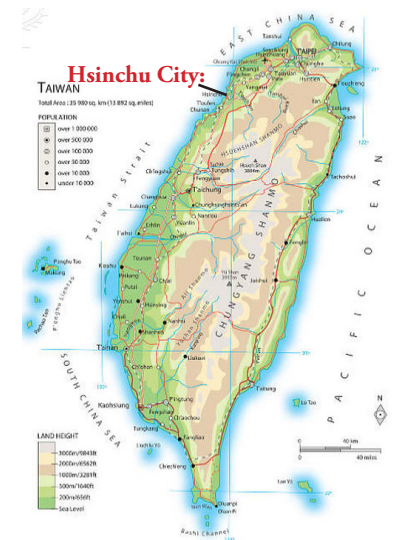
So how about the sports program in that school?

"The way that it currently works in Shanghai, sports and clubs are offered once a week, on Wednesday afternoon, after half day of classes. And then students get to go to academic clubs, which might be Model UN, or like a business or debate club . . . or students even founded their own DIY Club, where they develop something each week that they want to make. And then after that, there are sports. So in Taiwan, we'll have PE classes, which China has as well. In terms of the middle and upper school, I think we'll probably be able to incorporate more sports than we were able to in China. I think [our partners in Taiwan are] more interested in a truly American experience. I think that as students get older, there'll be more opportunities for sports -- the schedule wouldn't be as rigorous [as in Shanghai]."

Are they going to have a mascot?

"That's a good question. The mascot culture [in Shanghai] wasn't very popular."

The transcript was edited and approved by Ms. Dabney



NCS in Taiwan will be based in an area zoned for technology in one of Taiwan's biggest cities. Image courtesy of eb.com

GeoPrism staff interviews GS Director DeMarco

What got you interested in global studies?

“Growing up, my dad was involved in the military. We always talked about politics, and we had a deep passion for history. I think that passion for history and my dad’s wisdom growing up in education helped me to get on this path towards international politics. I like to solve problems, current events and to look at them from different angles. So I think what excites me about this sort of field is that it’s always changing. There’s always a new problem or a new solution that’s coming about that we can apply.”

Have you gone on any GS trips?

“I have not been on any of the global studies trips. I’d like to in the future. During Covid, of course, the world was shut down from international travel. We didn’t offer any trips for a few years just because of the travel restrictions in different countries. So hopefully in the future, though, I will be able to go.”

Where would you go if you did lead a trip?

“I’ve always been really interested in World War Two and the Holocaust and the study of those topics. I’d really like to get to Germany and Poland. If I could lead a trip somewhere, it would probably be there. Being a Russian historian, I’d like to go to Russia, to see it and experience it. Of course, with the war in Ukraine, it’s much more difficult now.”

Where have you traveled internationally?

“I’ve been many times to the Caribbean and Mexico on family vacations. But most importantly, I studied abroad. I got my master’s degree at the University of Edinburgh, which is in Scotland. And then, when I was in Europe, I traveled around to different places in Western Europe, namely France and Belgium and Italy.”

You run the Russian Club. Do you speak Russian?

“I speak a little Russian, and I’m self taught. I basically sat down and studied Russian two hours a day, using online programs, but also just videos on YouTube and things like that. I taught myself basic Russian. I’m always learning new things. I like to share that with the students in the Russia Club. I used Mango Language, which is through the Roanoke Library, which has all sorts of different languages to learn. I liked that program.”

What do you like about running the Russian Club?

“I like interacting with students who are interested in learning about Russia. And so for me, I feed off of their enthusiasm for wanting to know more about Russia, the Russian language, culture. We don’t just talk about Russian language. I’ll do presentations for them on Russian food, cultural customs, holidays, Russian history. So it’s more than just like a language.”

Why did you learn Russian?

“Russia is a unique sort of challenge because it’s obviously a different alphabet. It’s Cyrillic, not a Latin alphabet. But it’s not as difficult as something like Chinese, which is very obviously difficult. But I guess it goes back to because I’m really passionate about Russian history. It’s very beneficial to know the language, right?”

Do you speak other languages?

“I took years of French in school. So starting from middle school, I took it every year through high school, and then I did a semester in college and a year in graduate school.”

How has your Russian Club been affected by the war in Ukraine?

“That’s a great question. So initially, back in February of last year, when the war started, we actually disbanded Russian Club out of an act of protest so to speak. It didn’t feel right to necessarily champion or talk about Russian language and culture in a way that we were doing it before, just knowing the atrocities that were happening in Ukraine. But over the summer, students asked me if we could bring it back, because they really wanted to keep learning about Russia. And so I agreed, and they talked me into it, essentially.

Basically, when we’re doing Russian Club, we’re, of course, showing an appreciation for Russian culture, the Russian people, but that’s not necessarily condoning or approving the policies of the Russian government towards the people of Ukraine.”

What electives would you like to teach?

“Hopefully next year, I’m going to teach a Russian cultural history class. We’ll look at the cultural contributions of Russians. We’ll look at literature, art, language. Some of the greatest works of humanites in terms of literature were written by Russians: Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, right? So we’ll look at some of those works as well.”

What is one thing not many people know about you?

“I went to [Birmingham-Southern] on scholarship for clarinet performance. So I have a really intense background in music and music performance.”

What kind of music do you like?

“I like to go to the symphony. I listen to symphony orchestras, jazz bands. I think my favorite kind of music would be from the big bands of the 1920s and swing music of the 1930s. Lots of trumpets and saxophones.”

Has a student taught you something about a culture or country that you previously thought you knew and changed your view on something?

“Before coming here, I hadn’t taught a lot of Chinese students. Chinese students have taught me [to challenge] different preconceptions I had of China after talking to them and learning about their lived experience as Chinese people. Some of those conversations have been very enlightening. I had this conception of, ‘Oh, Chinese people prefer this,’ or ‘they eat this,’ or ‘they do this,’ and then you realize that those things aren’t necessarily true. Or it’s much more diverse than you anticipated.”

What is your favorite kind of art?

“It’s a great question. Impressionism. When I was in college, I used to paint and I did a project on impressionist painting.”

The transcript was edited and approved by Mr. DeMarco. Impressionist style oil painting by Mr. DeMarco.





