Fall play promotes discovery of one's own potential and acceptance of different worldviews

By ELENA SAVIANO
Assistant news editor

Crowds of students, faculty, parents and friends eagerly took their seats in the Black Box theater, the intimate stage set between three rows of seats on either side. Audience members chattered excitedly as the lights flickered and the show began, instantly transporting them into another world.

From November 7-10, Poly’s Upper School theater students performed Simon Stephens’ The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime based off the novel by Mark Haddon. The play focuses on Christopher Boone, a 15-year-old with a suggested autism spectrum disorder, and his quest to uncover the culprit behind the murder of his neighbor’s dog, Wellington. As the story unfolds, the audience is captivated by an emotionally challenging narrative about youth, family, acceptance and forgiveness.

The play is packed with moving scenes and littered with powerful messages that collectively required weeks of hard work and dedicated rehearsal to perfect. The actors immersed themselves in the world of the show, meticulously focusing on every detail of their characters to ensure a near-perfect performance each night. The actors immersed themselves in the world of the show, meticulously focusing on every detail of their characters to ensure a near-perfect performance each night.

Senior Cole Swanson, playing the role of Christopher’s father Ed Boone, said, “This show stretched me and my fellow actors to ensure a near-perfect performance each night.”

Swanson and his fellow actors immersed themselves in the world of the show, meticulously focusing on every detail of their characters to ensure a near-perfect performance each night.

The Lily Project.

See page 2.

Distinguished architect visits Upper School

By SARAH BURKE
Staff writer

Whether it’s pictures of The Last Bookstore in Downtown Los Angeles or the Rainbow Steps in Silver Lake that are scattered across countless feeds, social media has undoubtedly changed the way buildings are created. On October 6, Poly’s Global Initiative Program (GIP) hosted Alice Kimm, a distinguished architect of the firm John Friedman Alice Kimm Architects (JFAK) and Poly parent, to discuss architecture in a world shaped by social media.

In addition to being one of Southern California’s leading architects, Kimm is a prominent architectural educator, having worked as an adjunct professor and Director of Undergraduate Architecture at the University of Southern California.

Kimm’s lecture focused on “selfie culture’s” effect on architecture. She discussed the internet’s ability to contribute to a more global understanding of the world and its power to spread pictures on a large scale.

The rise of Instagram and other social media platforms has contributed to a shift within the architectural profession. As Kimm reflects, “[Architects are] aware that people are looking for spaces they can document themselves in… as we design, [we have to think] about how spaces can be reduced down in scale so they can be appropriated via social media.”

Though more Instagram-friendly buildings mean better photos, it can come...
Diversity Council

By MEGAN HA
Staff writer

Diversity Council junior leaders Claire Gallagher, Bea van der Velde-Kraft and Nick Richard-Craven recently facilitated a discussion centered around race and identity at Poly.

During the Shake Up, students participated in an activity with Skittles aimed to bring awareness of diversity within their individual circles. Each colored Skittle represented a different ethnicity, and students were asked to put Skittles in a cup representing people close to them, including their teachers, doctors and friends.

“We wanted to create an open environment for our peers to share how diversity, or a lack thereof, has impacted their academic or social lives,” commented van der Velde-Kraft. The Shake Up was meant to broaden students’ understanding of their surroundings.

“I think students became more aware,” remarked faculty advisor Ashley Greene. “I think some people noticed that we sometimes gravitate toward people who are like us.”

Moving forward, the Diversity Council plans to address other issues at Poly involving race, gender, sexuality and religion, working closely with the faculty to foster a community that celebrates diversity and promotes multiple voices and perspectives.

In response to recent hate crimes in American society, senior Jewish Student Union leaders Emma Wenberg and Victor Swezey led “Understanding Anti-Semitism,” a discussion on the impacts of such attacks. Though the Shake Up was originally intended to focus on the Israel-Palestine conflict, Wenberg and Swezey decided to refocus their discussion on the effects of anti-Semitism in America and the relationships between American Jews and Israel.

