

# The Pirates' Hook



# Inside

Pg 4

## College Columns

Three senior editors describe the truth behind college applications

Pg 9

## Homecoming

Riverside put on a homecoming dance for the first time in years, prompting questions about future dances

Pg 10-11

## Thanksgiving

It's the season to be thankful. Staff members share what they are grateful for

Pg 20-23

## Janitor Profiles

Janitors keep Riverside running. Find out who they really are

Pg 24-25

## Fall Sport MVPs

The River has risen because of a few star athletes

3 Editorial

5 Satire

6-7 RPC

8 Local Elections

12-13 Native Voices

14 Local Food Spotlight

15 Dear Lenny

16-17 Clubs

18-19 Fall Play

26-27 Winter Sports

28 5v5 Soccer Tournament



•COVER ART BY DUNYA OMAR

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As Thanksgiving approaches, the Hook staff wants to use this season as an opportunity to call attention to those who are often overlooked.

From keeping the hallways and classrooms tidy to organizing fun activities, maintaining the community at Riverside takes the commitment and effort of many. As we produced this issue we gained a new appreciation for a few of those amazing people.

It's incredible that our custodians are able to transform the school building from one day to another. Their work extends beyond cleaning, however, as they make an exceptional effort to build relationships with students, too. A collection of profiles about who they are and what they do awaits on pages 20 to 23.

Bianca Martínez took over the Restorative Practice Center (RPC) just this year. Instead of the bleak, isolating environment that RPC was once known for, she's made her classroom a welcoming and encouraging place for students. You can learn more about her impact on pages 6 to 7.

Technical theater students worked tirelessly to create Riverside's annual haunted house this Halloween season. And actors and set designers are hard at work preparing for the fall play, *Clue: Onstage*. Read more about it on pages 18 to 19.

And Riverside wouldn't be the same without its lively student body. Student-led clubs keep everyone engaged and connected. The Student Government worked hard to put on the school's first homecoming in recent history. You can read more about their hard work and see photos from the event on page 9. Destino Success celebrates Riverside's Hispanic heritage year-round, but the biggest event is the 5v5 soccer tournament. Check out photos and highlights on page 15.

Whether they are highlighted in this issue or not, we encourage you to take the time to appreciate those in your communities this season.



**“We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude.”**

**– Cynthia Ozick**



*“Muchas veces damos por hecho las cosas que más merecen nuestra gratitud.”*



*Al acercarse el Día de Acción de Gracias, el equipo de Pirates Hook quiere aprovechar esta temporada como una oportunidad para resaltar a aquellos que usualmente pasan desapercibidos.*

*Desde mantener el orden de los pasillos y los salones hasta la organización de actividades divertidas, mantener la comunidad en Riverside requiere el compromiso y el esfuerzo de muchos. Durante la producción de esta edición, hemos ganado un nuevo aprecio por algunas de estas increíbles personas.*

*Es increíble que nuestros conserjes puedan transformar el edificio de la escuela de un día para el otro. Y su trabajo va más allá que su esfuerzo excepcional por la limpieza, ya que también hacen un esfuerzo excepcional para establecer relaciones con los estudiantes. Una colección de perfiles sobre quiénes son y qué hacen los espera en la páginas 20 a 23.*

*Bianca Martínez se hizo cargo del Centro de Práctica Restaurativa (RPC) apenas este año. En lugar del ambiente sombrío y aislado que alguna vez se conoció como RPC, ella hizo de su salón de clases un lugar acogedor y alentador para los estudiantes. Puede obtener más información sobre su impacto en la páginas 6 a 7.*

*Los estudiantes de teatro técnico trabajaron incansablemente para crear la Casa Embrujada anual de Riverside en esta temporada de Halloween. Y los actores y escenógrafos están trabajando arduamente preparándose para la obra de otoño, *Clue: Onstage*. Lea más sobre esto en la páginas 18 a 19.*

*Y Riverside no sería lo mismo sin su animado cuerpo estudiantil. Los clubes dirigidos por estudiantes, mantienen a todos comprometidos y conectados. El gobierno estudiantil trabajó duro para organizar el primer regreso a casa de la escuela en la historia reciente. Puede leer más sobre su arduo trabajo y ver fotos del evento en la página 9. Destino Success celebra la herencia hispana de Riverside durante todo el año, pero el evento más importante es el torneo de fútbol 5 contra 5. Vea fotografías y aspectos destacados en la página 15.*

*Ya sea que se destaquen en esta edición o no, lo alentamos a que se tome el tiempo esta temporada para apreciar a aquellos en su comunidad que pasan desapercibidos.*



**– Cynthia Ozick**

# College application madness

*I'm so over this*

BY PIPER WINTON

Early action, early decision, who cares. Since July every conversation I've had has somehow circled back to applying for college. Every single gossip-session has included a computer open to something along the lines of "personal statement draft 74 SOS I hate college."

Every single ad that has popped up on my phone has been for a college fair at some random school I've never even

heard of. I am not going to Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer, North Carolina. During every single car ride and soccer game I re-write my essays in my head.

I literally had a dream last night where I was sitting in my living room entering my ACT score into Common App. My life seems to revolve around the idea that all that matters is that I get into the schools I apply to. It doesn't matter if my room is so messy I can't walk to my door without stepping on something, as long as I get into

UNC. It doesn't matter if I don't clean my water bottle for 2 weeks or wear the same pajama pants four days in a row, as long as I get into UVA. It feels like I'm living in the future. Nothing happening in my life right even registers in my brain, the only thing I can think of is that my deadline for Wake Forest is November 15.

I can't even remember what I had for breakfast (it might've been an apple or possibly Cheerios) because my brain is so over crowded.

I'm tired, I'm bored, I'm done.



• PHOTOS BY SAUL JANIAC STEIN

## *It's only my entire future*

Ten schools, each with one to three supplementals and accompanying questions. A personal statement which took three months to write and many rounds of editing. Not to mention the FAFSA and scholarship applications (at this point I'm pretending money doesn't exist).

And don't get me started on the subjectivity of it all.

Schools say "test optional" means reporting your SAT/ACT scores is truly optional, but it's nearly impossible to know whether a score will strengthen your application. Admissions officers tell me to use my best judgment, as if I'm the expert.

As much as I love writing, I'm

starting to hate it. The prompts are so vague it's a struggle to figure out the best angle to take.

It feels like I'm playing a guessing game with every application. Out of 100 applicants with perfect GPAs, dozens of APs and impressive extracurriculars, only 12 get in. I gamble. I pay \$75 dollars. I click submit.

I know college is a privilege, but it's hard to remain positive. People tell me it will be worth it in the end but it's hard to see that now.

After all my applications are finished, I'm going to lay in the grass

and take a nice, long hibernation. Check on me again in March when acceptance letters arrive.



BY ELENA PACES-WILES

Thousands of universities narrow to ten, then four, then one.

I have been told to think about college since middle school (if I hear the word "Xello" again I might scream). But after four years exploring interests, discovering passions and pondering my future, it feels as if I'm more confused than ever.

I know, realistically, I am no more lost than my peers. But college applications were not made for anxious overthinkers. It's hard not to compare yourself when that's literally what colleges do.

## *Relax: It's going to work out*

the next four years of your life, desperately begging teachers for recommendations, and stressing over the perfect words to describe yourself. But at the same time, there is only so much you can do.

This might sound odd, but I started working on my college application freshman year. Yes freshman year. No, I didn't make a Common App account and start requesting letters of recommendation, but everything that I've put on my college application is just the work I've done during high school.

Over the four years, I've joined many clubs and honors societies for

my own enjoyment. I serve as the president of the Black Student Union now. I know something like that looks great on college applications, but that was not my motivation when participating in the club. It was just something I wanted to do for fun during freshman year. The same applies to my other activities, like orchestra and journalism.

College applications are just a compilation of your activities and accomplishments. The tricky part is remembering all of it. This might be a little bold, but I am not stressed about college acceptances. I was a little worried about being accepted to the "top schools" at first, but then I realized that college decisions won't

define my future. The way I think of it, I will design my future in the way I want, regardless where I am accepted and choose to go.

The great thing about applying to college is learning who you are. Before creating a Common App account and entering pretty much my entire life, I never took a moment to think about who I am and what I've done. It is super satisfying to click submit, knowing admissions officers will learn who I am and what I like to do.

Even if I face some rejection letters along the way, I feel good that I even have the opportunity to go to college. It's not where I go, but how I spend my time there.



BY SADIE ALLEN

Applying to college is not that big of a deal. Don't get me wrong, it's hard. You are searching for schools where you will spend

# “The IV was the right choice for me.”

*Starbucks finds a solution to pumpkin spice withdrawal*

BY HANNAH POSNER

As Starbucks phases out their pumpkin spice flavorings this November, many Riverside students worry about how they're going to get their cinnamon fix.