Hot Pot Ingredients

Meats:

- Sliced beef, pork and lamb
- Meatballs, fish tofu, fish balls
- Dumplings

Vegetables:

- Bean curd, Fried Tofu Curd
- Corn, Napa cabbage, Lotus root
- Daikon radish, mushrooms, potatoes



Xīnnián kuàilè: Director of International Operations Nicki Dabney organized the event along with students like Eason Zhou '24. "I was absolutely amazed by the incredible turnout for the Lunar New Year celebration," she said in an email. "The best part about it was seeing students of all ages celebrating with their families and learning about traditions of our Vietnamese and Chinese students; it's rare to see so many generations at one event. I was so proud to see how adventurous students were in trying new food, and it made me really happy to share my love for a culture that I've spent the better part of my life studying." Photo by Sarah Sledd



NODORM FOOD TONIGHT! *Wilson International Executive Director Josh Kier helped make sure all of the dorm students could attend the event. "Lunar new year was amazing!" he said. "Ms. Dabney did an amazing job putting a really complex program together through student action, which is a thing that makes NCS so special! I most enjoyed the amount of students present from each division!" Photo by Sarah Sledd*





WINNERS: Attilio Ciccozzi '24 and Abram Sherman '24 celebrate after winning the doubles competition forming a double-W representing their victory. "It was the first year we've ever done something like that," Ciccozzi said. "It was a lot of fun." Meanwhile, Hanchen Ou '25 won the singles tournament. Winners and runners-up won cash prizes. Photos by Sarah Sledd

How this year's LNY celebration came to be

By Eason Zhou '24

The idea of the Lunar New Year celebration came from the fact that we didn't hold this event last year.

I have talked about this matter with Chinese teacher Nicki Dabney since the summer, and my study hall this year coincided with the Chinese class very coincidentally, both in period one. So I used this time to plan the event with Dabney and her students.

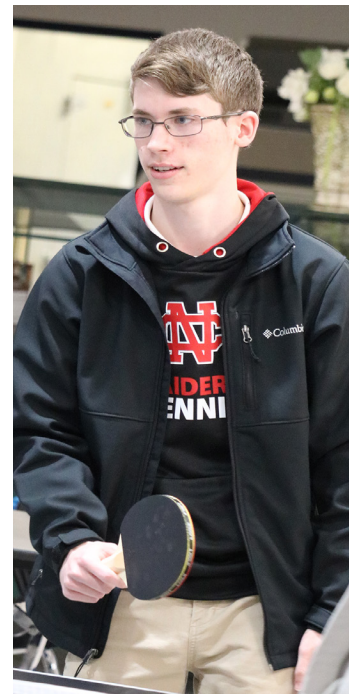
In the past, the school has held a celebration in the auditorium. This time, we decided to bring students together in a different way. We play a lot of table tennis in the lobby of the dormitory, so I came up with the idea of a table tennis competition. At the beginning of the school year, a friend of mine mentioned that he likes to eat hot pot. I once jokingly said that I would let every-

one eat at school during the Lunar New Year celebration. However, I didn't expect that the school would support this activity this year, and then we made it happen.

We arranged the place two hours before the activity began, and the students in the Chinese class gave a lot of help. We hung lanterns, pasted couplets, and put things in their proper positions. I have to say that everyone seemed to enjoy the hot pot. And as a referee, I can say that this table tennis tournament was very intense and wonderful.

DEI Director Debbie Taylor said, "The Lunar New Year celebration was a huge success! It was so much fun to see the students celebrating one another. The excitement in the room was ecstatic, especially when the students saw all the food they would get to sample. I am so impressed with all the hard work that Ms. Dabney and her students did to make the event memorable. I can't wait to do it again next year!"

LUCKY LANTERNS: Global Studies Director Ryan DeMarco builds traditional paper lanterns with Millie Chopski '26: "The celebration of the LNY was an amazing success!" DeMarco said in an email. "Mr. Dabney did a fantastic job organizing the event, and I am so grateful that our international students from China and Southeast Asia were able to share an important part of their cultures with us. Plus, the hotpot was really enjoyable for everyone!" Photo by Sarah Sledd



Paul Schueler '24 took part in the competition. "The Ping-Pong tournament was a blast," he said in an email. "It was really well organized and the atmosphere was unreal. All my friends were there and it was really fun even if we lost in the first round. Attilio and Abram won the doubles tournament in a heartstopping final match, which was super exciting. It was really cool to see all the talent in the singles tournament." Photo by Sarah Sledd

"The excitement in the room was ecstatic." - Taylor

Getting into U.S. colleges as an international student is difficult but worth the struggle

By Dat Bui

My process of applying to U.S universities has passed the most intricate stage. I am feeling pretty comfortable and a little satisfied right now for all the hard work I put in. Now, I just get to be patient and wait for the results of the colleges I applied to. All of the information, test scores, school reports were sent, and I also finished my personal and supplementary essays. I am pretty proud of myself.

Getting into a selective university in the United States is definitely a difficult, especially being an international student coming all the way from Vietnam. It is a whole lot of hard work such as getting good grades at school, participating in extracurricular activities or community service, earning a high SAT/TOEFL/ACT score, and also playing sports. All of the processes are just for you to have a chance of getting in, not even receiving a decent amount of scholarship.

Studying in the U.S. was always one of my biggest dreams. I came to the U.S. when I was just 9 years old on a summer trip with my family. When I first landed, I was shocked by its tall buildings, beautiful nature, and modern infrastructure, etc. It was a totally different environment from what I witnessed in other countries I have been to. After the three week trip, I swore to myself that I was definitely going to come back. Then, in the summer of 2018, my family decided to send me to a big boarding/international school in Wisconsin. It was my first year in high school as well as studying in the States.

There, I developed a different perspective. I gradually fell in love with the education, the food, and



Percentage of undergraduate international students at each college: Most public schools limit the number of international students as undergraduates. There are higher percentages of international students in each university's graduate schools.

8%

4%

After all the observations, research, and much consideration, I applied to six universities: Indiana University Bloomington, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, Texas Christian University, Miami University, DePaul University, University of South Florida, and Florida State University. I got selected by all of them except for Florida State University. It is the most difficult one on my list and also the highest ranking: No. 55 on the U.S. News and World Report. I am currently planning to go to University of South Florida as an undergraduate student in the class of 2027.

