

WHAT'S THE HOWL?

JOB OPENINGS

Jimmy Johns
Contact: <https://careers.jimmyjohns.com/us/en>
Chick-fil-A (Winterville Location)
Contact: Request an application from the general manager on shift in store. Must be 16 or older.

VOLUNTEERING

Greenville Foodbank
Contact: [Foodbanknc.org//get-involved/volunteer/](https://www.foodbanknc.org/get-involved/volunteer/)
Joy Soup Kitchen
Contact: Call (252) 561-7519 on weekdays between 8:30 & 10:00 am or fill out a form in-person.

Leading the Pack: An Inside Look

Caleb Spruill and Gabriela Washington

In her first interview as a reporter for What's the Howl?, Gabriella Washington sat down with Mr. Wynn Whittington to get answers to the Wolfpack's most crucial questions. Whittington, who has been the principal at the PCS Early College High School since its opening in 2015, talked thoroughly about his experience leading the Wolfpack.

While Whittington is viewed as being systematic because of his status, it took him years to realize his passion was in the school system. At one point, he decided "to quit school and college" altogether before entering the military and starting boot camp. Once back home, he began studying here at Pitt Community College while teaching swimming lessons part-time, where he says he "got bit by the teaching bug."

"Being a principal gives you an opportunity to have a greater impact on more students than in the classroom with just a few," Whittington states before describing why he initially decided to become a principal after teaching physical education and working in administration for about six years. He spoke extensively about wanting to build relationships with students beyond a classroom setting. "My goal was... to truly change students' lives for the better and give them opportunities that wouldn't otherwise be available."



Mr. Whittington working in his office on PCC Campus

Whittington credits Mr. Clay Stilley, a history teacher at the school, with presenting the idea of the school's motto, "Different Breed, Same Pack," in one of the first staff meetings seven years ago. When the inaugural class chose today's well-known wolf mascot, Stilley got an idea. "We are the wolves, and [PCC students] are the bulldogs, so we're different breeds... but we're both in the same pack," Whittington explains, "We're all one big family."

Because of his impact on students, Whittington's position as principal has affected him personally. He explains, "I was able to grow as a person and identify areas [in which] I can be better." He continues to say that he strives to create an environment where everyone looks after one another. Whittington notes that the most stressful part of leading the pack is personalizing all students' education to fit their needs and pushing them past external distractions and barriers.

Whittington concludes the interview by wanting his students to know that it is okay not to know what the future entails because the early college program may allow them to end up on a "path that they would not have otherwise been on."

➔INSIDE

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Early College students share their creative poems and artwork.

HOWLING NEWS

PCC AND EARLY COLLEGE EVENTS

PCS Early College Winter Dance

When: Friday,
February 24th
from 6-8 PM

Where: Goess
Student Center

PCC Black History Month Movie Day: *Wakanda*

Forever

When: Tuesday,
February 28th
from 11AM - 2PM

Where: Goess
Student Center

PCC Highlight: The Technical Academy

Emily Rorer

PCS-PCC Technical Academy is an opportunity for students to get a certificate or college credits during their junior and senior years of high school. Classes take place during the student's first and second periods, 9:00 AM- 10:50 AM. To apply, you must have a 2.8 GPA, a love for science, and a desire to learn something new.

Some of the classes a student would take in their first year include General Biology, Basic Lab Techniques, Microbiology, and Bioethics. There are many labs associated with each class. Some include gel electrophoresis and DNA extraction. "My favorite lab so far would be the DNA necklace lab, where we collected our own DNA and put it into necklaces," says Evelyn Correa, a second-year Biotechnology student. Some local businesses that encourage students to apply include Thermo Fisher and Mayne Pharma. These companies make pharmaceutical products. There are thousands more opportunities in the biotechnology field than just locally.

The Electrical Systems program includes learning about wiring electrical systems in residential and commercial settings. In your first year, you will take Residential Wiring, which is when you will learn about electrical systems in homes just like yours. In their second year, students take an Industrial Wiring course, where they learn about the layout, planning, and installation of electrical systems in an industrial setting.

"My favorite hands-on activity was actually in my first semester as a junior when we got to get our own stalls where we worked on your everyday residential wiring applications," says Dalton Marshall, a second-year Electrical Systems student. Once students graduate high school, they will have only 1-2 more semesters left to complete their Associate's degree. There are plenty of opportunities for work near Greenville, and many companies love to recruit students from Pitt.

"My plan after graduation is to get on with either Greenville Utilities hopefully or some other company like that" Dalton also says. He also recommends the program to any junior. "Honestly, I've seen people that didn't know anything about electrical end up loving this program" Dalton commented.