“It's been a really hard time,” said senior Caleigh Ressler, taking a sip of her pumpkin spice oat milk chai latte. “November is always a mourning season for me. When they faze out pumpkin spice, my body goes into hibernation.”

According to a Pirates' Hook survey, 70% of Riverside students have experienced post-pumpkin spice hives, shortness of breath, and/or hallucinations of Lewis, the Target jack-o-lantern.

“Lewis keeps showing up in my nightmares, telling me to order an apple crisp macchiato,” said junior LeRon Divers-Childs. “I'm lactose intolerant, so it brings up dark memories.”

Lewis declined an interview, but did release a statement addressing the nightmares.

“I am not a jack-o-lantern,” he wrote. “My name is Lewis.”

Luckily for these unfortunate students, Starbucks has invented a miracle solution: the pumpkin spice IV.

In a press release, Starbucks CEO Laxman Narasimhan said that the product is not considered a festive drink, but rather a necessary medical intervention for certain customers.

“The pumpkin spice IV saved my life,” said Senior Genesis Crawford.

“Now, I have a constant supply of

pumpkin spice going straight to my bloodstream. I keep it in me 24/7.”

“I feel great!” said Ressler. “My urine smells a bit like nutmeg, and I keep singing ‘Sweater Weather’ uncontrollably, but besides that I am completely normal.”

“She's rewatched Gilmore Girls 50 times,” said senior Jill Smith. “I'm deeply concerned for her wellbeing.”

Starbucks issued a disclaimer about the IV, listing possible side-effects including but not limited to: jumping in invisible piles of leaves, thrifting every single sweater at Trosa, cackling like a witch and thinking you are a pumpkin.

“These are life-threatening side-effects,” said Narasimhan. “They can even threaten the lives of your loved ones, or anyone who comes into contact with you. We seriously caution using the pumpkin spice IV unless it is absolutely necessary.”

Starbucks recommends alternative, less invasive coping mechanisms such as chewing cinnamon sticks and spreading pumpkin pie filling under the nose.

“The IV was the right choice for me,” said Crawford. “It isn't for everyone. Not everyone is prepared to listen to only ‘we fell in love in october’ for all of October.”

“I think I monster mashed too close to the sun,” said senior Elodie Mitchell. “Be careful with pumpkin spice.”



• GRAPHIC BY SADIE IRBY

“Lewis keeps showing up in my nightmares, telling me to order an apple crisp macchiato. I'm lactose intolerant, so it brings up dark memories.”

*- Junior LeRon Divers-Childs*



Jahre Royster (left), Bianca Martinez, Macie Burnette, Keiara Mitchel, D'Angel Lloyd, Shia Moore (right) gather in a talk circle in the corner of Martinez's room. RPC is now located in room 133. •PHOTO BY KYLA BANNERMAN

# Riverside revamps RPC

*Bianca Martinez implements new practices as RPC coordinator*

BY TALIAH COOPER

Bianca Martinez is putting a new spin on RPC.

Her classroom walls are painted muted purple and covered in colorful posters. Some students sit in desks, while others relax on couches. And there's a set of chairs arranged in a "talk circle" for kids to discuss issues they have had and what they can do differently, which give students a chance to express their own emotions.

"We really focus on restorative justice, which is all about repairing relationships and harm," Martinez said. "This method does help change behavior."

It's vastly different from one

year ago, when RPC was held in a windowless space that used to be a computer lab on the 160 hall and students often avoided the room.

"I love laughing with kids, being able to support them, and helping them make the right decisions," she said.

This is Martinez's second year at Riverside. Last year she taught English two. Originally from northern Virginia, she moved to Durham from Memphis, TN when her wife got a new job. Her own experiences as a student inspired her to become an educator.

"I remembered my favorite classes were the ones where the teacher was very compassionate," she said. "My eighth grade

teacher was amazing and I was like 'Wow, I want to do that.'

"Traditionally, RPC - which was called "In-School Suspension" or "ISS" at Riverside until 2018 - has been a punishment for students instead of a way to guide and help them. Students were held in the small room and never discussed what happened or how things could be handled differently.

As a result, students kept going back.

Junior Kw'i'Ahrra Void recalls what it was like in RPC last year.

"You didn't really talk about what happened," she said. "You just sat in there all day. It literally was just prison. I don't think it did [help], because people kept going back."

Martinez's version of RPC takes a more positive approach.

"When I first came in here we had a whole conversation about what happened," she said. "I feel like I could use that in future situations, and it's a better environment in general."

The Restorative Practice Center is meant to be a positive and more encouraging alternative to traditional ISS, which has been implemented in school districts across the country since 2015.

"Schools across the country are being urged to adopt restorative approaches as an alternative to suspensions, which may disproportionately affect students of color," wrote Laura McLean in a 2016 article

published by Edutopia.

McLean works for the Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility and helped implement restorative practices in New York City public schools.

“Instead of using punishments and rewards to influence the way students behave, restorative addresses the underlying reasons for students’ hurtful behavior and nurture their intrinsic desire to treat others with care and respect,” she wrote.

Martinez’s approach is closely aligned to these new practices.

“The goal this year was to turn RPC into a space where kids are able to process their emotions as well as their actions in a way that wasn’t so focused on punishing them,” Martinez said.

She also focuses on how students’ behavior is addressed.

“Instead of saying ‘You are bad, you need to be punished, we’re gonna suspend you,’ it’s ‘You made a bad choice but you’re not a bad person, so how can we make this right?’” she said.

The district’s overall rates of both in-school suspension and out-of-school short-term suspension have stayed relatively the same since last year. But Martinez is noticing differences in the number of students in RPC compared to last year’s records.

Last year’s suspension rate was 12% and it has since decreased to 9% according to DPS Restorative Practices Discipline data.

According to DPS’s Student Discipline Data collected this year RPC there have been 45 RPC assignments for half a day (one period), 41 full day RPC assignments, and just 3 repeat students.

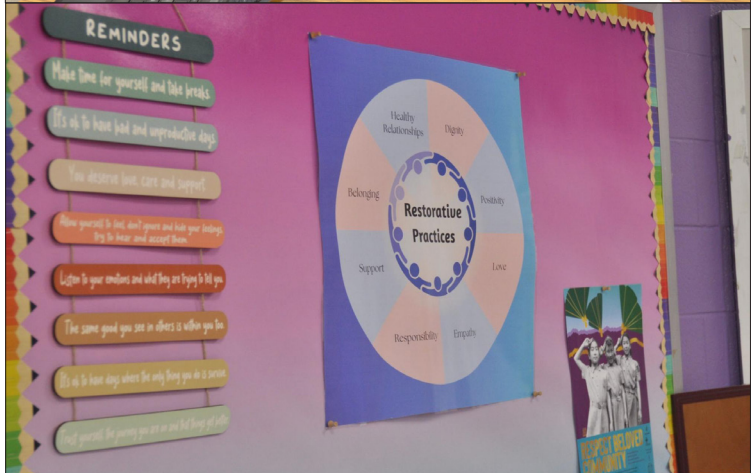
This is a significant reduction from the 2022-2023 school year, when an average of 175 received RPC assignments each quarter.

“We have had less students than we did last year in RPC,” Martinez said. “There have been less repeat students.”

*Editor's note: Some information in this story was published in a previous article by Eden Richman.*

“We really focus on restorative justice, which is all about repairing relationships and harm.”

- RPC Coordinator Bianca Martinez



(Top) D'Angel Lloyd and Macie Burnette share a laptop in RPC. (Second) Wall decorations in Martinez's room. (Third) Martinez adjusts her glasses during an interview with the Pirates' Hook. (Bottom) A couch in the RPC room.

• PHOTOS BY VALENTINA SERRANO-GONZALEZ AND KYLA BANNERMAN

# Caballero, Baker, Rist elected to City Council

BY HANNAH POSNER

**Carl Rist** has lived in Durham for 30 years, working remotely for Prosperity Now, a DC-based nonprofit for economic equality.

As founder of the Durham Living Wage Project, he plans to advocate for the expansion of living-wage jobs as a city council member.

“One in seven people live in poverty in Durham,” said Rist at a candidate forum on September 21. “One in five kids is food insecure. One in six families have zero net worth to their name.”

Rist is a former Riverside parent, and his son Jared Rist was an editor for the Pirates’ Hook.

**Nate Baker** is a professional urban planner focused on building a walkable, sustainable Durham.

He was born and raised in Durham, graduated from Durham Public Schools, and earned his Master’s degree in City and Regional Planning from UNC Chapel Hill.

“Education is a human right, and it is essential that we pay and support our teachers and provide them with the tools they need to succeed,” Baker told the *Indy Week*.