4%

6%

Texas Christian University and The University of Minnesota
Statistics cited from collegefactual.com



“International students make up a greater percentage of the overall U.S student population than ever before, and their numbers are rising rapidly.”

the environment here. My only goal was to get selected by American colleges. Hence, in my sophomore, junior, then senior year, I strived my best to concentrate on my goal: I got a good GPA, I scored 1310 on the SAT, I played sports, and I was involved in community service and extracurricular activities. And I genuinely believe that with all the hard work and dedication, I am not going to miss this opportunity.

Nowadays, international students are sharply increasing in American colleges. The IIE's June report cites data from 559 institutions and shows that 65% of them saw an increase in their international student applications for the 2022-2023 academic year across all institutional types, up from 43% one year ago.

We are absolutely important to American universities for the economic impact. According to Boundless, international students contributed \$28.4 billion to the economy and supported 306,308 jobs during the 2020-2021 academic year. Hence, we are a significant contributor of finance.

According to insidehighered.com, the number of international students at U.S. universities almost returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2022, roughly 4.7% of all students.

As a new school year begins in the United States, institutions of higher education are voicing optimism that international student numbers are bouncing back given an increase in applications for the 2022-2023 school year.

But why should international people choose to study in the U.S?

Of course, by having quality education, a multicultural environment, and easy access to big companies with abundant opportunities, the United States is the best destination for international students to attend.

My trip to England to visit family and friends

By Rowan Anderson

For me, living in a rural town far from a city and being a dual citizen, it is sometimes very obvious that I live a slightly different life from a lot of the other NCS students.

My mom was born in Durham, England and later moved to a small town in the country called Poulshot, Devizes, but only lived there for her elementary school days. It was enough to develop somewhat of an accent. Now her accent is not very noticeable, but when living in a rural southern town, it is easy for people to spot the accent; However my grandfather still had his accent for the rest of his life even though he lived only a few miles down the road from me.

I take pride in the fact that I'm a dual citizen, and think it's just another one of those interesting conversation starters, but other than that, it doesn't affect my daily life very much. It is always enjoyable to tell someone that I don't know or haven't told, that I'm a dual citizen, and they always ask me all kinds of questions about what it's like and what side of the family it's on. I'm very glad to have this experience.

When I visit England, I enjoy it very much, and every time, it has me questioning whether or not I would want to live there, and how it would change my life.

My family visited England during winter break. We started at my aunt's house in the countryside right outside of Bath, England which is located right south of Wales about 97 miles from London. We then went down to London and visited my other cousins in east London. This trip essentially happened because I heard my mom talking to some of her cousins about the possibility that we might end up moving to En-



PUB! This is The Raven Inn, a pub located in Poulshot, a village near the town of Devizes in Wiltshire County. This pub has been around since before my mom lived there. According to the pub's website, "The Hues family, who have been farming in Poulshot for nearly 60 years, took over the running of The Raven in 2021. This is new territory for us and the first time since the early 1800s that the pub has been run by farmers!" This was the location chosen by my aunts and uncles to hold an after funeral lunch with all of our family and friends. Image courtesy of The Raven Inn website

gland in the next couple of years. This had me thinking about how my life would adjust, and what it would be like to leave everyone and everything behind and start

going to a new style of school, where I don't know anyone.

In England, I started to notice all the school kids that were out for school trips and I saw their uniforms and how much more strict they are in England. I thought that there was no chance that I could uphold that dress code, if I can barely comply with the North Cross dress code. I'd

think that I would have rather grown up in England and not had to worry about losing friends if I moved. I like the environment there more and the people are a lot

easier to talk to. The kids that I spoke to were great. I'm pretty sure that I'm going to England this summer and will stay

there on my own with my cousins in London and just have the experience of living there for a while.

One of the best parts about visiting is being able to see all of my family that I haven't seen for years. The last time that I was in

England was 2018, and I got to meet my cousin that had just been born and see all of the family that my mom grew up around. It is so great going back and seeing how much my cousin Mable has grown and meeting her new sister. They are both still young.

"It was so great to see our UK family, and I always love countryside walks and long pub lunches."

My mom was the oldest out of all of her cousins. I am the oldest of my cousins, and even my sister, who is almost four years younger than me, is older than our cousins.

It is a very amazing and unique experience having two such different lives.

Being a dual citizen is a very worthy experience, and I wish that I could go to England more often.

It was so great to see our UK family, and I always love countryside walks and long pub lunches.

Stop assuming gaming is bad!

By Lam Do

Gaming is one of the most interesting hobbies that everybody should try at least once, especially with friends. Playing with friends boosts the excitement and fun much more. Gaming is not only entertainment, but it is also helpful for brain development.

It makes people react faster to stuff. When they play games, they have to react fast, so that they can keep up with the game, or react faster than their enemy so that they can win. A Nature Journal story showed that gamers and non-gamers all had better reaction times after playing games.

When people game, they can be exposed to diverse opinions and thoughts can also be included in gaming. Having different thoughts can create a more exciting game experience.

Playing games definitely helps you meet new people. They can become your friends and your teammates in games. There are a lot of circumstances when people meeting in games become friends.

Patience and teamwork are the most important things to get to victory and improve especially teamwork. Communicating with teammates is a must if gamers want to win, and they have to learn to all help each other. Each individual in a team should have trust, enthusiasm, motivation and those can only work depending largely on the teammates. Working well with teammates can also have a big impact on team performance. Players will also get others' respect. It does not just improve game scores.

Gaming also requires critical thinking and strategy, which asks you to think carefully, smartly. No critical thinking almost means no

winning games. Last but not least, it reduces stress after a long day.

Gaming is a must to-do for teenagers. Skill will improve in games and real life. For example, critical thinking, teamwork, fast reactions -- these all affect your life. If a person doesn't have these skills, she absolutely won't be able to be successful. Gaming does really help improve those skills, as they are what games acquire. You will be able to learn these skills if you want to achieve victory.

Without games, life would be less diverse, exciting and modern. Games are like a workout for your brain but considered as fun. Gaming is similar to working in a group of people where you need teamwork and patience.