A laboratory technician performing an experiment in a PCC science lab

The HVAC Systems program is for students who have an interest in how things such as heating and cooling systems, refrigerators, and air purification systems work. In students' first year, they take Intro to Refrigeration and HVAC Electricity. In these classes, they learn the basics of refrigeration and the refrigeration cycle. They also learn how to wire circuits properly.

"My favorite thing I've learned to do so far is operating on heat pumps," says Brent Dickinson. Once students graduate high school, they will have a few more semesters to complete before getting their Associates degree. Companies such as Greenville Utilities and Advance Mechanical Engineering are some of the local options for careers after graduation. Right now, Brent has no specific plans for what he will be doing after graduation but hopes to see what is out there.

The Architecture Design program is where students learn how to design and read blueprints. During the first semester, students take Intro to Architectural Designing and a Computer CAD class. One of the students, Kayla Applewhite, says that her favorite activity they have done so far was building a cabin in her Computer CAD class. In these classes, you will learn that there is more to reading a ruler, using different tools to create houses on the computer, and improving time management. When students graduate high school, they have a few extra semesters to complete their Associate's degree. Kayla plans to attend a 4-year university and become an interior designer or architectural designer. This program is recommended for anybody interested in the electrical field or anybody interested in learning more about how buildings are built.

If any students have any questions or want to apply, email lvgriffin010@my.pittcc.edu and the deadline to apply is April 1, 2023.



HOWLING OPINION

Should The Early College Building Have Vending Machines?

Temira Hutchinson and
Edgar Romero

If you walked into the Early College High School building and were desperately craving a drink, you would either have to ask the front office if they had water, go to the water fountain, or walk to another building that contains a vending machine. This is a difficult situation because the office doesn't always have resources on demand. Students might feel uneasy about drinking from water fountains, due to the pandemic, and everyone wants to avoid walking. To avoid this issue, many students would appreciate a vending machine in the Early College building.

While this seems like a reasonable idea, it is controversial for some. It is argued that a vending machine would cause a distraction to students, and would be used irresponsibly. The Russell building, a building that many students have class in, contains multiple vending machines available to all students.

During various times of the day, students are seen going back and forth to the vending machines to get snacks during class. While most teachers don't mind students using the vending machines during free periods and in-between classes, it is seen as disrespectful to leave class and return with vending machine food. Most students would disagree with this statement and claim they are responsible enough to monitor their time at the vending machine, but they have been disrespected time and time again.

Teachers have reported seeing students lingering in the Russell



An early college student using a vending machine

hallways. It would be helpful to have a vending machine in the Early College building, but teachers might sense a sort of distraction from students at the vending machines so often throughout the day.

But the early college vending machines would not be limited to early college students. Early college staff members could use them too! In addition to students and staff members being allowed to use the vending machines, the Early College could put the money they gain to good use. They could use this money to buy more textbooks, advanced equipment, better supplies and materials for our classrooms, and more. The suggestion remains. To even think about this change, a student would have to contact Principal Whittington and suggest a vending machine with good points.

Do you think it would be appropriate to place vending machines in the Early College High School building?

PACK OPINIONS

Apple Juice or Orange Juice:

Apple- 62.1%

Orange- 24.1%

Neither- 13.8%

Cats or Dogs:

Cats- 34.5%

Dogs- 60.9%

Neither- 4.6%

Chicken or the Egg:

Chicken- 29.9%

Egg- 39.1%

IDK- 31%

DCEU or MCU

DCEU- 17.2%

MCU- 82.8%

Favorite Season:

Fall- 44.8%

Summer- 17.2%

Spring- 7%

Winter- 31%

iPhone or Android:

iPhone- 81.6%

Android- 18.4%

Best Social Media:

Instagram- 20.7%

TikTok- 59.8%

Twitter- 5.7%

The Sensationalism of True Crime

Viviana Gardner

Seventeen victims. Murder. Cannibalism. Necrophilia. Jeffrey Dahmer was a monster who ruined the lives of many different people, whether it be the families of the victims or the victims themselves. Many people have taken an interest in this case, causing a rise in popularity for true crime. Unfortunately, a lot of those people have taken this to the worst extreme. The masquerading and praising of killers without a thought of condolences, consent, or consideration to the families sparks the question: "Are making shows like this morally okay?"

The popular streaming service, Netflix, released a short series titled "Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story", that highlights and reenacts the crimes of Jeffrey Dahmer - a killer who is thought to have zero sympathy for any of his sixteen victims. This series quickly found popularity on the platform and was in the "Top Ten" slot of the website for weeks. Many are outraged at the fact that Netflix recreated his violent crimes and decided to make the series into a form of entertainment instead of a source for information.