**Javiera Caballero** was elected the first Latina member of the Durham City Council in 2019.

Her priorities are expanding the HEART program, Durham’s mental health crisis response initiative, and approving new affordable housing.

“I’m committed to making sure that renters have affordable and safe housing as our city grows,” Caballero told the *Indy Week*.

Caballero’s kids, senior Natalia, junior Miguel, and freshman Paolo, currently attend Riverside.



Newly elected mayor Leonardo Williams hugs his son, Izaiah Jackson. Jackson is a former RHS student who now attends NCSSM.

•PHOTO COURTESY OF KAITLIN MCKEOWN/NEWS & OBSERVER

## Former Riverside parent elected as mayor

BY TOBIAS RANGEL

On Nov. 9, local business owner and city councilman Leonardo Williams was elected as mayor of Durham.

Williams, whose son, Izaiah Jackson, attended Riverside in 2020-22, made improving small business support and a city-wide focus on youth key parts of his campaign.

A small business owner himself, he and his wife, Zweli, run two Zimbabwean restaurants in Durham. He’s only been a politician since 2021, when he joined the city council

“I don’t know if I would really consider it a career,” said Williams, “the circumstances around me really motivated me to get involved politically.”

Williams learned about the issues surrounding Durham youth, especially teenagers, while working as a teacher at DPS.

“I was able to see the issues in our community amongst our youth

firsthand,” he said, “and I would say, ‘gosh, man, if I only could get these kids jobs after school, or get these kids involved in activities after school, or just help them stabilize themselves.’”

Williams is especially worried about the problems surrounding Black and Brown young men in the Durham community, who he feels need more assistance.

“Our young men of color are struggling academically,” he said.

He took these ideas with him when he became an entrepreneur, and started ensuring that he was providing as much as he could in the Durham community. Williams was able to fund a citywide apprenticeship program that starts at the age of 16, and also helped create

a task force to study the status of young Black men in the city. He plans to continue these programs and also plans to support Durham Public Schools as much as he can while being mayor.

As mayor, Williams also plans to propose a policy of a small business ombudsman position, ensuring that there is someone in government that is there to help navigate any need or support for small businesses. He is highlighting the need for cash capital injection

into Durham local businesses. He supports others being involved in fixing the issues they believe are there, and he hopes to be an example to people. “I believe in the philosophy of you’re part of the solution or you’re part of the pollution.”

“Our young men of color are struggling academically.”

-Leonardo Williams



Students dance in the cafeteria. Following the football team's 29-17 loss to Chapel Hill on Oct. 6, the Saturday night dance was Riverside's first homecoming dance in four years.

## "The kids had a blast."

### *Successful homecoming sparks questions about winter formal*

BY LUCINDA DORRANCE & CHANDLER CATES

Riverside's first homecoming dance post-COVID has lots of kids wondering if a winter formal will return, too.

Riverside held its first homecoming dance in four years on Oct. 7, 2023.

The dance was organized by the Student Government Association (SGA).

"Obviously there were a couple of difficulties at the beginning, but from what I've heard everyone enjoyed it a lot," said student body co-president, Riley O'Connor. "So I'm very proud of everyone and

just like SGA as a whole for being able to put that together."

Frank Hayes, the advisor for SGA and a Riverside English teacher, described the dance as a success.

"The kids had a blast," Hayes said. "I think it was a huge hit and I think it's something that needs to be made a yearly event."

But this doesn't mean other Riverside dances are guaranteed.

"It's a lot of work [because I have] a life outside of school," Hayes said. "But, I could be convinced, honestly."

The dance was pushed up by two weeks due to scheduling issues with the

football game, so a lot of the organization happened last minute.

"It was kind of stressful in the beginning because it just wasn't what we thought it was going to be, and so that's always a little disappointing, but it still was good," O'Connor said.

Last year SGA had plans for a winter formal that was canceled indefinitely after two weeks of planning.

Gabrielle Minnick, a Riverside social studies teacher and former SGA advisor, said SGA began planning the event in the fall, but there were not enough meetings scheduled to get everything

ready.

"The time of year didn't work out just with break," Minnick told the Pirates' Hook in a January 2023 interview. "Then there were

exams when we got back, so it was hard to decorate and everything like that."

Right now prom is the only other dance planned for this school year.

Right now prom is the only other dance planned for this school year.

I'm very thankful for morning showers. Every morning, after my brother gets out of the bathroom, I take a nice, warm shower. It's not only relaxing (especially in the fall and winter), but the water on my face also helps wake me up to get the day started. I usually wake up from a long night's sleep feeling really grimy and with messy hair. Taking a shower in the morning is the only thing that allows me to go to school awake, without messy hair and feeling clean and refreshed. The feeling after getting out of a warm shower on a cold morning is unlike any other, and I will always be grateful for it.

*Love,*  
*Austin Wymore*



# It's the

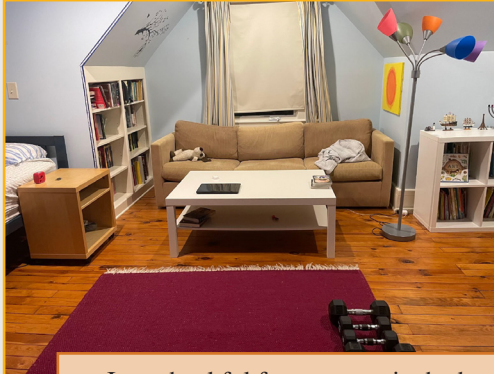
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# things...



I'm thankful for the 9 minutes and 32 seconds it takes to drive from Riverside high school to my house. Whether it's listening to 2000 pop throwbacks, British rap, or Lana Del Rey. Sitting in silence with the windows down, endless chatter about every little aspect of the day, or constant complaints and bad moods, I'm glad my sister and I are forced to spend this time together, because there's not much time left. Next year I won't have someone that's forced to listen to a play by play of my day or someone that I feel comfortable sitting in complete silence with. Knowing that these drives are almost over makes me even more thankful for them. Yes, the non-stop dream recaps and critical outfit reviews can drive me crazy, but I know next year I'll wish I was back in the 2014 Toyota Highlander with my sister, Tula.

*Love,*  
*Piper Winton*

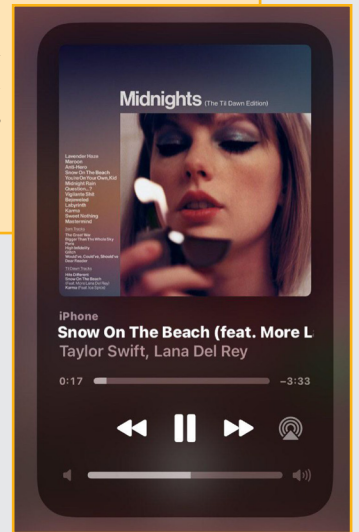


I am thankful for my upstairs bedroom. Between the area it creates to relax at night or do homework efficiently, my bedroom is my favorite part of the house. When my friends come over to hangout, we can set up a projector screen and watch a show together with a new nice breeze from the upstairs window. I can use my bedroom to display everything I love with posters and framed pictures of my family, trinkets from places I've been and things I hold dear.

*Love,  
Saul Janiah Stein*

I am thankful for Spotify premium. Every Christmas for the past few years, my Dad's go-to present is the year-long premium plan. And every Christmas I love it even more, excited for the inevitable road trip we take to see family over winter break. I play music while getting ready, sing along in the car on the way to school and listen to podcasts when I take notes. Whether it's the Kelce brothers "New Heights" or "Anything Goes" with Emma Chamberlain, music can change my mood, be background noise and keep me awake while I do homework. My day-long playlists never fail me, no matter what I'm listening to: 21 Savage, Lana Del Rey, Faye Webster or Radiohead. From playing songs stuck in my head on a loop to getting a new perspective on the topic of an advice podcast to being in the top 0.5% of all Taylor Swift listeners on Spotify, I'm thankful for it all.

*Love,  
Nellie Purdy*



I am thankful for my oversized, sunset colored sweater that keeps me warm. I dislike the chillness that comes with the autumn/winter months. My sweater warms me up and creates a barrier from the cold, which I appreciate a lot. It feels very comforting when I wear it. The soft cotton inside feels soothing and the fact it's oversized makes it all the better, it makes me feel safe.

*Love,  
Danya Omar*



I am thankful for funky ceramic mugs. Sipping on tea is much more enjoyable with a llama or a cactus shaped mug rather than a plain glass. There is something so simple about it that brings me so much joy. Whatever I'm drinking tastes better in a uniquely shaped mug than in any other glass, likely due to the novelty of it. One of my personal favorites is the Natural Life sloth mug, which looks like a tree with a sloth clinging to the side. Looking at and using funny little mugs can brighten my day in a way that I am grateful for.