Gaming gives you joy and a lot of useful skills in your life if you know how to use them wisely. People always have to think cleverly when they play games, they can't stop working and do whatever they want. This is why gaming is seen as entertainment, but actually it is a workout for your brain. YAY!

Aadeetri Pandey contributed reporting and editing.

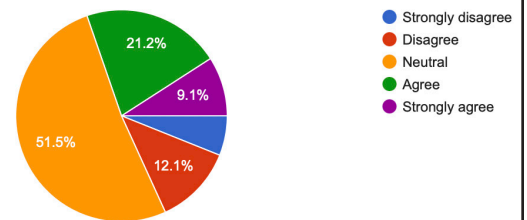
Gaming survey results from a GeoPrism survey conducted Feb. 20-22 and limited to only 34 responses.

3.09 billion active video gamers worldwide

1.48 billion gamers in Asia

285 million gamers in North America

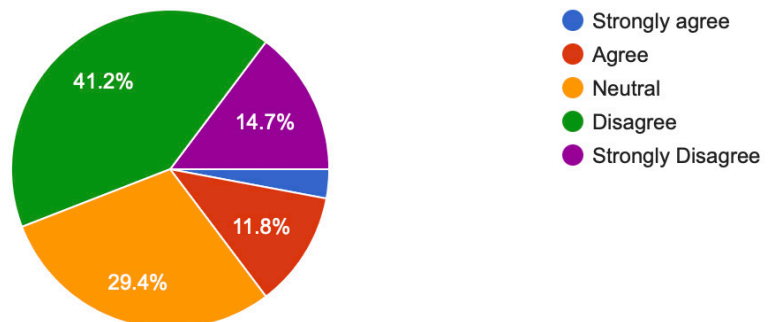
Gaming is good for me
33 responses



<https://explodingtopics.com/blog/number-of-gamers>

Gaming interferes with my academic performance

34 responses



Favorite game: *Counter Strike Global Offensive*

By Jiale Qin

I like playing games very much. I have two hobbies, one is basketball, and the other is playing esports. I love all types of games, whether it's shooters, puzzle games or MOBA games. I'm crazy about them. But my favorite type of game is still first-person shooter, or FPS.

My favorite games are Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CSGO), Overwatch, PUBG, Apex, and Rainbow Six. Every shooting game has its own different game play. I like CSGO because of the tactics in the game. I like to cooperate with my teammates and try to figure out the opponent's psychology. CSGO is a 2012 multiplayer tactical first-person shooter game developed by Valve and Hidden Path Entertainment. There are two locations where bombs can be installed, A and B. The terrorist's task is to go to the location to install the bomb and prevent counter-terrorists from dismantling the bomb until the bomb explodes. Or eliminate all counter-terrorists. Counter-terrorists, on the other hand, are tasked with preventing terrorists from planting bombs and defusing them. Of course, eliminating all terrorists can also be won. In this way, after a certain number of rounds, the two sides will switch camps, and the side that wins 16 rounds first wins. At the end of a short round, the player



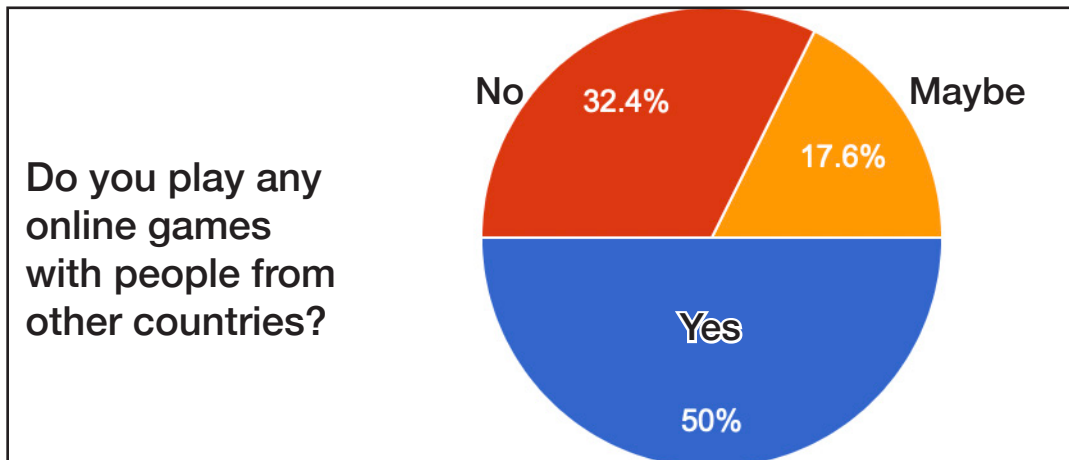
I like CSGO because of the tactics in the game. I like to cooperate with my teammates and try to figure out the opponent's psychology.

will reward in-game currency based on individual and overall team performance, which can be used to purchase weapons and items for subsequent rounds. Winning rounds usually rewards more money than losing, and killing enemy targets also grants extra gold. In addition, CSGO has one of the most popular esports scenes in the world. Has a huge number of fans. CSGO has many leagues, the most famous of which is the major.

The game . . . taught me to be cautious in everything, how to communicate with people, and . . . keep working hard, because I might create miracles!

The Major is the highest stage of the CSGO game league, which is equivalent to the NBA in basketball and the NFL in football. And has one of the largest prize pools; the Major's prize pool has grown from \$250,000 to \$1,000,000. The event also set a new record of 2,748,434 live viewers in the history of a Major. On weekends, I invite my friends to play CSGO together every day. This is the only way to maintain

a relationship with my Chinese friends. It is so amazing to work with my good friends. The joy of winning a game together also keeps us going and soaking it up. When our teammates are not playing well, we encourage each other. When we fall behind by a big score, we do not give up. We persist in recovering the score bit by bit and finally win the game. We celebrate wildly. This may be the charm of the game. The game also teaches me a lot. It taught me to be cautious in everything, how to communicate with people, and - even if there is a headwind or a big gap - don't give up and keep working hard, because I might create miracles!