This portrayal of Dahmer's crimes has lead to people claiming that Netflix does not truly care about the people who were affected by Dahmer's crimes and only looked to make a profit without donating any part of the profits earned to the families. In addition to this fact, this show has also affected the victim's families. Rita Isbell, the sister of Errol Lindsey, a victim of Jeffrey Dahmer, spoke out about this during a interview with Insider. She claimed that the show was "traumatizing her over again" after viewing a scene from the show in which her emotional statement was given in court. Netflix has yet to make an official statement about this and many people

believe that this decision was made in extremely poor taste.

Not only has the show itself garnered negative traction for its indecent way of showing the killer's crimes, but some viewers of this show have begun to praise the killer. These people have decided to make "fanpages" dedicated to appreciating him and have even gone as far as to dress up as him. This type of idolization is extremely dangerous, as it can lead to the minimization of his crimes. Of course, this is not Netflix's fault, but it is definitely an issue that has resulted from the show.

The behavior of these people has gone on to offend many people and minimizes the severity of his crimes. When talking about true crime cases, it is imperative to handle the subject with care. The people affected in these crimes were real people with families, dreams, and futures.

Imagine having one of your closest friends or family members being brutally murdered and then having a large corporation make a dramatized series based off of the killer without your consent, and donating none of the profits to you or the other families that were affected.

After the commercial success of this series, people began dressing up and dedicating social media pages to the killer that ripped one of the people you cared about the most out of this world. How would you feel? Knowing that you'll never get that person back and the person who caused you all that pain is being praised without any sort of consideration being sent your way from the corporation that sparked all of this. After taking all of these facts into consideration, can you truly say that this form of true crime coverage is morally right?

PACK ATTACK

These are rants of PCSECHS students on everyday things.

"My biggest pet peeve is being given advice I didn't ask for."

"My favorite meal is rice with shrimp asparagus, samosa, and horchata".

"The best soda is DR. PEPPER ALL THE WAY"

"Legos are not just for kids"

"Taylor Swift is overrated"

"Barbeque chips are disgusting"



Bella Montesano participating in a blood spatter analysis

Helen Keller Was Lying?!

Temira Hutchinson

During quarantine, the rise of the app TikTok was evident. While the app was trending, there was a theory that the famous blind and deaf woman Helen Keller was lying about her disability.

After hearing Helen had flown a plane and wrote a book, many people took it as “Helen Keller was a myth” and that “it was an act that she was impaired”. Many people hopped on the bandwagon and continued the joke further, but others thought it wasn’t funny but rather ableist. Taylerris, a disabled TikTok influencer, explained, “Saying that someone can’t do something because of a disability or their body functioning differently than yours is ableist.” Taylerris is deaf and was offended because she can do everyday activities as Helen did. Being blind and deaf does not limit people to things. It is very believable that Helen Keller was able to write a book, communicate and have

awareness of her surroundings. She didn’t have two important senses, but she still had taste, touch and smell. Many blind and deaf people write books using ASL, braille and patterns. Helen Keller received help from aids when she wrote a book, which most people don’t know about. Although there is

controversy behind it, the joke remains a staple to TikTok. People frequently use the joke as a conversation starter or a way to seem quirky. I’m sure the quip will last and people will continue to make conspiracy theories about Helen and the disability she battled for years.

Name: _____

Helen Keller

Complete the crossword puzzle below by reading the above article.

Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

3. a form of writing blind people use to understand others

5. famous 'blind' and 'deaf' woman who wrote a book

6. a form of discrimination against disabled people

Down

1. a phrase meant to be humorous and funny

2. disabled tiktoker

4. a condition where one is not able to hear

7. a condition where one is not able to see

Are Birds Real?

Edgar Romero

Have you ever looked up at the sky to see a flying species circling over you? Or perhaps, stalking you at midnight on an electricity pole? Birds are a fascinating group of class Aves that have been roaming planet Earth since the beginning of time.

Although birds are fascinating creatures, have you ever wondered how creepy they are? Some people claim birds to be undercover tracking agents made by the government for patrol and maintenance purposes. According to the Everhart Museum, birds can be found everywhere on Earth. Not only does this support the idea of birds being surveillance robots, but it also means that birds were manually

constructed to endure every type of geographical condition.

For example, certain birds can endure hot, tropical temperatures, while others can handle freezing, arctic temperatures. Migration is another theory that concerns their suspicious behaviors. Migration is the exchange of locations due to inclement weather or seasonal changes. This could be some sort of logical brainwash the government manipulates us with to cover the real purpose of migration. In reality, migration could be birds switching places or “taking turns.”

The physical construct of birds also plays a role in this conspiracy theory. Birds are able to move around by flying which gives them an advantage on animals who stay on the ground. Their ability to fly could be a form of



Photo by Arianna Latimer

protection from being attacked, so they can stay alive to monitor the world.