The Shake Up began with students discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and America’s role in it, watching a video about Evangelical Christians that support Israel and delving into the reasons for their involvement. The leaders analyzed the effects of diplomatic decisions made by religious groups and state actors on the formation and political trajectory of Israel. The rest of the time was spent discussing attendees’ opinions on the conflict, what obligation (if any) American Jews have to condemn Israeli settlerism and how Israel fits into a global context.

“Beyond providing a safe space for the Poly community to reflect on the troubling rise of anti-Semitism in America, I felt it was important to help people look with a critical lens at both American support of and criticism of Israel,” Swezey reflected.

Looking forward, S.H.E. Nicaragua hopes to create a blog where female identifying students at Poly and in Nicaragua can have discussions.

In addition, the club is supporting The Lily Project’s newest program: Wise Girls. Wise Girls, an after-school club in Grenada, aims to create a safe space for girls in order to inspire them to continue their education.

“While we do learn some about women’s rights in the United States, I think that it’s important to broaden that lens and take into account what’s happening to women across the world,” said Grether.

Fall Play

Continued from page 1

at the expense of both visitor experience and thoughtful design. This trend, referred to as “monumentalism” by Kimm, means guests become preoccupied with getting the perfect selfie at a building, losing sight of the building itself and the people who work inside.

“In the rush of the school year, most Poly students complete countless class projects, many of them finished and then forgotten. However, when sophomore Maggie Grether and Olivia Schleifer began a service learning project about Nicaraguan women’s rights in Doug Jolly’s freshman World Cultures: Latin America course, they carried their efforts into the next year. Grether and Schleifer created Sexual Health and Education (S.H.E.) Nicaragua, a club dedicated to bringing awareness of Nicaraguan women’s rights to the Poly campus.

S.H.E. Nicaragua works in conjunction with The Lily Project, a Nicaragua-based organization that focuses on improving the quality of life for women and girls through health and education. The club recently invited Anielka Medina, co-founder and executive director of The Lily Project, to the Upper School.

During her visit, Medina taught a tenth grade Human Development class and a Spanish III class and spoke to students and faculty during lunch.

In the Human Development class, students made “Period Bracelets,” bracelets with different color beads corresponding to the days of the menstrual cycle. In the Spanish III class, Medina focused on the political climate in Nicaragua, discussing the history of dictators and the United States’ impact on the instability in Nicaragua.

During the lunch, Medina was joined by co-founder and executive chair of the board Susan Cotton, who discussed sexual education in Nicaragua as well as their future goals with Poly.

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In response to the lack of conversation around financial diversity, freshman Opal Hetherington and Upper School Director Jennifer Fleischer led “Financial Diversity at Poly” during this year’s first Advisory Shake Up.

Hetherington wanted to create a safe environment where her peers could speak freely about their views on socioeconomic diversity and learn about financial homogeneity at Poly.

She explained, “Conversations about all kinds of diversity are essential: racial diversity, gender diversity. Financial diversity is especially important to talk about because we don’t currently discuss it enough.”

Fleischer added, “For example, 25% of Upper School students receive some sort of financial aid. That number really shocked the students in the room. It was a good reminder that there are still a lot of things that people don’t know.”

Moving forward, Fleischer and Hetherington want to continue facilitating similar discussions. While they don’t believe that the topic is something that needs to be discussed daily, they feel that it is still important to be aware of socioeconomic differences in order to better foster inclusion in the Poly community.
One might think that, with our emphasis on tolerance and diversity, ideas and opinions would be freely exchanged here at Poly. But within our community too frequently casts aside opposing viewpoints as laughable or obscene, failing to ever truly confront the ideals it believes to be so ridiculous.

And really, I would be as fraudulent as the Flat Earth Society if I were to claim that I haven’t participated in the satirizing of political opinions I deem baseless, reprehensible or both.

However, my particular animus dismissal of opposing voices becomes a habit, when mockery becomes a tool to avoid discussion, when differing viewpoints—particularly those on garden-variety matters like taxation and foreign policy—are rendered indefensible, we as a community must move to change our methods of discourse.

In the lack of genetic diversity can pose a threat to the future of a species. Likewise, any given population of scholars must maintain sufficient ideological diversity in order to facilitate dialogue and force its members to refine their respective views, driving innovation.