*Love,  
Lana Melvaine*



# A Time To Remember

*Native Americans celebrate family, traditions during Thanksgiving*

BY LANA MCILVAINE

Growing up, my Thanksgivings were very stereotypical American.

I had mashed potatoes, green beans, turkey, cranberry sauce and pie like everyone else. I loved watching Charlie Brown's Thanksgiving, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and the National Dog Show in the morning.

On the East Coast, most of my family lives in Pennsylvania. My holidays were often

spent outside of Philly with family. When I was younger, one of my best friends was my grandfather. He had the biggest hugs and would always play with five-year old me.

Unlike me, my grandfather was Native American, a member of the Sac and Fox Nation (known for the great athlete Jim Thorpe, my ancestor). A hologram of my grandfather was even featured in Washington, DC's National Museum of the American Indian, where he also produced a series of films on American Indian heritage.

Native American culture was never a large part of my father's life, but he did travel to Pow Wows in Oklahoma every few years. My father also told me about a Sac and Fox cookbook that used milkweed in recipes, my great-grandmother (named "First Ray of Dawn"), and the Carlisle Indian School.

Although I never participated in any special traditions, I try to remember my ancestors and listen to the voices of modern Native Americans. We all



William McIlvaine stands next to a bonfire in Pennsylvania, beside his cameraman Obeid. They worked on stories for the Native American Museum at the Smithsonian.

• PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIAN MCILVAINE

learned in school that the first Thanksgiving was celebrated in 1621 between Pilgrims and the Wampanoag Native Americans.

But as the American holiday has evolved over the centuries, Native Americans are often left out of the conversation.

According to the Administration for Children and Families, only around 2% of Americans are Native, and DPS' 2023 enrollment data show 41 of 31,901 students are Native American (0.1%). There are five Native students currently enrolled in Riverside.



Sac and Fox athlete Jim Thorpe stands at the 1912 Olympics. Thorpe won gold in the penathlon and decathlon. He also played football and baseball.

• PHOTO COURTESY OF BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE.

This fall, I decided to find local Native voices beyond my own family. Throughout this process, I could not find anyone to talk to within Durham Public Schools.

After I widened my search to the Triangle area, it was almost as difficult contacting local Natives. To me, this spoke volumes about how lost Indigenous voices are, especially around Thanksgiving.

According to the Triangle Native American Society, there are over 130,000 citizens in North Carolina who identify as Native American Indigenous, represented by eight state-recognized tribes. After searching for interviews, I found Wanda Burns-Ramsey, the President of the Triangle Native American Society (TNAS). She is a member of the Lum-

bee Tribe, from the Robeson, Scotland and Hoke counties of North Carolina.

*"For us, the story of Thanksgiving isn't a heartwarming tale, and it doesn't represent the truth of our histories either."*

*-Nikki Locklear*

T N A S represents all Native Americans of all tribes living in a five-county area that makes up the triangle of North Carolina," said Burns-Ramsey.

Burns-Ramsey celebrates Thanksgiving like any other family would - filled with people and food.

"[Indians] have food and family and friends during Thanksgiving," she said. "That is still the way that it is spent. For Native Americans, and other people as well, it is a big celebration. It is extended family, cousins, aunts and uncles, grandparents, and moms and dads."

Burns-Ramsey's favorite thing to eat at Thanksgiving

is turkey.

“Most of my family wants turkey only once a year,” said Burns-Ramsey. “First [we] put butter on the top of the turkey, add salt and pepper, fill the cave with onions and an apple, cover with a bacon bag and bake per pound.”

Although Thanksgiving is a time to celebrate, she said, it is also a time to remember.

“I am happy that we are still celebrating Thanksgiving; we cannot erase our past. We have to embrace our past and move forward,” she said.

I also found Native voices at Duke University through both the Native American Studies Initiative and the Native American Indigenous Student Alliance.

Nikki Locklear is the graduate student representative on Duke’s Native American Studies Initiative (NASI) committee. Like Burns-Ramsey, she is a member of the Lumbee tribe of North Carolina as well as the co-founder of Duke’s Native

American Graduate and Professional Students Alliance.

“Native Americans are like other Americans in that we all celebrate or don’t celebrate differently,” said Locklear. “For us, the story of Thanksgiving isn’t a heartwarming tale, and it doesn’t represent the truth of our histories either.”

Many Natives treat Thanksgiving as a day of mourning, and gather to protest each year. The Lumbee nation faces difficulty being federally recognized. Although they are the largest tribe east of the Mississippi river, the Lumbee people cannot receive federal services or benefits that other tribes have.

This has been an ongoing battle for many decades. Nationally, Natives are working for the enforcement of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and reclaiming land.

“My family has always used the day as an opportu-

nity to cook and feast with loved ones, and I think the best way to make use of the holiday is to take its emphasis on gratitude,” said Locklear. “Others celebrate the holiday as a day of gratitude for the strength of Native nations and our cultures.”

“Thanksgiving is a complicated holiday,” said Locklear. “It’s fair to say everyone acknowledges it’s a day to commemorate the tragedies in our history, but also our resilience. We’re still here.”

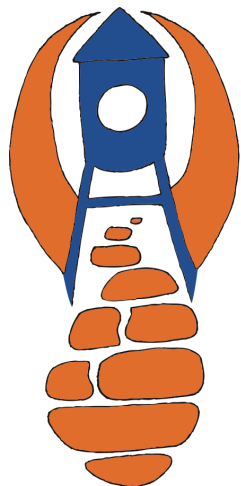
Ultimately, the local Natives I found do not celebrate Thanksgiving any differently than I do. They emphasize family and thankfulness, but



William McIlvaine (right) with other Sac and Fox members. Also named "Leader When Lightning Strikes," McIlvaine was a journalist who wrote about both his heritage and Natives across the country. • PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIAN MCILVAINE

also stories of remembrance. Although the Lumbee Nation has over 55,000 members (according to the Lumbee Tribe), I had never heard of their presence in North Carolina until I started working on this story.

Thanksgiving is a time for both gratitude and remembering the past. Natives today are still here and are moving forward, and neither I nor anyone else should forget it.



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# Thanksgiving, Bull City style

*Love to eat but hate to cook? These local businesses offer great holiday options.*

BY SAUL JANIAK-STEIN  
& NORAH LUBECK

Thanksgiving is around the corner and plenty of people are looking for options to bring to a dinner, lunch, or gatherings. Durham is home to a variety of businesses that offer options for Thanksgiving, including Guglhupf, Fosters and the Durham Farmers Market. Most places offer desserts, sides and fresh made food, to be part of a Thanksgiving spread.

## FARMERS MARKET

The farmers market has multiple booths with a variety of locally-grown fresh vegetables. These include jam, jelly, relishes, pickled products, squash, green beans, eggplant, herbs and potatoes.

## FOSTERS

Fosters offers a full Thanksgiving menu. If you're short on time to cook, consider pre-ordering sides or

a full meal. All you have to do is pop the turkey in the oven. The dinner for four consists of an oven roasted turkey breast or spiral ham, cornbread stuffing with celery & sage, classic mashed potatoes, herb gravy, cranberry orange relish, dinner rolls and pumpkin pie.

If you're looking for more side options, Fosters also offers hors d'oeuvres (starter dishes), such as cheeses and meats. They offer sides, such as vegetables, green bean casseroles, and mac and cheese. For desserts, they are most known for their pies, which include apple with walnut and crumb topping, bourbon pecan, key lime, and chocolate chess.

## GUGLHUPF

Guglhupf offers many Thanksgiving pastries and cakes that can fulfill your holiday cravings. For a bigger dessert for the whole family to

share after Thanksgiving dinner, it offers a pumpkin almond tart. It also offers a smaller pumpkin almond demi tart.

For smaller offerings, Guglhupf has a variety of pumpkin Thanksgiving pastries. If you are looking for a vegan option they have a mini vegan pumpkin Guglhupf. The Guglhupf cake, which the restaurant is named after, is turned into a miniature for this vegan pumpkin dessert.

Other small pastries shown in the case include a pumpkin danish and a pumpkin cream cheese muffin. The Danish has a crispier exterior, while the muffin is softer and lighter. Guglhupf also has a unique pumpkin eclair and pumpkin almond tartlet.

Photos from Guglhupf display case and Durham Farmers Market. Guglhupf is open on thanksgiving.



• PHOTO CREDIT SAUL JANIAK  
STEIN AND NORAH LUBECK

# Dear Lenny

Dear Lenny,  
Every year my mom makes the same bland casserole and always overcooks it. I would like to experience my first Thanksgiving where I don't have to plug my nose before I take a bite of food. Do you have any recipe recommendations that we can make instead?"