Birds are everywhere on Earth. Their resistance to extreme temperatures, migration, and their physical construct could be part of a big act the government brainwashes us with. So, the next time a bird watches you from a distance, whether it’s from a McDonald’s rooftop or from a telephone pole at night, keep walking and DO NOT make eye contact.

Academic Validation: The Epidemic Among Students

Aniyah Perkins

Think back to a time when you failed a test. You had studied exceptionally hard for it, but you still managed to fail. Now think back on a time when you passed a test. How did you feel in each of those instances? Did you feel proud of yourself when you passed? Did you feel a need to tell someone about your achievement that day? Did you think that would make them think highly of you? When you failed, did you think that your parents or teachers would think less of you? The need or craving to be seen and thought highly of academically or “to be recognized as an individual” is called academic validation. Academic validation is a very real and important topic that needs to be addressed. It is something that many students struggle with, and to help with it, parents and teachers should work to be better support systems for students.

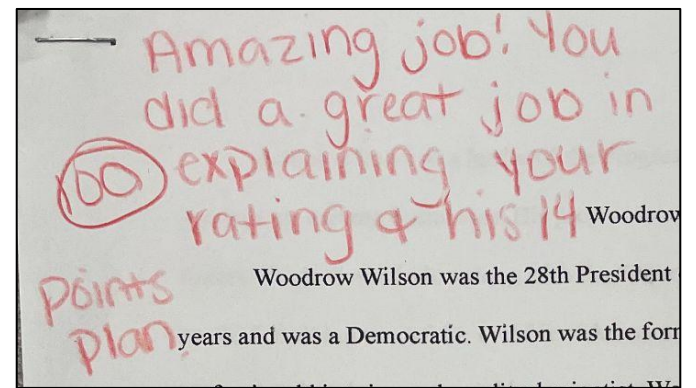
Students feel the need for validation because of pressure from teachers, family members and their peers. Because of this, some students internalize and hyper-fixate on comments by others, and they put pressure on themselves because they do not want to disappoint others. They do not want low grades to ruin or skew people's views of them. This craving for validation from others can put pressure on students' mental health. The Newport Institute in the article “The Mental Health Toll of Academic Pressure” says, “When young adults feel they must prioritize academic achievement over everything else—including physical health, positive relationships with peers and family, creative self-expression, and downtime to recharge—they pay a high mental health toll. Academic pressure can lead to depression, anxiety disorders, or high-functioning anxiety.”

Although the feeling of

needing to be validated by others plays a role, students often feel the need to validate themselves by setting high expectations for themselves. When those expectations are not met, it shatters their self-esteem. Popular social media star Emma Chamberlain in the publication “We Don't Talk Enough About Academic Validation” says, “I tied my identity and my worth to my grades and I would literally look in the mirror after getting a bad grade on the test and see an uglier person.” Academic validation is all about a person's mindset. One slip-up on an assignment and students go down a downward spiral thinking of that failure and letting it define who they are.

Some believe that academic validation can have a positive impact. Crystalyn Estabillo in the article “Academic Validation: Is It Really Worth All The Stress?” says, “Academic validation gives students the boost of self-worth and reassurance they look for in life. Many students say that relying on academics for positive reinforcement gives them the push to stay up endlessly studying, or working on assignments to ensure they do well on them.” This may be true, but the harder students work they can eventually become overwhelmed.

Adults often think that academic validation is a great motivator and improves students' grades. Adults are only enforcing and normalizing this stigma that it is okay for kids to feel burned out because that means they are “working hard.” In reality, it is counterproductive and is a harmful misconception. Monique Delagey, in the article “Addiction to Academic Validation is Harmful” says, “It becomes a constant search for identity that can only be satisfied through continuous praise from educators and results in a harmful mindset.” She also states that “Identity and worth can quickly



Paper by Vaughnessy Coffield

become associated with academic achievement in developmental years. This could mean that a parent or guardian showed more affection towards straight A's than D's and F's. Students who struggled in school early on often experience a lack of validation. According to Khiron Clinics, this results in insecurities as an adult. The “gifted kid burnout” phenomenon sometimes occurs for excellent students after they are done with school. This phenomenon appears later in life if a child experiences a lot of stress to live up to a certain expectation, according to the Davidson Institute.”

It is understood that parents and teachers may only be trying to look out for their child's or student's best interest and encourage them because they may feel like they're letting the student or child know that they hear them. Debra Kessler, in the article “Why It Is So Important For Parents To Validate Their Children” says, “When someone important to us understands us, their hearing us helps us to tune into ourselves and accept our emotions as real and meaningful.” That single statement may be what most parents and teachers think they are doing by giving children validation on their work. They want to make it known that they are there for the children and understand them.