At Poly, no matter how bitter the process may be, we must engage with our more conservative peers, hopefully challenging—rather than simply dismissing—those with whom we disagree.

As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote in his letter from the Birmingham Jail, “I like a boat that can never be turned about as long as it is covered up,” ideas of injustice and ignorance “must be exposed... to the light of human conscience and the air of natural opinion before [they] can be cured.”

Not only does our culture of homogeneity trade diversity for stark sameness, it also lowers the rhetorical standard for Poly’s opinion section.

Ideologically lazy, uninformed Democrats can scrape by on party-approved taglines and vague emotional appeals while our conservative peers are forced to defend their perspectives constantly.

This dichotomy means that conservatives benefit from daily rebuffs of their core beliefs, demanding of them a much higher degree of empirical argumentation and dynamism.

Meanwhile, allegedly open-minded members of our community, in their march toward scholarly oblivion, disregard these perspectives, denominating the “other” by misrepresented conservative views as necessarily radical and intolerant.

Conservative viewpoints are perceived less and less in their original form, increasingly corrupted by the very biases of our supposedly tolerant community.

Political diversity is so crucial to functioning communities, democratic and academic alike, that some provisions must be made to create discourse where it might otherwise be nonexistent.

Indeed, if only those that yelled the loudest or sounded the most urgent were heard, football fans and auctioneers would control the government.

I learn more from disagreeing with others than I do from agreeing with them. It’s easy for me to make this statement, but following through on it can be difficult in today’s excessively polarized political climate.

So now it’s up to you to read the rest of this feature. And really listen to them. You just might hear some ideas worth considering.

-Desmond Mantle

Sh o u l d we find middle ground with white nationalists or oppose white supremacy altogether?

What is the true goal of meeting in the middle? Most politicians toward opponents, where would we be as a society?

Of course, one can find common ground over innumerable topics such as food, music, sports and movies, but in order to ensure that the arc of the moral universe bends toward justice, one must stay true to his or her beliefs.

The pressure to compromise for common ground often outweighs support for resistance. But how do we find the middle between justice and injustice? How does one find common ground over reproductive rights or gay marriage when doing so means compromising your core beliefs and moral integrity?

Your political opinion is more than just abstract ideology. It reflects a world view that leads to policies with material consequences that affect real people. When you attack your position in order to get along with someone else, you sacrifice your ability to maintain honest convictions and advocate for a just society.

Becoming more comfortable with difference and disagreement seems more valuable than allowing your moral compass to go astray. Sticking to principles may alienate some peers, but in the long run, you will have many allies who will help you channel your moral integrity toward meaningful action.

Seeking the moral middle gives way to false equivalences that undermine justice and democracy. The in creasingly prevalent idea on both sides of the political spectrum of “good” on one hand and “bad” on the other hand perspective is ammunition for normalizing bigotry and hatred.

When Trump popularized the phrase against the Charlottesville riots, white nationalism suddenly gained traction. What—or, rather, who—is responsible for remaining in “the middle.” In reality, “the middle” means nothing at all.

Milo Woods

Worse yet, if I, along with my peers in the Opinion section, were to endorse this kind of ideological totalitarianism, some of the ideas aired in this very feature would not be read by a single member of our community; our opinions would effectively be censored.

Of course, this position would reduce the editorial space of The Paw Print to a mishmash of the views of the same handful of writers each year, elbowing out unrepresented voices at Poly: those of women, minori ties, queer folks and, undeniably, conservatives.

The Founding Fathers, in their drafting of the Bill of Rights, did not protect freedom of expression so we could tip toe around ideas that scare or offended us.

At Poly, we must attempt to rebuild the bridges that so many of us have already burned in order to create a community that better represents the political diversity of our peers and colleagues.

Michael Deschenes

also regularly attends Conserva tive Club meetings where I am Co-President. Michael and I do not share close political ties; he is a professional libertarian—but we do share the common bond of trying our best to work across ideological differences and come to a more profound understanding of the challenges our nation currently faces.