South Africa's hot music genre: Amapiano

By Didintle Dibete '24

What is Amapiano? One of South Africa's music genres, Amapiano translated means "pianos" in Zulu, one of 11 South African official spoken languages. In just a few years this genre has quickly gone from a local South African trend to an international, well-known genre. Amapiano can be heard on the dance floors across many other countries and making Amapiano producers, djs and artists famous.

This genre does not really have a direct beginning date due to the fact that it is a combination of deep house music, jazz and lounge music characterized by synths and wide percussive base-lines, but around about the year 2017 started to become popular and from there has only been getting more popular.

The pandemic has given many more artists an opportunity to be heard, and has made a phenomenal name for many. As history about Amapiano continues to draw interest from music enthusiasts, a well known producing group called MFR Souls take the credit for the naming of the genre and



In Zulu, Amapiano literally means pianos."



I recommend the song Sjepa by Focalistic on the Ghetto Gospel album, because 15 songs, 1 hour 16 minutes Amapiano 2022 18 Area Holdings

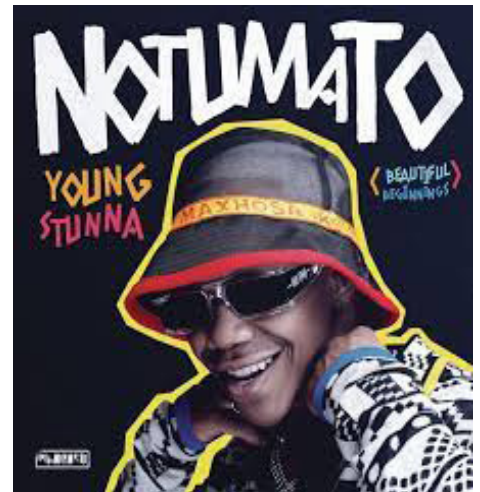
My top-10 favorite amapiano tracks:

- "Tobetsa Remake" - by Myztro
- "SJEPA" - by Focalistic, Mellow & Sleazy, & MJ
- "Iy'ntsimbi Zase Envy" - by Reece Madlisa & Zuma
- "Banyana ke Bafana" - by Pabi Cooper
- "Sengzwile" - by Mas Musiq
- "Izolo" - by DJ Maphorisa & Tyler ICU
- "uMlando" - by Toss
- "ZoTata" - by Pcee, Justin99 & EeQue
- "Adiwele" - by Young Stunna
- "Woza" - by MrJazziQ (feat. Boohe)

their relentless efforts in pushing it to the mainstream.

Amapiano is a form of expression and getaway for the youth of South Africa. It expresses the struggles and enjoyments that the youth go through on a daily basis.

Not only does Amapiano express emotions and feelings but also makes songs catchy to catch onto the beats and sounds, not only to listen to it but to feel the music and make you able to catch the rhythm to dance to it as well. TikTok played a role in helping export the movement to millions all over the world. Besides Nigerian and Ghanaian artists and producers, the genre has spread out and influenced producers in a lot more African countries. Amapiano is one of the most talked about and consumed genres in the industry and recent data released by Spotify indicates that streams of the Amapiano Grooves playlist have increased by 210% globally over the past year and has an increase of 170% over the same period. Artists I would personally recommend would be Young Stanna and Focalistic; and DJs I would recommend are Kabza De Small, Dj Maphorisa and Kelvin Momo.



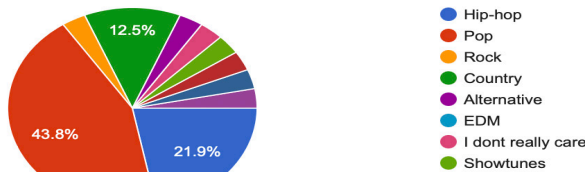
On the Notumato album, I recommend "Adiwele" by Young Stunna, because it received over one million streams and was awarded best selling artist in the same year.

Notumato means new beginnings in Xhosa, one of 11 South African languages.

2021 South Africa - Piano Hub, exclusively distributed under Sony Music Entertainment Africa (Pty)Ltd

What is your favorite genre of music?

32 responses



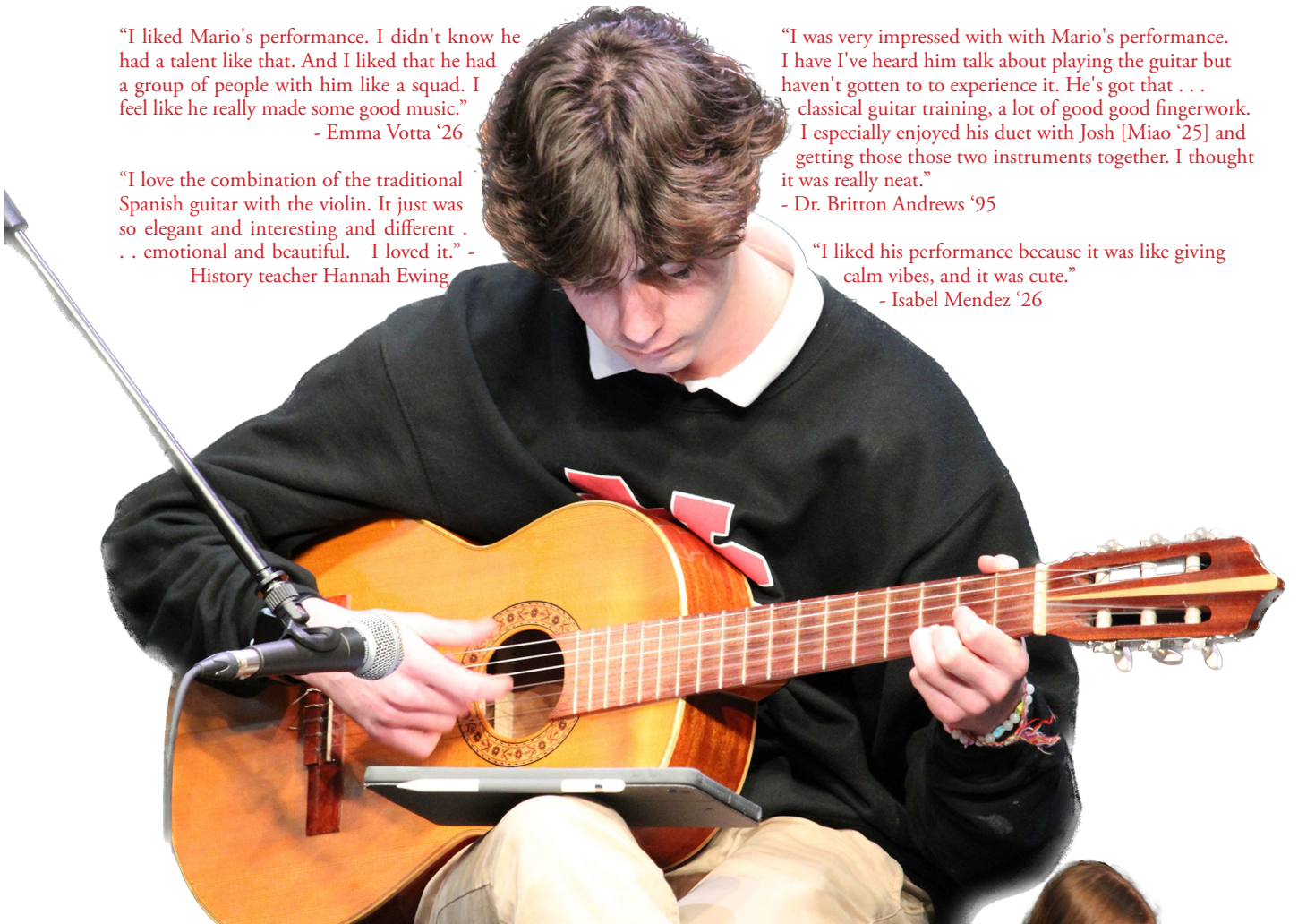
Mario Jara '25 brings Spanish guitar to Muses