By all means, academic validation was never something intended to be negative. The problem only begins when such validation is expressed in a way that makes it seem that grades are what should be the only focus. Parents can help their students succeed in healthier ways by reassuring them that they are loved and valued no matter their grades or test scores and emphasizing that their character defines them not grades. If these concerns are addressed and there is an effort to improve as a support system for students, this may be avoided in the future.

HOWLING ENTERTAINMENT!

IMPORTANT SCHOOL DATES

**Friday, February
24th:** Staff
Professional
Learning Day - No
Early College
classes.

**Friday, March
10th:** End of 1st
Nine Weeks for
Second Semester

**Monday, March
13th to Friday,
March 17th:** Spring
break - No classes.

Attending Early College: Your Best Or Worst Decision?

Caleb Spruill and Olivia Anglen

It's time to tackle the question on many student's minds. Do early college students regret their decision to join the program? Who better to ask than the students themselves? With the end of the fall semester approaching, a poll was sent out to over two-hundred early college students with that simple question. Students could respond in three ways: they regret their decision, they have regretted their decision in the past but no longer do, or they have never regretted their decision. The responses may be surprising.

A staggering 60% of respondents answered that they regretted their decision in the past, but no longer do. When asked to elaborate on her answer, Odalys G., a junior, wrote, "During my freshman and sophomore year I regretted attending the early college[;] I felt like I was missing out on my high school years. I was tempted to get out of early college and transfer to regular high school. But now that I am a junior I love the early college and am so grateful I didn't leave!" There is a strong pattern of upperclassmen saying to work through the transition of traditional school to early college in your underclassmen years and you will adapt to the environment.

Thirty-six percent of the respondents say they have never regretted their decision to join the early college; students mention supportive teachers and a positive environment. One super senior wrote, "All



Nyiesha Robinson and Chyna Sneed

of the staff and teachers treated everyone as a family and truly wanted us as students to succeed." On the other hand, some students express longing for what they lost to attend the early college. Sacrifice is a part of joining the early college and many think it is worth it, including one freshman writing, "I never regretted my decision to attend early college[;] however I do miss some of my friends from last year, and I miss having regular band."

The remaining 4% of respondents say they regret their decision to attend. When asked to elaborate, personal factors preventing success prevailed as the biggest concern. The vast majority of early college students think they made the right decision joining the program.

The burden placed on the students in early college programs has been at question since their creation. Gauging the students taking part in the programs is the best way to understand the issue. If the voices of students are silenced, then how are we supposed to be successful?



Joseph Rainey in a jousting competition at the Renaissance Fair

Social Media and Beauty Standards: A Parasitic Relationship

Madison Moyer

You're lying down on your bed, scrolling through Instagram and you see a beautiful model pop up on your feed. Her body is perfect, her skin is glowing, and everything is seemingly in place. You wish it was you, but it will never be.

Over the past few years, social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have painted unrealistic standards of beauty.

Beauty standards are not a new concept, but with the rise of social media they are becoming increasingly harder to achieve, and they are changing faster than ever. Social media creates false realities and praises them; therefore, that beauty standard seems like the only way you can be beautiful. Often, the people portraying these standards can hardly keep up with the

constantly-changing trends themselves. If it's not trending, then it must not be beautiful.

Common examples of this are the clean-girl aesthetic or being "that girl". Damaging standards such as these are not limited to women. Muscular and lean body types are promoted to young boys and men through Instagram, which has been proven to decrease their mental health at a tremendous rate. This phenomena is not often talked about, because when we think of social media-created beauty standards, more often than not we think of teenage girls.

When it comes to beauty standards, social media feeds off of them like leeches to humans. Social media cycles through these standards, making one or two of them popular for a short

amount of time and then continuing on to the next.

This toxic cycle can be detrimental to your health, and cause depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. When people strive for these standards they long to achieve, they become obsessed. It starts off with just changing small things in your life, and eventually, you will be determined to achieve a certain look or aesthetic. It is unhealthy and obsessive. Your brain will trick you into thinking that your life will not be fulfilled unless you look or even act a certain way.

This phenomenon has been going on for the past few years, but it has been especially bad with the rise of TikTok, and how quickly the app cycles out trends. What's trending this week will *not* be trending next week; no exaggeration. The fact

that people will poke fun at those who do not fall into the loop of these trends does not make it any better. In recent years, social media has poisoned the minds of teens, giving them negative perceptions of themselves.

For the sake of your mental health, next time you find yourself making comparisons between you and someone on the internet, remember it is also impossible to achieve; and that's okay.

It is evident that social media is a breeding ground for lots of insecurities. The micro beauty trends are impossible to keep up with, make you insecure, and are often very unattainable. Social media's standards for beauty are skewed, and it is okay that you don't meet them.