Our goal in designing this Opinion section—indeed, this very feature you are reading right now—has never been to elicit emotional responses or stir up anger. Instead, we seek to find nuanced, diverse opinions and share them with our community in the hope that every body can learn from what we print.

On a larger scale, I seek to promote a world where there are more relationships like the one Michael and I have. Even as young as I am, I can remember a time when politics was not the emotional beast it has become.

I remember people not talking politics so personally: they understood that there were good-faith views on multiple sides of the political quandaries of the day. In short, they engaged in civil discourse.

Yet we have moved into an era of orthodoxy. Perhaps more troublingly, that orthodoxy is not limited to one side of the political spectrum. So-called anti-fascist destroy property in an effort to suppress conservative speech. Radical conservatives surround themselves with conspiracy-theory-trafficking media and deny the validity of “liberal” fact-checking. Neither of these strategies is healthy for upholding the values of a democratic republic.

If the time for us to start valuing heterodoxy—we need to surround ourselves with disagreement, appreciate ideological dissonance and cherish dissent. Within the Poly community, I believe that means promoting greater acceptance of conservative and libertarian thought.

Non-progressive thought is not supported solely by white, evangelical, non-college-educated men.

It is a movement of people from diverse races, genders and levels of education. It’s time for everybody in the Poly community to look past the stereotypes of political factions and understand why people believe what they do.

You have already taken a step toward that goal by reading this article. So now it’s up to you to read the rest of this feature. And then go out and talk to someone who disagrees with you. And really listen to them. You just might hear some ideas worth considering.

-Desmond Mantle

General information

Contribution to the opinion page does not mean an endorsement by Poly of your views.

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A culture of affluence: our lack of socioeconomic diversity

By OPAL HETHERINGTON
Staff writer

As a current ninth grader entirely new to Poly, I spent the last few weeks of my summer worrying. Frantic thoughts filled my mind about whether classes be too hard? Will I fit in? Indubitably, these were the questions bothering many a new student; this anxiety was to be expected. However, my main concern was not one of my standing in that new school, but one of my status based on wealth. During the first few days of school, I found myself fretting over things such as my laptop of more caliber and my lack of a Hydro Flask. These are not things that should ever worry a student in a school such as ours, which practically markets diversity and inclusion, yet it has been an ever-present concern for me throughout the year; in this, I am not alone. In part, this feeling of exclusivity is due to the school itself. The constant extra costs not included in the tuition provide a barrier for those who cannot afford them. Outdoor education, for example, is supposedly a cost included in tuition. However, the amount of gear needed for some trips is somewhat excessive and certainly costly. Though there is some support for covering these costs, students can still have difficulty obtaining equipment. These hidden costs of attendance also include the purchase of a laptop. A $400 subsidy is given to students receiving 50% or more financial aid, yet this is clearly not enough for a high-performing laptop such as a MacBook. Of course, a MacBook is not a necessary item and nor is expensive gear; one can get by with a $400 computer and a cheap backpack, but this argument neglects the stigma that comes with having a relatively lower socioeconomic status in an affluent community such as Poly. Clearly, social status within the general Poly community is somewhat intertwined with socioeconomic status. The annual Report of Giving sent to each household lists people based upon the amount of money they donated to the school. Not only is this report divisive—I think it’s downright harmful. Though the report was for 2017, and my family did not donate last year, I could not have been included in one of the named categories. To achieve the lowest rank of donor, one must give $1,907, a figure completely out of reach for my family. However, my mom chose to make the generous decision to donate to Poly this year. Though this amount was not large, it was meaningful; it is not entirely easy for my family to support Poly financially. Yet this sacrifice felt insignificant when compared to the lists of people who donated thousands of dollars. Some donors have done this for decades. This experience is but a single drop in a large pool of moments when I have felt undervalued and uncomfortable at school simply because of my socioeconomic status. There is an unfortunate overall lack of sensitivity in the administration and financial aid program at Poly with regard to supporting students with different backgrounds. Being a part of such an affluent environment is already difficult, and these subtle incidents add to my already subconscious fear that I do not belong here. In my experience, students genuinely care about making Poly a comfortable community for all and making a diverse student body with people from a variety of backgrounds. Not once have I heard a peer express any negative about or to another because of their peer’s background. However, we all—including myself—should watch what we say. Before suggesting that your friend is-genocidal or asking someone why they don’t want to buy anything at Starbucks, put yourself in their shoes. Compassion and empathy are two key factors in making everyone feel welcome at Poly, no matter how well-off they are. Almost a quarter of students in the Upper School receive financial aid; we need to come together as a community to make this significant step forward in the perception of our school feel appreciated. The most essential element of promoting this diversity on campus is conversation. While discussing socioeconomic backgrounds can be uncomfortable, conversation is the most crucial factor in changing our somewhat exclusive culture at Poly. Ultimately, the impact is up to you. Your voice is the most powerful tool you have to make Poly welcoming for all. Reach out to your peers, administrators, and faculty. You have the power to make real change.