Sincerely,  
Flavorless

Dear Flavorless,  
I know what it's like to sit down to a feast, ready to demolish a masterpiece of a meal, just to be met with an unappealing disaster. I remember one year, I was anticipating my grandma's mac and cheese, which goes perfectly with her turkey, cooked just right. Then my aunt handed me a plate of her newest recipe, a mixture of greens and eggs that smelled faintly of peanut butter and was seemingly over and undercooked at the same time. That mess was worse than any crime I ever committed on the Seven Seas. So this year, I'd recommend my family's most secret treasure, passed down through generations of raiders, the perfect replacement for your mom's foul casserole.

## Pirate's Sweet Potato Pie

- 2 cups mashed sweet potatoes
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 3 large eggs, beaten well
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 1 unbaked pie crust



• GRAPHICS BY SADIE IRBY

Dear Lenny,  
I hate slow walkers. I feel like we need to institute a minimum speed limit in the hallways. I understand why people get into fights. When someone comes to a dead stop where I'm walking, I want to throw hands, too. Can you help me fight the urge to push people out of my way?

Sincerely,  
Aggravated

## Instructions:

1. Begin by mashing the sweet potatoes till smooth.
2. In a large bowl, mix the mashed sweet potatoes, sugar, brown sugar, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger & cloves. Stir the ingredients until well combined.
3. Gradually beat the eggs into the mixture and blend it all thoroughly.
4. Stir in the evaporated milk, allowing it to join the mix like the waves of the ocean.
5. Now, preheat your oven to 350° F.
6. Place your unbaked pie crust in a pie dish, and pour your sweet potato mixture into the crust, spreading it evenly like a vast sea.
7. Bake the pie for 55-60 minutes, or until the filling is set and the crust turns a golden brown hue.
8. Let your pie cool before slicing into it and savoring the spoils of your labor.

Dear Aggravated,

I feel the same way about certain blimey barnacles. While your frustration is targeted at the students with the pace of turtle, it could be stemming from a bigger issue.

Recognize your stressors so that you know how to manage your reaction to them. Remember that at the end of the day you won't care about the guy who had to make out with his girlfriend in a sea of people.

When you are in a moment of feeling like shoving someone out of the way, take a deep breath, maintain control of your body and remind yourself it will be okay. The little things get to me, too, but all it takes is a quick reminder and I can take a step back from the edge of the plank. Best of luck getting to math on time!

Sincerely,  
Lenny the Pirate

Dear Lenny,  
Am I the scallywag for failing my entire class? I assign my students one eleven-page packet each day, twenty pages of notes for homework, and expect a detailed summary of the work, all due on Friday. Now, I know they have demanding schedules, but they should be able to get it done. During class, I answer questions and tell fun stories. I suggest finding videos online when a student asks for help, (ut they are blocked by DPS). It's not my fault students are lazy! What should I do?

Sincerely,  
Inconsiderate

Dear Inconsiderate,

I know it's been centuries since you attended any sort of school, so it might be hard for you to be able to connect with students on a deeper level than just being the brunt of all their jokes.

While your argument that students need to be able to manage their time is fair, some kids don't have a choice in their after school duties. They have to take care of siblings or work a job to help support their family, among other obligations. Managing adult responsibilities alongside being a teenager and student is not an easy task. That doesn't mean they're lazy.

Sincerely,  
Lenny the Pirate

# C L U B Spotlight



## Democrats Club does a lot more than talk politics

BY CAYDEN PEGG

The Democrats Club is a safe place for Democrats to voice their political opinions and participate in social outreach.

It is overseen by Christopher Meglin. The president is Lana McIlvaine and the vice president is Vivian Brennan.

The club contributes to the community by going to precinct meetings and discussing protests.

"[Being in the Democrats Club] means doing good for the community and educating people about current events and what it means to be a Democrat," junior Quinne Rizzuto said.

In their last meeting, Meglin spoke on the United State's prolonged gun issues and the possibility of banning all AR-15 style weapons.

"It is unnecessary to use these weapons for any practical purpose," he said.

In a typical Democrats Club meeting, they talk about much more than just gun violence.

"We do current events, local elections, get people to vote and this year we're having guest speakers," Rizzuto said.

The club meets in room 219 during A lunch on Mondays.

## Republicans Club leans into healthy disagreement

BY EMMETT FLYNN

The Republicans Club is more than meets the eye.

On the surface, it's just a cluster of students with a shared political ideology, but it's more than that. It's a place where students have passionate debates and discuss opinions on current geopolitical events.

"The club gives me and other like minds an opportunity to voice our thoughts and opinions, while at the same time, learning more about our own viewpoints," president Emmett Wolfe said.

During their last meeting, they shared opinions about the current conflict between Israel and Palestine. The opinions varied some but a main idea that stayed was that the United States should stay out of the conflict.

Every meeting, students are encouraged to have a degree of background knowledge before participating.

"In a time when things are so polarized it's nice to be able to have a conversation with people you disagree with," chorus teacher Jill Boliek, the club's advisor, said during their meeting.

The club meets every Friday at 8:30 a.m. in room 103.

## Queer Straight Alliance creates community

BY SADIE IRBY

the parade.

"Our plan was we were going to walk with the DPS group in the parade," Pruettt said.

Some members also planned on handing out homemade flowers they created at Thursday's meeting on September 21st. The theme of Pride this year was "Giving Them Their Flowers." According to the LGBTQ Center of Durham, this represents "honor and gratitude for the courage and leadership of our trans communities."

Riverside's Queer Straight Alliance (QSA) creates a welcoming environment for LGBTQ students.

The club serves as a community space where queer students are free to be themselves. Their biggest project is planning for the annual Durham Pride Parade.

It was set for September 23, but was canceled due to tropical storm Ophelia. QSA club members were unanimously disappointed.

Junior Quinn Pruettt, QSA's social media manager, was planning on attending Pride that Saturday.

"I feel disappointed," Pruettt said. "I feel like it (Pride being canceled) happens a lot since September is hurricane season."

Members of QSA planned on going together to



PHOTO BY NICO JORDAN

Riverside's QSA poses for a photo in room 214. The club meets every Thursday during A lunch

Though the biggest Queer event of the year was canceled, organizations like QSA still mean a lot to the student body.

"QSA means to me. It's just a community where we are able to freely express ourselves and be ourselves unapologetically," said senior Destiny Health.

awas a little bit disappointed but pride is always."

"Pride is always."

- Destiny Health

# Fish Club brings marine science to Riverside

BY NICO JORDAN

Grace Farley wanted her marine biology students to interact with real organisms rather than pictures, so she decided to start the Fish Club.

Farley has taught at Riverside for four years. She is currently teaching biology and marine science. Her interest in marine life began in third grade.

"I have always been interested in marine life," she said. "I started off being interested in dolphins but quickly expanded my interest into more unusual creatures, like my current favorite, sea slugs."

She started the Fish Club at the beginning of the semester using a \$200 grant that each teacher got from MacKenzie Scott and other grants from the school.

Getting an aquarium was a goal of Farley's marine

bio class so they decided to start the club.

"Originally, Fish Club was just going to be a project for the marine science class, but in the end it became a club because we ran out of time," said senior Sophia Overholt.

The club is considering

going to the eno river, having fundraisers where people can pay to name the critters in the aquarium and having a day where they go to the Wilmington aquarium.

"We're still a young club finding our feet, but we're really excited to shape

the club into something that everyone is excited about," Farley said.

It was originally called the Aquarium Club. Eventually the name was changed to the Marine Science Club. They now call it the Fish Club even though they know that

they might not get any fish. They are planning to mainly get invertebrates instead of vertebrates because invertebrates are easier to maintain.

"I was one of the biggest advocates for naming it Fish Club because it was originally [named] Aquarium Club and then we voted on the new name, so now it's Fish Club," said freshman Isa Arrwood. "[I am] hoping to keep fish alive."

There are usually 15-20 students in attendance, but the club grows every week.

"[I want to] make some sort of difference through helping an animal," said freshman Ollie Ambrusfield.

Fish club meets during B lunch every Tuesday at Ms. Farley's room (224).

"Everyone should join, it's really fun and it's very involved, there's a lot of variety in the people there," said Overholt.



Members of Riverside's Fish Club pose for a photo during a weekly meeting in room 224. The club meets on Tuesdays during B lunch.

• PHOTO BY NICO JORDAN

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• PHOTOS BY AUSTIN WYMORE

# Clue

## Takes the Stage

BY AUSTIN WYMORE

The fall play is finally on the way and it's shaping up to be the biggest in years.

*Clue: Onstage* is a comedy/murder mystery based on the board game and movie by the same name. It premieres in the Riverside auditorium on December 1.