"I liked Mario's performance. I didn't know he had a talent like that. And I liked that he had a group of people with him like a squad. I feel like he really made some good music."
- Emma Votta '26

"I love the combination of the traditional Spanish guitar with the violin. It just was so elegant and interesting and different . . . emotional and beautiful. I loved it."
- History teacher Hannah Ewing

"I was very impressed with with Mario's performance. I have I've heard him talk about playing the guitar but haven't gotten to to experience it. He's got that . . . classical guitar training, a lot of good good fingerwork. I especially enjoyed his duet with Josh [Miao '25] and getting those those two instruments together. I thought it was really neat."
- Dr. Britton Andrews '95

"I liked his performance because it was like giving calm vibes, and it was cute."
- Isabel Mendez '26



NO PICK: Mario Jara plucks his accoutic guitar in a duet with Josh Miao. Photo by Eason Zhou



MIA MANDOLIN: Indira Weed '25 accompanies Valeria Dancea '25 in singing Abba's "Mama Mia" along with Mario Jara. Photo by Eason Zhou



TOO TALENTED: After playing a Rachmaninov piece on solo piano, Josh Miao '25 picked up his violin to play a duet with Jara. Photo by Eason Zhou



METALLICA MEDLEY: Evie Eagan mashes power chords along with Dr. Tim Naginey on drums and vocals and Dr. Mike Koss on bass. Photo by Eason Zhou

Isabel Mendez shares love of volleyball in Costa Rica

By Rabia Ferron

A student known for her incredible volleyball skills and her desire to serve others in anyway she can, Isabel Mendez went back to her home country, Costa Rica, last summer and taught little kids how to play volleyball.

“Her love of the game and desire to teach it to others,” said her Coach Emily Gaston, “makes her an admirable member of our team.”

Isabel Mendez was born on February 3, 2007 in her hometown of San Jose, Costa Rica. She spent most of her life in Costa Rica till she was 10 and moved to Roanoke. Before attending NCS Isabel attended Cave Spring, where she started to play volleyball and grew an attachment to the sport.

“My team and professional players,” Isabel says, “are the people who keep me playing.”

Coach Gaston loves how committed Isabel is to volleyball and how it impacts her whole life.

“Isabel is truly a team player,” said Coach Gaston in an email. “She works hard to improve her skills, and she is a very supportive teammate. She is just as involved in the team, whether she’s on the court or on the bench. Isabel is also selfless and generous.”

Not only does Isabel dedicate her life to volleyball, but she also is a great student and friend to others. In an email one of her closest friends and volleyball teammate India Lopez explains how Isabel has impacted her life for the past six months she has known her.

“Isabel has been a great support since I have met her,” Lopez said, “I feel that she has been one of the people who have been able to understand and help me the most, from being a great volleyball partner to being a great friend. I am very fortunate to have her in my life.”

Now that the volleyball season is over, Isabel still finds a way to play her sport whether it’s practicing her serves against a wall of practicing while playing a friendly game with her family and friends.

Over winter break Isabel went to Costa Rica to spend some time with family and close friends. During her trip back home she played volleyball with some of her family members, but not only was she playing her favorite sport with her loved ones but she was also making a footprint in her country by planting mangrove trees.

April 22, 1991 Costa Rica was hit by the strongest earthquake Costa Rica has ever faced with a magnitude of 7.5. These small steps are the same steps that will make sure Costa Rica will stay safe from terrible things like the one of 1991.

“Mangrove trees are planted in the ocean,” Isabel says, “and are used to protect the country from any damage that could come from storms or earthquakes.”



Isabel Mendez serves the ball. Photo by Sarah Sledd

INTERNATION PLAYERS ON WINTER AND SPRING TEAMS

INDOOR TRACK		OUTDOOR TRACK	
BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS
8	2	6	1
BASKETBALL		LACROSSE	
VARSITY GIRLS		BOYS	GIRLS
2	3	2	2
JU BOYS		TENNIS	SOCCER
3	2	2	
		BASEBALL	
INFOGRAPHIC BY EASON ZHOU		5	

Girls basketball wins 1st round of state tourney



Girls basketball beat Westover Christian in the VISAA Div. II tournament home game on Feb. 28. Seeded No. 8, the girls then travelled the next morning to play top-seeded Walsingham Academy.



Seniors Kylie Schaefer, top-left, and Alexis Teter led the scoring. Photo by Eason Zhou

REPAIR PHONES & TABLETS

WE CAN FIX IT NOW!