Save prospector statue at Cal State to preserve state history

By DUNCAN MCPHERSON
Staff writer

Last September, the students of California State University, Long Beach wrote a resolution that would remove or relocate a statue of a prospector from their campus. Prospector Pete, as he’s called, has stood on the campus just outside the Faculty Offices since 1967—only 18 years after the construction of the campus itself. But controversy over the statue flared up last year when this resolution was written. It states that the school should cut ties with the history of the Gold Rush era because the time period was characterized by the mass displacement and murder of the native Tongva people and that Prospector Pete, a representation of the typical miner depicted by Pete, cannot be allowed to stand where he has for decades—“that is to say, removing the statue would actually deny the facts that render the prospector like Pete problematic. It would allow the spirit of adventurous opportunism. California owes most of its early economic boom and urban development to prospectors like Pete.”

Moreover, the Gold Rush, as a whole, did amazing things for individuals as well as the state. For example, about 4,000 black Americans joined in the Gold Rush. Many had come to accompany their owners in 1849 before California became a free state, and once it was, those slave owners went back home with their slaves. But many of those slaves collected enough gold to buy their freedom. Jennifer Newton, a professor at CSULB’s Journalism and Public Relations Department, said in an email, “I think Prospector Pete is an important part of our school’s history. I think it’s important to know our history, the true history, and learn from it, become better people because of that knowledge, but not erase it.” That is to say, removing the statue is an act of historical censorship and would actually deny the facts that render the removal unnecessary. However, Pete must be removed, but they are part of history and should remain so that we can be reminded of them and learn from them.

For these reasons, the assertion that Proscopers like Pete are problematic and nothing more has more holes than a prospector’s pan. Considering the truth of the matter and the greater significance in moving the statue, as it sends a signal of condoning historical censorship, Prospector Pete should be allowed to stand where he has for decades—a as a mascot for the school and a symbol of how our state of California got its start.
Alumnus update: interview with Jayzen Patria ’91

Jayzen Patria ’91 returned to Poly this month as a distinguished performance and leadership consultant, keynote speaker and activist. Over the last 25 years, Patria has worked with Fortune 100 companies including Comcast and The Walt Disney Company as well as entertainment brands such as Bravo and Telemundo to develop brand foundations, build executive leadership and promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Patria has spoken at national conferences including TEDs, Creating Change, Models of Pride and most recently NBCUniversal’s Talent Lab, a corporate university he designed dedicated to seeking developmental, leadership and cultural solutions. At Poly, Patria founded the Upper School’s Gay-Straight Alliance (now called the Queer Straight Alliance). He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles LGBT Center, the world’s oldest and largest non-profit organization serving the LGBTQ+ community.

Miles: Could you talk about your time at Poly and how it has influenced your career?

Jayzen: Absolutely. I graduated in the class of 1991—I first came to Poly in first grade. One thing that I’ve always been appreciative of is a great, well-rounded education Poly provides its students in terms of being strategic thinkers and understanding the core canon of literature. Having spent 25 years working in the media industry, understanding the core stories that people have told over time is such a key piece in understanding the stories we’re creating today.

Miles: In working with big media brands, how are you able to assess their leadership needs, and what does leadership development look like?