Set in a mysterious mansion at a dinner party where the guests don't know why they've been invited and one of them is a killer, the play is both comedic and thrilling, with lots of twists and turns. As the body count stacks up, everyone is a suspect.

*Clue* features a larger cast, longer runtime, and more involved set than other recent school productions. The team is extremely excited, espe-

cially backstage, where the seniors have wanted to put on the play for years.

"We have been wanting to do *Clue* for two years," said senior backstage head of sound Dio Parker. "We have great set plans and a great cast for it so I think we're really gonna pull in a good audience with this one."

Parker works behind the scenes along with six other seniors on the tech team. They are all passionate about theater and have lots of experience from past plays like *Shrek*, *Little Shop of Horrors* and *A Ghost for Rosanda*.

"They're committed and that's a wonderful thing," said theater teacher Monique Taylor, who is also the play's production director.

This being their last year

at Riverside, *Clue* is one of the last plays that some of the seniors will be a part of. Although they are sad to leave, they've left their mark on the school with their roles in such great performances.

"I wanna cry," said senior stage manager Sergio Rosa. "But...we have a good cast and a good tech crew, so I feel really excited."

"We're just doing a lot more with this one"

-Dio Parker,  
Senior



Most of the cast of *Clue: Onstage* in the theater room, where they rehearse. The play premieres on December 1-2. • PHOTO BY AUSTIN WYMORE

# Student Profile: Eloise Wescott

BY NICO JORDAN

After noticing issues in theater production, senior Eloise Wescott decided to create a new role for herself.

She created the role of Student Technical Director because the stage manager was very busy so things in the theater would constantly go wrong, such as props breaking and mics malfunctioning. Now the responsibilities of the stage manager are split between two people.

“I also do paperwork, so boring but absolutely crucial,” said Wescott.

She is always backstage, making sure that everything is running smoothly.

Wescott is the president

of the International Thespian Society at Riverside (ITS), a theater honors society that was started around a year ago. A “thespian” is someone who participates in theater. Her responsibilities include organizing what shows the theater is going to do and hosting competitions that compare the theaters at various high schools.

To join ITS, applicants must have at least 100 volunteer hours at a local theater.

“I had 250 volunteer hours this year,” said Wescott. “100 hours is nothing.”

She helped organize the theater’s storage, by moving boxes of led lights, costumes and other resources

that the theater uses. She has also fixed many other small issues that the theater had.

Wescott also helped create the haunted house last month. She has worked on the haunted house every October for the past three years.

She is also helping create props and sets for the Clue play, which will run December 1-2.

Wescott has been in theater for three years and she has loved it since she joined.

“I started my sophomore year but my freshman year was COVID, so three years was the whole time I was in the building at Riverside,” said Wescott.

Before she came to Riv-



Senior Eloise Wescott in her theater tech class. She is the Student Tech Director for *Clue*.

• PHOTO BY NICO JORDAN

erside, she was in chorus and helped behind the scenes to ensure shows ran smoothly. This inspired her to join tech theater in high school.

“I don’t actually like singing,” she said. “[But] I really do like being backstage and fixing stuff, and that’s what tech theater is.”

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• PHOTOS BY SAUL JANIAK STEIN, NORAH LUBECK AND JOCELYN DIAZ

"Once you get to know me,  
I'm always around."

*There are six full-time custodians who clean up after nearly 1900 students. Meet the people that keep Riverside up and running.*

BY ELODIE PAGE



Visite  
[thepirateshook.com](http://thepirateshook.com)  
para leer este artículo en  
español.

Inspiring youth has always been a passion for lead Custodian, Michael Cureton, and he has been able to continue doing this at Riverside.

Cureton began working at Riverside on December 22, 2022. Originally from Charlotte, he moved to Durham to help take care of his mother-in-law. He has now lived in Durham for 28 years with his wife, daughter and son.

Cureton attended North Carolina A&T State University through a wrestling scholarship and then graduated from Christopher Newport University with a major in business administration. Before working at Riverside he was a manager at a chip manufacturing company now called Wolfspeed. After retiring from the company, he took this job as an opportunity to work in Durham while further engaging with this community.

"I really have a heart for youth," Cureton said. "I used to be a Youth Pastor at a Chapel Hill Church called Celebration Assembly of God. I lived in Durham but all of my outreach ministry I did in Chapel Hill. I wanted to work in Durham, so I can say I did live and work here."

He also sees himself making an impact on students at Riverside.

"Sometimes I see guys in the bathroom," he said. "Class has started. I encourage them. I say 'Get out of the bathroom, go get your education, go learn something today. Recently, I think they are starting to hear me. When I walk in, they just leave. I don't even have to say anything. I think I'm making an impact. I hope so."

If his new nickname is any indication, students seem to agree.

"I call him 'Uncle Mike' because he's like an uncle to me," senior Essat Seales said. "He gives good advice, he be listening to the Gospel music, he be dancing and he's just funny."

According to Seales, he has made students feel this way since the beginning of school.

"He's very loving and kind to us," she said.

Working in an environment with young people is one of Cureton's favorite parts of the job.

"It really keeps me young," he said. "I think that the bad part is I don't get to go to your games and stuff because I work from six in the morning to four."

Because Cureton has a background in wrestling, he has also wanted to become a volunteer wrestling coach, but ultimately his schedule restricts him from doing so.

"I just wish I had more involvement in sports," he said.

For a big part of his life, Cureton has also



Lead Custodian Michael Cureton

traveled to different countries in Africa preaching and doing missionary work.

"I encouraged people about their faith, using your faith to motivate yourself to do things," he said.

He is also a veteran.

"I was in the US Navy for six years," he said. "I'm glad to have served my country. That means a lot."

Thomas Holloway, has always dedicated himself to helping others.

He is always looking for ways to help others, whether it's around the school or scouting out jobs for people in this community.

Holloway has always had this mentality.

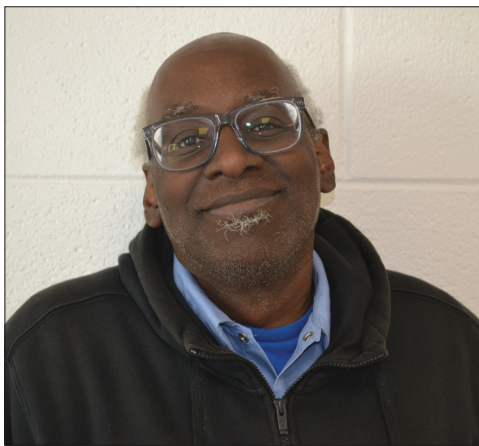
He even let his clients determine the cost of his childhood babysitting business because it was more important to him for the service to be accessible.

"People wanted to have time for themselves," Holloway said. "You find you got five mothers that you're helping out, and they want to go out. You don't give up, you say 'you charge yourself.'"

Holloway has lived in Durham his whole life. After attending Southern High School, he enrolled at Durham Tech for computer programming, then switched his major to business administration but had to stop temporarily to take care of his family.

Now, he has a family of five kids ranging in age from seven to 31 years old.

Holloway has been working at Riverside for almost five years. But before that, he helped with staff events at Duke. He was told by a friend about a job opening in a private company, so he applied and got the job. The program brought him to Durham Public Schools and eventually to Riverside full-time.



Thomas Holloway

"Sometimes I see guys in the bathroom. Class has started. I encourage them. I say 'Get out of the bathroom, go get your education, go learn something today. Recently, I think they are starting to hear me."

- Michael Cureton

Holloway's father was also a custodian. "So I just followed suit," he said. "The best part of this job is meeting new people.

Outside of Riverside, Holloway also helps other people find job opportunities.

"I have had my hand in helping people find jobs," he said. "I go out and I survey. If it's more than three months, I look at how much business they have and what they need to get done."

This undertaking developed through his dream of owning a business.

"I'm not ready for it yet," he said. "And if I'm not ready I want to help somebody else get ready for a job."

Holloway considers himself easy to get along with.

"Not many people know that," he said. "Once you get to know me, I'm always around."

This helps him connect to the kids at Riverside.

"[I'm] not just [grateful for] my five children," he explained. "But all the kids I have here in the school."

Deysi Polanco realized the importance of gratitude after leaving her family and life in El Salvador to come to the United States.

Polanco has now lived in Durham for 17 years. She studied in El Salvador before she came to the United States and first moved to New York and then New Jersey.

"A friend of mine told me there were

better job opportunities [in Durham]," Polanco explained in Spanish.

She has three children but she misses the rest of her family who stayed in El Salvador.

"My siblings, aunts, and uncles stayed in El Salvador," she said. "I [also] had cattle and animals."

She also misses Salvadoran culture and traditions.

"There were many parties in the villages," Polanco said.

She specifically recalls a yearly Salvadorian festival where several villages celebrate independence on September 15.