Elective Dilemma

Staff Editorial

We think that PCECHS needs electives for its students. Why? We believe that students should have the right to choose what they want to learn about in their school life. These electives can help students develop certain skills that are basic essentials to your everyday adult life. These essential classes can include Child Development

and Home Economics. This can help students discover newfound interests and encourage them to try something new. We also think that electives give students an opportunity to clear their mind after back to back classes. Electives can also be essential to high school students' everyday life because electives can be something that students can look forward to because they get to

interact with their peers more often and can actually influence them to actually come to school more than our regular core classes. Although we are offered electives such as ACA, Band and Orchestra, there are flaws within these choices. Students are not given a choice about what electives that they will take. Not only are we not given a choice, but ACA is only available to

sophomores in the second semester. This takes away the opportunity for students to explore and further develop their interests. Band and Orchestra are great electives to choose from, but these are the only elective options that we have. We are grateful for the opportunities that we have, but we would like to have more!

Teenage Angst: Dealing with Mental Health and School Life

Karli Hollis

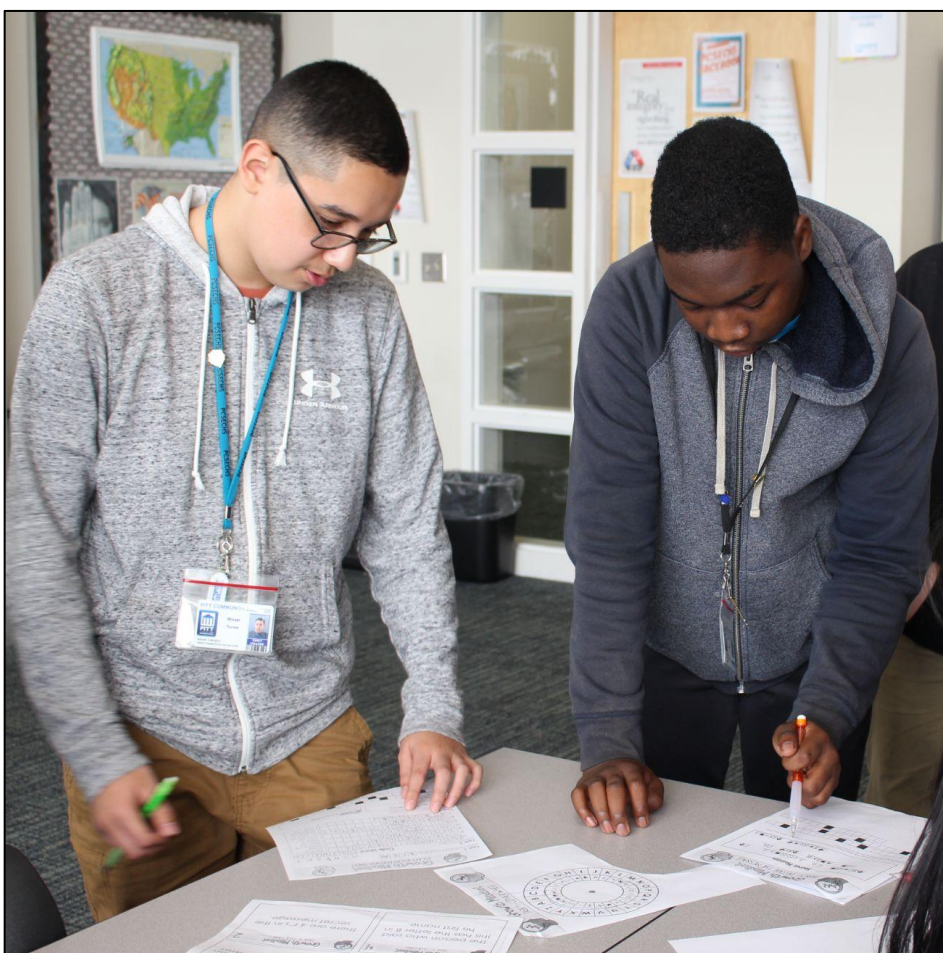
No one ever said being a teenager was easy. In fact, it's pretty dang on hard. Think about it. Your body is growing and changing, sending your hormones into a spiral of self-pity and devastation. One moment you're on top of the world and the next you want to crawl into a hole and fall into a death-like sleep. Add mounds of schoolwork, social activities, pressures of college, academic validation, friendships and relationships, family matters, sports, and after-school clubs... no wonder we're moody.

But you're not alone. You are only one in a billion teenagers who struggle with their mental health, self-discovery, and just life in general. In fact, according to Adolescent Wellness Academy, one in three teens in the US suffer from at least one mental health disorder. That's including anxiety, depression, OCD, eating disorders, and all the other mental obstacles one must battle just to simply keep breathing.

It's not easy.

Being a teenager is stressful and sometimes heartbreaking. This is the most prominent time in our life. We are figuring out who we are, what we like, the kind of people we want to be friends with, our passions and obsessions, and our path in life just to name a few. It doesn't help that many of us have added family pressures set on our shoulders or even peer pressure that makes us want to forget about it altogether because, at the end of the day, what's the point?