Jayzen: Having run Universal’s Talent Lab and supported great executives in the media space, it’s about understanding that, regardless of industry, no matter how sexy things in Hollywood are, at the end of the day, business is all about people and relationships. Are leaders adept and do they have the dexterity to lead people in a way that they do their best work? How do they bring people on board with their vision and engage people to utilize their gifts and talents and achieve that vision, or even potentially co-create that vision?

The media companies that are the most successful have strong business acumen and great people-leader skills. That’s the new model for Hollywood. It’s about people understanding that it’s a creative business, with “business” playing an integral part in that definition. When you look at the great business titans in the media space, there are folks who look at being business people first and probably creative people second. Or they look at having amazing relationships and being able to lead great, creative people.

Miles: What have been some roadblocks in your career?

Jayzen: I would probably say that a roadblock for me in different times has been when people don’t see your value—when you’re trying to really demonstrate your value, and people don’t see what you can bring to the table. It’s been a good pivot point throughout my career to always make sure that you’re having to find places and you need to find people where your true gifts and talents really add value to what they’re working on and what they’re doing.

Miles: So from what I understand, you’re saying that if you’re doing the best work that you can, and people don’t recognize what you’re doing, then you should change your environment?

Jayzen: Absolutely. And that can be for multiple reasons. That can be that you’re really not a great fit in that role or environment, that could be that there’s unconscious bias from other people that make it difficult for them to see what you’re capable of bringing to the table or everything that you actually are bringing to the table. I’m a big fan of—especially in your career—viewing yourself as in control. Having coached people in corporations for a lot of years, I think that one interesting thing I see is that for some reason we [believe] that a company is supposed to do something for you or my manager is supposed to do something for me. You’re ultimately the owner of your own career. It’s all about making strategic choices as to what you actually want to do. What trade-offs are you willing to make to get places on your path, and when are you going to ensure that you’re in environments where you’re able to show up as your best and do your best work so that you get everything that you want.

Miles: As an advocate for equality, you champion diversity, specifically in the workplace. What, in your opinion, is the importance of diversity in leadership?

Jayzen: The reality is that the world we live in is so drastically different than even ten years ago or twenty five years ago or thirty years ago. We live in a society—especially in North America, in the United States—that is so ridiculously diverse. It’s more diverse than any other type of community that has ever existed. When we look at the way the world has changed, diversity, inclusion and belonging is what I’d call a cultural obligation and an economic opportunity for us. Companies who aren’t focused on that—the right thing to do and the right thing for business—are really missing the boat.

If we just look at some basic stats, right now in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Houston and Miami, if you are under thirty years old you are in a generation that makes up 50% of the workforce. The economic opportunity is there alone with our cultural obligation for people to be involved in the process and for companies to support the communities that they work in.

When I look at it, it’s really a formula. The reality is that when people feel like they belong, when people are engaged in the workplace, they’re giving more of their discretionary effort towards business results, and they’re more likely to stay in the workplace and more likely to refer more people to work for an organization. They’re doing all of those things that drive the bottom and top line business results. We have to start with, do we have representation and are we aware that our workplace may not actually reflect our consumer base or the community that we operate in? Then it’s really about, on a day-to-day basis, do people really feel included—meaning that people have a seat at the table—when we’re demonstrating inclusive actions and behaviors? And then ultimately, is the outcome that people feel like they belong? It’s not until we attain the belonging piece that we reach the result that we’re actually looking for.

Miles: How do you plan to continue your work in the future?

Jayzen: For me it’s about touching more people with a message around diversity, inclusion and belonging. And for folks to be able to hear my message around finding their authentic brand voice so that they can bring their full selves to work whether that’s with their community, work with their family or work in the careers that they choose.
Asian-American students reflect on recent Harvard affirmative action case

Compiled by SHA DESAI
Life editor

T he college application process is a challenging time for both my peers and me as we try our best to package and sell ourselves to schools of our dreams. We are told that our application needs to reflect who we are as a person—we need to stand out and be unique. I am seventeen years old and making decisions for my future. I am an Asian-American student born to immigrant parents. I attend a private college preparatory school in the San Gabriel Valley, and I’ve lived a life of privilege. None of these identifiers makes me stand out, at least not to college admissions officers.