WIRELESS REPAIR & CELL PHONE SERVICES

- WE REPAIR PHONE & TABLETS
- WE BUY PHONES NEW, USED OR BROKEN
- WE UNLOCK PHONES

540-467-6633

German native Hannes Hammer graduates early and leaves NCS for Virginia Tech

By Tristan Lange

Jan. 7 was just a normal day for Hannes Hammer as a high school student at North Cross, but four days later Hammer enrolled at Virginia Tech to begin working out and studying as a college student-athlete.

Hammer '23, one of the best lineman to ever come through North Cross School according to Coach Stephen Alexander, recently went up to Virginia Tech to start his workouts and start his classes. Hammer received his offer from Virginia Tech last April and committed a few months later. He finished his 2022 season with All-State and All-Conference honors as an offensive lineman.

International students make up a big population of North Cross students and they make a massive impact on academics and athletics. There are many different websites that help athletic foreigners find the right school for the sport they play. North Cross is big with those websites and it has helped them gain lots of athletes.

Gridiron Imports Foundation is a non-profit organization that places international football players at U.S. high schools and universities. North Cross has gained many football players who have made a huge impact on the team such as Hammer. Without this foundation North Cross school wouldn't have gained such an impact on the football program and it would have been so much harder to win a State Championship.

Back to Hammer, Hammer the 6-foot-7, 272 lbs. Tackle from Cologne, Germany recently had his first workout at Tech and he said it was one of the most intense workouts he's ever had. The workouts consist of running and lifting. They spend about two hours in the gym and an hour on the football field per



Image courtesy of techsideline.com.

day. Right now they don't have film, but they have Theorie and that's for about half an hour per day. The running consists of speed paired with conditioning. The lifts consist of all supersets which are very high intensity and very heavy weight.

as a quarterback/ tight end/wide receiver and was really good at it according to his German friend Moritz Schmoranzler and Moritz Mitten-dorfer, but soon people started to realize how big he was going to be so they quickly worked with him and

"It's really hard and tiring, but I'm having lots of fun, so that's good." - Hammer

"It's really hard and tiring, but I'm having lots of fun, so that's good," said "The Hammer." Hammer has three roommates who are all new-freshmen. He is taking Economics, Philosophy, Sports Media, Design, and Cannabis Class.

When Hammer started playing football in Germany he began off

Over the summer Hammer started going to college camps such as Virginia Tech. He played really well and showed the coaches what he was all about. He gained an offer from Virginia Tech and it didn't take long for him to realize that's where he wanted to be.

Hammer is one of the most determined and hardworking people to ever come through North Cross. He made his goal and knew he was going to accomplish it with hours and hours of hard work each and every day. This hard work paid off and he finished the 2022 season ranked top 30 in Virginia with All-State and All-Conference honors.

"The Hammer" was also a force to be reckoned with on defense. He had 30 total tackles including 13 solo tackles and three sacks for a loss of 23 yards. For being a mainly offensive player, these stats show that Hammer is a beast, and he will perform no matter where you put him. Hammer never took plays off and was always giving his all. He was a team player and played through three games with a sickness that made it hard for him to breathe, but it pushed it out for his team because he is such a hardworking player. To play through this sickness Hammer had to beg his mom to let him play through the illness. His illness made it hard for him to breathe because he had an infected lung. Hammer would have to come out more often than usual to take a break and get some water, but when he was on the field he made a massive impact. Hammer playing through this injury shows how much he is desired to win and how much of a team player he is.

"Im 275 right now", said Hammer "I'll be around 285 probably." -Hammer said about what he hopes to be when football season rolls around.

turned him into a physical lineman. Mind you this was all flag football.

When Hammer came to Roanoke, Virginia he had never played tackle football so no one knew what to expect. Hammer learned the game really fast and really developed his first year and worked hard off during the season and over the summer.

Spaniard and Italian will help boys defend title

By Anne Bradley Cullen

Martin Arrutia '24 moved here at the beginning of the school year from Spain to attend North Cross School.

"I decided to come to NCS because I had always wanted to study in the USA and North Cross gave me the opportunity to do so while combining it with a great tennis program. I discovered NCS through a Spanish sports agency."

He brought talent to the soccer team, but is especially going to bring great talent to the tennis team.

He prefers to play singles over doubles because it is faster paced and tends to be more competitive since it is only you against your opponent.

Martin and I played doubles together in the "Tennis Prom" tournament together back in October. Each match was two sets, first to four games. Martin and I won every match that we played and were

crowned tennis prom champions. In the final we beat Cate Cook '24 and Alessandro Perin '24 with a score of 4-1,4-1.

Arrutia is going to be a huge asset to the boys team whose season starts up in the spring.

He first started playing tennis when he was 6 years old.

"I used to watch my older brothers play," Arrutia said, "and it really started to inspire me to learn."

Arrutia comes from a small town called Getxo located in the north of Spain of about 8000 people.

"It also has around five beaches with high cliffs," he said. "There are a lot of people who surf and skydive. I live one minute from the beach."

Arrutia said he attended an academy where he practiced soccer, tennis and track, but he also loves winter sports.

"One thing that no one knows about me," Arrutia said, "is that I used to ski competitively."



CROWNED! Martin and I won candy and gift cards as Tennis Prom champions. Below: Kate Cook and Alessandro Perin hold their gift cards for finishing as runners up. Photos by Sarah Sledd

Tennis Schedule

- **March 14: William Fleming High School**
- **March 16: Radford High School**
- **March 21: @ Radford High School**
- **March 23: @ William Fleming High School**
- **March 24: St. Anne's Belfield**
- **March 27: Blacksburg High School**
- **March 28: @ Eastern Mennonite School**
- **March 31: Jefferson Forest High School**
- **April 1: BRAC Singles Tournament @ VES**
- **April 4: @Blacksburg High School**
- **April 6: @ St. Anne's Belfield**
- **April 11: @ Miller School**
- **April 13: Virginia Episcopal School**
- **April 14: Carlisle School**
- **April 17: Western Ablermarle (Scrimage)**
- **April 19: @Virginia Episcopal School**
- **April 21: @Collegiate School**
- **April 22: @Collegiate School v. Norfolk Collegiate**
- **April 25: Blue Ridge School**
- **April 27: The Covenant School**
- **April 28: @ Hargrave Military Academy**
- **May 1: New Covenant**



Criado adds Spanish expertise to soccer

By Veronica Weston

Rocio Criado '23 is new to North Cross this year to add skill to the soccer team this season.