But like I've said, you're not alone. After talking to a few willing students at the Pitt Early College, I've



Early College students working on a group project

found some pretty helpful advice that might just give you the push you need to keep on trudging.

Olivia Anglen, a junior at the Early College, opened up to me about her journey and the support she was able to find within our school community. Anglen talks about how she initially put a lot of pressure on herself coming to the Early College like many of us can relate to I'm sure. She talked about the intimidating environment full of expectations and curves. But eventually, she realized all is not as bad as it may seem. When asked about our teachers here at Pitt, Anglen described their individuality and acceptance of students from many backgrounds. Each teacher is different and that's what makes it so amazing. Anglen talked to me about getting to know all the teachers and the accepting and welcoming environment they create for students. "It can be anxiety-inducing at first," says Anglen. "But as you move along, you get more comfortable in understanding who you are and finding who you want to be."

Anglen also talked about the pressures we students tend to put on ourselves when it comes to grades, especially in our college classes. But it's also very important to find balance within your life. School is important, yes, but so is your mental health. It's not easy being an Early College student by any means, so allow yourself room to breathe. You certainly don't have to be perfect.

I also talked to Anglen about her journey of self-discovery and she was more than happy to open up about her experience within the school. "It's okay to be open at the school," Anglen said. "It is a safe environment even if your home environment is not safe. The teachers are diverse and open. There is always someone to support you. Even upperclassmen can be a place to find support. You shouldn't fear hiding and being yourself at school."

It is understandable that many teenagers are afraid of being true to themselves for fear of being rejected, harassed, and in some cases, even abused. But one place you shouldn't be afraid of is school. Pitt Early College has worked hard to become a loving and accepting environment for students of all backgrounds. As Anglen mentioned to me, "School is really open. There are students of all genders and sexualities. We are women-based, queer-based..etc. Everybody gets along. Everybody knows everyone. And we all know each other's story."

At the end of the day, it's incredibly important to remember who you are and remember that you are not alone on this hormonal roller-coaster of teenage life. We may all walk different paths in life and choose different friends and have different interests, but one thing we all have in common is that we're in this together (whether you want to be or not).

Book Recommendations

Karli Hollis, Christiana Moore, Aniyah Perkins, and Arianna Latimer

Karli's Recommendation:

Book title: "For the Wolf" by Hannah Whitten

Genre: Thriller/Romance retelling

Review: Dark and twisty, "For the Wolf" takes the reader on a haunted retelling of "The Little Red Riding Hood." Two enemies forced to join forces in order to defeat the crippling darkness seeping in and threatening to destroy everything they've ever loved. With a dangerous forest with a craving for blood, a second daughter sacrifice, and a wolf that appears more man than wolf, this wild retelling will take you on a journey like no other before. "A forest in your bones, a graveyard beneath your feet. There are no heroes here."

Christiana's Recommendation:

Book title: "American Royals" by Katherine McGee

Genre: Romance and Alternate History

Review: Immensely heartwarming, with multiple characters who have their own story to tell. Very well written with unexpected twists towards the end of the trilogy. Katherine McGee was able to incorporate real-world problems in a fictional world. In this book, each character faces many challenges that include:

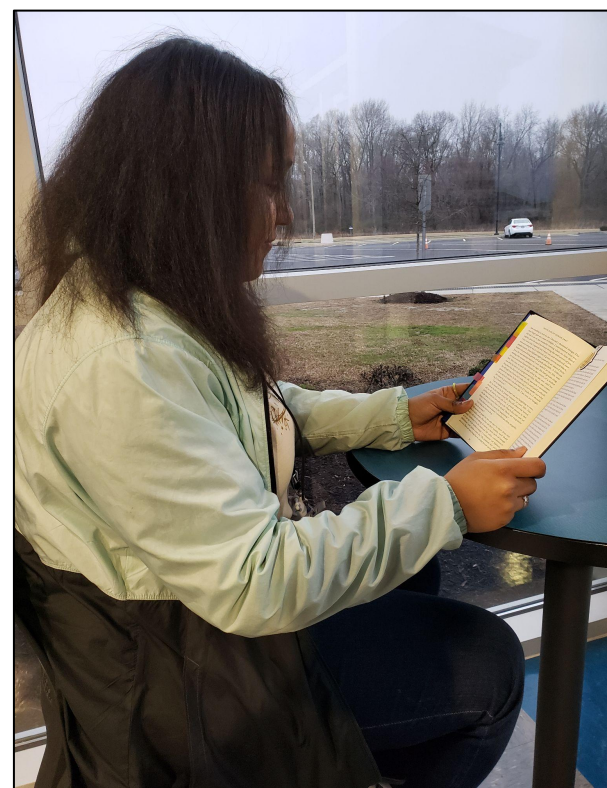
arranged marriages, party girls, and trying to fit into the status quo that was once given to you and fitting in. This makes you believe that you really are in the story. The structure of this book was written perfectly. Each chapter is written from each character's perspective. The book is definitely a page-turner and I would recommend it to people who definitely love a good twist or a good romance.