While her two homes are different in many ways, Polanco also sees similarities.

"Here, it is like the countryside like it was in El Salvador," she said. We lived where there were a lot of people and homes next to each other."

Before becoming a full-time custodian at Riverside, Polanco worked at a window factory.

"I liked the factory better [than being a custodian], because they showed how to cut the material with a

machine," she said. "I just set the machine up and just had to use my feet. Here, one has to be all over the place cleaning."

She came to Riverside after the window



Martha Garcia

factory closed three years ago.

"I like this school," Polanco said. "It's all the same for me."

She doesn't have a favorite part of the job, but she is thankful to be here.

"I am grateful that God keeps me alive," Polanco said. "And I am grateful that my

parents gave everything they could."

Long before she came to Riverside, Martha Garcia left El Salvador to provide for her family.

She finished high school and went to San Lorenzo College in El Salvador, but she only stayed a year before she left the country at the age of 18 for the United States.

"I left my son with my mom when he was one and a half and I wanted to give him as much as I could," she said in Spanish. "In El Salvador, you get paid less than \$5 an hour. I couldn't sustain my son and my mother with that income so my sister bought me the ticket to come to America."

Garcia has now lived in Durham for over 25 years. She has four children: three sons and one daughter. They all live in the United States.

Garcia got her first job cleaning houses in Los Angeles through her aunt's friend. She later moved to Durham and worked in cleaning services and was a Kroger employee before coming to Riverside.

"Kroger got bought by Harris Teeter," she said. "They still offered me a job, but the pay was a dollar less than the janitor's pay. I applied for both but decided to get this job and clean since the environment of the retail job was very exhausting," she said.

Garcia has been working at Riverside for 6 years. She prides herself on being friendly and approachable.

"I love cleaning overall and interacting with students," she said. "When everyone is on break the day feels like it goes by slowly, but when everyone's in school the day goes by quickly. When I get home it can be pretty lonely since there's no sneaker running noises to fill the silence, so I try to distract myself by going on walks."

Her least favorite part of the job is the way she is treated.

"I don't like how there's a lack of respect or when people are ungrateful," she said. "For example, I don't like when someone gives you an order and they say it harshly. I'd rather they just ask nicely."

Garcia's true dream is to own a business,



Deysi Polanco



Martha Garcia sweeps the cafeteria during second period. Garcia's daughter and grandson both attended Riverside.

but money is the holdup.

"I could get a loan but there's always a chance of something going wrong," she said. "I would love to own a little grocery store and sell a little bit of everything."

After growing up in a segregated school system, Julius Griffin encourages students to take advantage of the opportunities offered at Riverside.

Griffin has lived in Durham for 35 years. He is originally from Siler City, NC but moved

because many of his relatives already lived here. He was working for a contractor that assigned him to Riverside to help because it was bigger and later took a full-time position at the school.

He loves watching his colleagues grow. "I've been doing it 47 years," he said. "Watching other people grow, that's the best part of the job for me. Watching people come in like Delfina, become managers and stuff like that. That's the most exciting thing in this for me."

Griffin has been working at Riverside for nine years.

He places a lot of importance on the opportunities he sees for the students at Riverside because of his own experiences.

"In all my goals in my life, I think I should've gone to college," he said.

College access wasn't the same when he was young. Back then, many school districts in North Carolina were still segregated.

"When I was in school it wasn't like what it is for y'all," he said. "We had all Black schools and we had all white schools. It wasn't integrated. You only went to one school, from first to twelfth."

Segregation wasn't just in schools.

"When you went downtown, you had a black side of town and you had a white side of town,

you had a black barber shop, you had a white barber shop."

Times have changed and Griffin thinks Riverside is a place for students to reinvent themselves.

"I think Riverside is a chance to grow," said Griffin. "[Students] have a chance to be whatever they really want to be. They really got the opportunities. All they gotta do is just apply themselves and they can succeed."

Griffin has retired from a few different jobs, but he doesn't mind being a janitor.

"Whether I'm doing bathrooms, mopping floors, it's all the same for me," he said. "It don't have a bad part."

He just wants to encourage kids to pursue the opportunities he didn't have.

"The biggest goal I accomplished is to continue doing what I'm doing," Griffin said.

After nearly twenty years working in high schools, Delfina Contreras has seen it all.

Originally from Veracruz, Mexico, Contreras moved to Durham to provide a better life for her family.

"In our country, things are difficult, and here it's a lot better to live in," Contreras said in Spanish.

She worked at Northern for 12 years before coming to Riverside seven years ago.

Contreras doesn't notice many differences between the two schools.

"For me they were

the same," she said. "They're both high schools."

"I was signing my daughter up for high school here at Riverside, [when] I saw a friend," she said. "I was in search of a job, so I asked him if there was a job for me here and he said yes."

Contreras works alongside Julius Griffin during the night shift. They come in around three and leave long after teachers and students have gone home.

Because she has been here for a long time, Contreras has experienced a lot. She said that one of her most unique experiences was working throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The school felt sad when the students weren't around," she said.

Contreras has also observed changes in the Riverside community.

"Riverside has grown a lot," she said. "I noticed that recently students are more engaged in class rather than wandering around," she said.

Student engagement also makes the job better for Contreras.

"The best part for me is to work with the students," she said. "I love to see the students smile."

In the past, Contreras also wanted to be a high school secretary.

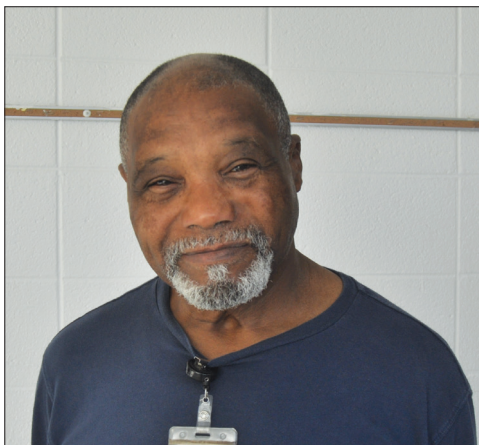
"Unfortunately, the lady that was supposed to help me passed away and I couldn't complete that dream," she said.

The language barrier also prevented her from following her secretarial dream, but it hasn't been a problem at Riverside.

"It doesn't really affect me much since I do try to speak English at Riverside and outside of it," she said.

Coming from another country has made Contreras appreciate what she can do here.

"I am grateful for what I have accomplished in this country," she said.



Julius Griffin



Delfina Contreras

"I've been doing it 47 years. Watching other people grow, that's the best part of the job for me."

- Julius Griffin

## **GUSTAVO LAGOS** **(11)**

### **Men's Soccer**



No one improved more this season than junior Gustavo Lagos.

“Last year he would get frustrated very easily. He would yell at people and be kind of nasty,” head coach Alex Ramirez said. “Then, [this year] here at tryouts, he’s encouraging guys. It goes throughout tryouts, throughout the summer workouts and the pre-season games.”

Lagos has been a role model for his team.

“He’s been a really good emotional leader for the team,” Ramirez said. “He’s good in the [classroom] for team morale, he makes people laugh, and he brings people together.”

On the field, he contributed to his team’s overall improvement, too. The Pirates’ 8-11 overall record was significantly better than last year’s 5-13-2.

Lagos scored 15 goals and had 3 assists this season. He finished second in goals scored in the DAC-VII 4A conference. He was also voted Offensive Player of the Year by his teammates and coach.

“I’m so glad he came back and I really hope he comes back again next year to finish out his senior season strong,” Ramirez said. “He has real leadership potential.”

## **MITCHELL BONNER** **(12)**

### **Football**



The Riverside football team may have had a disappointing season but Mitchell Bonner has not.

“He is probably the best version of a teammate that he can be. No matter who it is, what their skill level is, he’s always there to encourage them,” head coach Chris Lea said. “He’s unbelievably valuable to us as a player and a person.”

Bonner averaged 48 receiving yards and 11 tackles per game. He also led the team in touchdowns. In addition to the talent he brought to Riverside, he was also the DAC-6 conference leader in tackles.

Off the field, Bonner had just as important of a job.

“I’m more of just a hype [man] for my team,” Bonner said. “I’d say I do a pretty good job of just getting them ready and preparing them for the game.”

# **FALL**

## **LAUREN POWRIE** **(12)**

### **Women's Volleyball**



Senior Lauren Powrie stepped up on the court this year.

Powrie is a six-rotation hitter.

Six-rotation hitters are some of the most versatile people on the court.

In the front row, she plays outside attack and blocker. And in the back row, she plays defense.

She was awarded the coveted role of floor captain, which made her the only player who is allowed to talk to the referees about certain calls.

Powrie not only showed out as a leader, but also as a player. In addition to the added responsibilities, she led the team in kills with 129.