She is from Madrid, the capital of Spain. She says her home town is a very big city, it has many parks and very tall buildings, and there are many trains that go all over Madrid. She finds that the culture in Madrid is very different, especially because the population is over 32 times bigger than Roanoke. They have many restaurants and bars open until 2 a.m.

"My favorite thing about Madrid is that we have a lot of transportation," Rocio said, "to move around everywhere in Madrid and eat at the restaurants."

Rocio came to North Cross through an agency that looks for scholarships for her through soccer. The agency gave her several options to choose from and North Cross was one of these schools. After looking at her options Rocio chose NCS.

Rocio says most people don't know that she doesn't like watching movies.

She likes to play.

Ever since Rocio was 5 years old, she's been playing soccer. She began playing because when she was 5 she decided to watch the 2010 World Cup and Spain won. Since then she started to like soccer a lot and decided to join a soccer team.

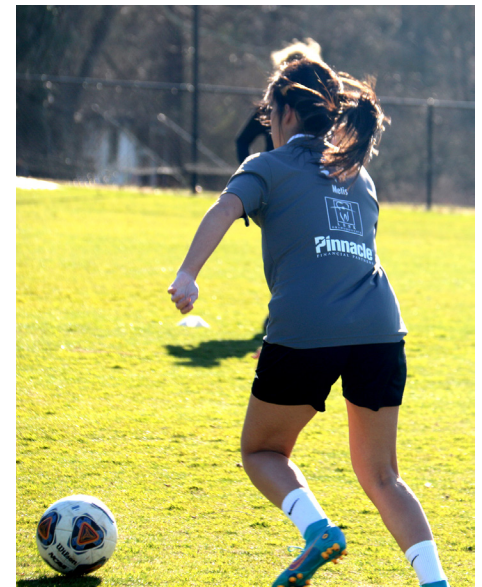


CAPTION: Rocio Criado provided this photo of herself playing club soccer in Spain. She played midfielder for A.D Alcorcon. Right: Criado takes part in practice drills on Feb. 21, when the weather warmed to feel like spring. This is one of her first practices for the North Cross soccer team. Photo by Veronica Weston

"I like soccer because it is a sport in which I have met many people," Rocio said, "and because of the passion I have for it. It helps me to be better mentally and to disconnect from problems."

She plans to continue soccer in college, and after that move back to Spain and become a police officer.

"I want to be a police officer because, all the roles they do," Rocio said. "They help people. Since I was a child, it was something that I liked a lot, and I have always been interested in."



Soccer Schedule

- **March 21: @ Franklin County**
- **March 23: @ STAB**
- **March 27: @ Fleming**
- **March 29: Franklin County**
- **March 31: Trinity Meadowview**
- **April 3: @ SWVA Home School**
- **April 4: Chatham Hall**
- **April 12: @ Covenant**
- **April 13: Eastern Mennonite**
- **April 14: VES**
- **April 17: SWVA Home School**
- **April 18: @ Dayspring**
- **April 20: @ EMHS v. Highland**
- **April 25: @ New Covenant**
- **April 27: Dayspring**
- **April 28: @ Miller**
- **May 1: Carlisle**

We provide fully furnished and professionally decorated apartments in a charming residential neighborhood in Roanoke. Our places are perfect for those in need of temporary, easy living in one of Roanoke's most desirable locales... South Roanoke.

540-915-1048

THREE RAIDERS ARE STATE CHAMPS

Boys place 6th, girls place 7th in unified VISAA meet

Flavia Daniels '23 repeated as high-jump champion, Xavier Mitchell '24 came from behind to win the 500-meter race, and Jase Rhodes '26 leaped 43-10 to win the triple jump by seven inches, putting three Raiders on top of podiums at St. Christopher's on Feb. 18.

Competing against teams from all VISAA divisions, indoor track teams, the Raiders placed higher than any Div. II schools in both girls and boys.

"The level of competition was incredibly high, and our team and supporters cheered on every one of our athletes from beginning to end," Coach Ed Dickenson wrote in an email. "For most of the team, it was their first time at the VISAA Indoor Championship, but they demonstrated a huge level of talent and heart throughout the



GLOBAL TRACK: Among the track team at the VISAA Indoor Track Championships, many athletes carry non-American passports. Back row: Kathryn Hancock, Lauren Boone, Anna Cicozzi, Flavia Daniels, Konur Onufer, Moritz Schmoranzner, Alex Dickenson, Harry Anderson. Middle row: Josh Miao, Ainsley Myles, Ethan Ferguson, J'ziel Hart, Denzel Marufu, Nate Hayes, Chase Daniel. Front row: Kerrigan Chaney, Ian Cann, Jase Rhodes, Xavier Mitchell, Moritz Mittendorf, Rhone Burton. Photos by Lauren Horner day."

With a dozen boys qualifying for finals, the boys earned top-10 spots in seven events. Two girls earned points. Daniels jumped 5-foot-5 in qualifying and

needed only 5-2 in the finals to win. She placed second in the 55-meter hurdles and took sixth place in the long jump.

Kerrigan Chaney '25 ran 1600 meters in 5:09 for second place and 1000 meters in 3:06 for third place. Both times were personal records.

Podium Finishes

- Flavia Daniels '23– 1st High Jump 5-2, 3rd 55 Hurdles 9:06
- Xavier Mitchell '24 – 2nd Long Jump 22-06, 1st 500 1:07.79
- Kerrigan Chaney – 2nd 1600 5:09.79, 3rd 1000 3:06.70
- Jase Rhodes – 1st Triple Jump 43-10
- Boys 200x4 Relay – 3rd 1:34.96 (Moritz Mittendorf '24, Rhone Burton '23, Ian Cann '23, Xavier Mitchell '24)



ON TRACK: Xavier Mitchell runs the anchor leg on the 4x200 relay race in which the Raiders took 3rd.



WINGS: After hopping and stepping, Jase Rhodes jumps to finish first in the triple jump.



LONG JUMP: In addition to winning the high jump, Flavia Daniels competed in the long jump.