Aniyah's Recommendation:

Book title: "Cinderella is Dead" by Kalynn Bayron

Genre: Fantasy

Review: "Cinderella has been dead for two hundred years. I've been in love with Erin for the better part of three years. And I am about two minutes away from certain death." This book is very inspiring. Kalynn Bayron does an amazing job showing how young girls can choose their own destinies despite what's chosen for them, not caring what the world and everyone around expects from them. For Kalynn to write a character as brave as Sophie who goes against the norms and chooses not to conform to society's brutal reality despite what could happen is truly motivating and



A student reading at Early College

inspirational. It is truly a good read and it is highly recommended.

Arianna's Recommendation:

Book title: "In the Wild Light" by Jeff Zentner

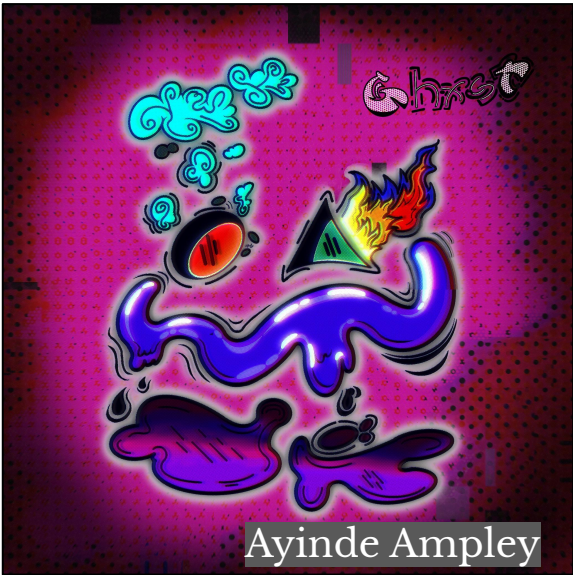
Genre: Young Adult Fiction

Review: A great book about friendship and finding your place in the world. Two kids from a small town in Tennessee make a scientific discovery that finds them presented with more opportunity than most in their hometown have ever seen. One is the definition of genius, the other is still smart, but believes his abilities pale in comparison. Together, they live through challenges and triumphs, joy and immense grief.



Artists’ Den

<div>“O you beautiful one”</div> <div>Malek Hadwan</div>	<div>“Society”</div> <div>Caleb Spruill</div>	<div>“I May Not Know”</div> <div>Hilton Clayton</div>
<div>She is as beautiful as one could be, Her smile is brighter than the white sun, She talks wisdom as if she owns foresee, One should oblige to the wide things she shun, And one should be a servant when she pose, Why would you not when you were just a thing? She brought you up and cared as if she owes, Don’t you dare treat her as if she is hing, O queen, do you want me to fetch the moon, That’s a righteous one who serves their beloved mum, As for the ugly one, spank with a spoon, The mother won’t bear and will only hum, Bless be the one who in your beauty mull, O mothers know that you are precious full.</div>	<div>We all sit around in propriety, Wondering how to pay the bills, What is wrong with society? The few that act like a deity, Watch us like fish with gills, We all sit around in propriety. Everyone wants to stay in gaiety, But what is needed to do so is pills, What is wrong with society? The powerful promote sobriety, But that is not what kills, We all sit around in propriety. Popularity is notoriety, Yet we need it to host our thrills, What is wrong with society? Our prescribed duties invoke anxiety, And we can’t harness our skills, We all sit around in propriety, What is wrong with society?</div>	<div>There are many things I may not know Things that the wispy hands of my mind cannot grasp Things that have never metastasized to the muscle behind my emerald-green eyes I may not know how $y=mx+b$ I may not know why the caged bird tends to sing I may not know why a tattered heart can cling I may not know how much wood a woodchuck would chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood I would know these things if I could I may not know why the moon has a dark side I may not know why man has a dark side I may not know where candle wax goes when it burns Or how often the tables turn I may not know what to do Or what tomorrow holds I may not know why flowers bloom Even in times of gloom Or how many stars are in the moonlit sky Or even why I often smile when I cry But I do know this I know your smile tore the veil around my heart I know when I was in your arms I didn't fall apart I know every moment I've spent with you is a treasure inside my mind Polished and smoothed to its prime I know watching you walk away shattered me to my core And I know there's no one I've ever loved more</div>



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