Riverside’s team finished with an 8-11 record overall, a major improvement from last year’s 6-14.

“I thought it went good,” said Powrie. “We had a better record than we’ve had my whole four years.”



## **MIA COVINGTON** **(12)**

### **Women's Field Hockey**

The field hockey team’s success is due in large part to senior goalkeeper Mia Covington.

The Pirates saw big improvement from last season’s 0-16 record.

“It was definitely better than our last season because we actually won a game,” Covington said. “And we scored a few goals, which was good.”

Although the team ranked thirty-fifth out of 37 in the state, Covington was the seventh-best goalie. She is also ranked nineteenth in the nation in saves with 167 this season.

Her best game was the October 9 loss against Cardinal Gibbons, during which she had 30 saves.

But she does more than just score for her team.

“Off the field, I try to make sure everybody is doing alright,” she said. “And just help with whatever I can.”





**NAILAH BOLDEN  
(10)  
Cheer**

Yes, cheerleading is a sport, and Nailah Bolden deserves some props.

According to head coach Kayla Thompson, Bolden is always in good spirits and making sure she has the cheers perfect. She always displays her kind character by lending a helping hand when needed and bringing good vibes.

“The reason I joined cheer was because it's a part of my personality,” Bolden said. “[I cheer] no matter if people are losing in life or in sports, I’m still going to cheer them on.”

She appreciates the opportunity to meet new people and observe their different styles.

“Starting off with a positive mindset can really help me get through the day,” she said. “You never know what somebody's going through.”



**ZOE ROBINSON  
(9)**

**Women's Tennis**

Freshman Zoe Robinson wasted no time making a name for herself on the Riverside tennis courts.

Robinson won the most matches on her team with a 5-1 record in 6 singles. While only a freshman, she has inspired her teammates with her hard work ethic.

“I’m a hard worker. I try to lead by example,” Robinson said.

“She has good endurance and perseverance,” senior Hannah Valente said.

Robinson was awarded Player of the Match three times this season, but she has lots to look forward to in future seasons.

“For the whole team, the season could have been better,” she said. “I think there is still room for improvement, but there were definitely good matches and moments that I was proud of.”

**TYRRELL  
THE  
SON**

**2023**

**CONNOR TYRRELL  
(11)**

**Men's Cross County**

Connor Tyrrell made major improvements this year.

He set a school record at the state championship race on Nov. 4 in Kernersville, NC. Tyrrell finished 40 seconds after state champion Noah Valyo with a time of 15.46.36. It was the fastest by any junior in the state.

“[The season] has gone amazing,” Tyrrell said. “I’ve gotten new records multiple times and it’s been a great season.”

In addition to the personal records, he also placed in the top five of multiple competitive meets including Great American, Conference and States.

Tyrrell credits some of his success to his team’s support.

“I guess we all just support each other,” he said.



**ELIZABETH HEALY  
(11)**

**Women's Cross Country**

Junior Elizabeth Healy currently holds six school records in cross-country and track events. She also led her team to the first Conference championship in school history and contributed to her team’s City-County championship for the third time in the past three years.

“She’s our fastest, and she reduces our points by a significant amount,” said senior Ada Kaiser-Potter.

Healy continued to improve her time, finishing with a PR and a new school record of 18.09.

“My biggest personal achievement was setting my new PR,” Healy said.

She serves as a leader, but is also a great teammate and really emphasizes the importance of a strong team bond.

“Everyone just works together as a team and we all rely on each other to motivate each other,” she said.

With one year left at Riverside, she hopes to finish her career strong.

“I’ve accomplished a bunch of my goals, but I’m excited to keep working towards more of them,” she said.

# Winter Sports

By ELODIE PAIGE & AURELI DOMINGUEZ



1. *What is your role on the team?*

2. *What are your hopes for the season?*

## Gymnastics

**Sayer Brown (12)**

1. "Mostly just to keep the team encouraged and happy. If they're nervous then I give them pep talk and keep everyone happy and excited to compete."

2. "I would like to win another state championship title. I was the vault state champion last year, so it would be really nice if I was able to repeat that."

3. "We work really hard in the gym. It's a really small team but we have a close bond. So working hard and supporting each other will hopefully help us reach our goals and my goal of becoming state champion again."

4. "We are having our state championships coming up at Raleigh School of Gymnastics. I'd probably say Jordan is our biggest rival because they're on a similar level as us, they're also the only other high school in DPS that has a gymnastics team. We're also usually pretty close score wise."

team is going to work really hard to work hard in those cold temps."

4. "We have four meets in the winter, and the final one is probably the one [you want to watch]. It's going to be at Eastern Alamance. That's the biggest winter meet we have. It's going to be a fun one."

## Winter track (Sprinters)

**Rafaela Drake (12)**

1. "This year I am co-captain of the sprinters and jumpers."

2. "Definitely breaking the school record for triple jump."

3. "As a team, winter is about conditioning and getting better. So I think everyone is going to work on improving their times."

4. "States or any home meet."

## Wrestling

**Daniel Dickerson (12)**

1. "I am a captain along with a few others that help me out with motivating the team. In practice, if I see a group struggling I will do my best to help out. If not, I'll get a coach and he will definitely fix it. Whoever my partner is for that day, I'm always helping them by walking them through each step."

2. "State championship."

3. "We're going to work every day. Just showing up and giving one hundred percent of your effort is a step toward this"

4. "Probably Jordan because they're the second best in the conference. Or Chapel Hill."

## Winter Track (Distance)

**Elijah Pope (12)**

1. "I help lead practice and I help make sure everything gets done."

2. "The goal for the winter is to have a really good season and build toward the spring. It's a very big training season for us."

3. "We do a lot of weight training, a lot of workouts, a lot of early mornings and late nights and a lot of cold practices. So the whole

(Left, from top) RHS men's basketball players, Gaige Miller (12), Ste (12), Aubree Spreitzer (11), Kate Bakelaar (11), Jill Smith (12). (Right) Mangum (12), Zaneta Hudson (12), and Eloise Egger (10).

# Preview

3. *What will the team do to accomplish this?*

4. *One matchup students can't miss?*

## Cheer

**De'Kayla Taybron (12)**

1. "I am a captain."
2. "Our team goals are to make cheers more complicated and more complex than last year."
3. "We're going to motivate our team in every way or form possible."
4. "Northern!"

## Women's Swimming

**Elodie Mitchell (12)**

1. "Helping people with their strokes, or making sure we're leaving on time for the right intervals."
2. "I'm hoping this year, all three of our relays make it to states and hopefully have more people individually make it to states."
3. "Working harder at practice, but I think more of creating a bond with the team...Dinners and stuff like that would be really good for the team because if we're more connected as a team, then we'll do better."
4. "I'd say Jordan, or even Chapel Hill schools. That's where we swim a lot, so those would be our rivals. That might be a fun meet to come out to."

## Men's Swimming

**Otto Schonwalder (12)**

1. "[As captain] I get to help organize how relays are run and

make sure meets run smoothly."

2. "I hope we'll make it to regionals."

3. "We're gonna go to practice every day. The people who don't go to the high school practices will go to their club practices and we'll give it everything we have."

4. "Our biggest rival would probably be Northern, so any meet that we race Northern you should definitely show up."

## Women's Basketball

**Mimi Holder (12)**

1. "My role is to lead the others to success"
2. "I hope we do better than last season and play as one. Hopefully with the new coaches we can get better."
3. "With a lot of dedication and a lot of flexibility."
4. "The rivalry Northern game is one everybody is going to want to come and see."

## Men's basketball

**Corey Hairston Jr. (12)**

1. "I am a captain."
2. "I hope to have a great season, win conference and go to the play-offs. We have a lot of potential."
3. "Work hard in practice, keep our attitudes in check, play together, and encourage each other."
4. "Both Northern games, the Southern game, Hillside and Jordan. Conference, basically."





Destino Success is a Latino community space. Throughout the year, the club hosts guest speakers and organizes service opportunities, cultural games and activities.

Destino's most popular event is the bi-annual 5v5 soccer tournament. Students and faculty form seven-member teams, vendors sell food and DJs play music as the games begin after school and run into the night. *The Los Potros FC won this fall's tournament on November 9.*

# 5v5 Soccer Tournament

*Destino Success es un espacio comunitario latino. A lo largo del año, el club recibe invitados especiales y organiza oportunidades de servicio, juegos y actividades culturales.*

*El evento más popular de Destino es el torneo bianual de fútbol 5 contra 5. Los estudiantes y profesores hacen equipos de siete miembros, los vendedores venden comida y los DJ tocan música mientras los partidos comienzan después de la escuela y corre hacia la noche. El equipo Los Potros FC ganó este torneo del otoño el día Noviembre 9.*