So what does make me stand out? It isn’t my test scores or my GPA or my list of activities—many people have those, especially Asian kids. Apparently, it’s my quirkiness. I play with paint instead of a piano. Does that make me quirky? I’m no longer writing objective nature of evaluating an individual’s personality scores that are far lower than students Asian-American students receive person...
Girls’ cross country competes at CIF finals; Evan Hayes represents the boys’ team

By DAVID MATHIAS and BECKETT NEWTON

Staff writers

Poly’s cross country team was the last remaining sport in CIF for the fall season. This past Saturday, the Panthers traveled to Riverside to compete in the CIF finals race. The girls’ team looked to qualify as a team for the state tournament, and junior Evan Hayes sought to qualify individually. During an injury-riddled season, the girls’ team embraced the underdog mentality.

Sophomore Alessia Checcone echoed this sentiment, saying, “We didn’t know if we were going to make it to finals, but we did, even though we were missing two of our best runners.”

This mindset created a dynamic within the team that brought the girls closer together in the face of adversity, upon which they certainly leaned in the CIF finals—heading into the race, the girls’ team was ranked seventh, and only the top seven qualify for State.

Despite the doubts surrounding the boys’ ability to qualify for finals, Hayes performed spectacularly, and he contributed significantly to the boys’ overall success. At finals, he finished three miles with a time of 17:13.1 and placed 66th out of nearly 200 runners.

Filippone, another sophomore, also achieved a personal record with a time of 20:08.5 despite feeling under the weather, and Lucia Innocenti, a senior, was ready to step in their shoes and leave an impact on their own next season.

Girls’ tennis falls in CIF semifinals

By ANDREW DESCHENES

Staff writer

The girls’ tennis team’s phenomenal season recently finished at the CIF semifinals. Due to the Panthers graduating seven key seniors, the team will have a hard time adjusting to the losses. However, the strong showings this season from juniors such as Jackson Treister and Thomas McConnell help to ensure a softer transition into next season.

Despite successful regular season, football loses early in CIF

By BRENNAN SHIN

Student contributor

Poly’s varsity football team fell to the Palmdale Knights 35-7 in the first round of CIF playoffs, ending their season with a 7-3 overall record and league record of 2-1. Blowing out the competition in the first two games of their season with scores of 34-7 and 52-0 against Village Christian and La Canada, respectively, the Panthers were off to a dominant start. After dropping the next game to Brentwood 37-27, they bounced back to maintain their dominance as they continued their season without another non-league loss until the playoffs.

Despite the early exit, the Panthers were proud of how well the team fought the entire year as they surpassed most expectations—including a blowout win against rival Rio Hondo Prep (28-7). Senior quarterback Robbie Wilson credits the success they had to the overall team chemistry and effort with which the unit played.

Wilson said, “A huge reason for our success is the incredible team mates we had as well as an extraordinary coach. Everyone did a great job putting the team first, and there was an expectation that everyone would give their all.”

Due to the Panthers graduating seven key seniors, the team will have a hard time adjusting to the losses. However, the strong showings this season from juniors such as Jackson Treister and Thomas McConnell help to ensure a softer transition into next season.

Girls’ volleyball Division I runner-up

By ANNA MCCONNELL and ELEANOR VEURICH

Staff writers

The girls’ varsity volleyball team finished their season with two tough losses: one in the CIF Division IV finals and the other in the first round of the CIF State Division II tournament. However, the team ended with an impressive overall record of 13-2.

In the CIF Division IV finals against the Quartz Hill Rebels, the Panthers struggled on a number of fronts, especially playing in the high pressure of a championship game on an opponent’s home court.

In the first set, the Panthers were defeated by the Rebels with a score of 30-28 in one of the closest sets of their season. In the second set, the Panthers again held their own but were unable to finish, losing 25-23. Using their momentum to their advantage, the Rebels defeated the Panthers in the third set 25-16.

Head coach Katrina Damasco said, “It’s really important for me to say that we are not focusing on the loss because coming into the playoffs, we were seeded tenth, and to face the number one team on their home court—in the finals—was tough.”

Only three days later, the team faced Garces Memorial in the CIF State Division II tournament. The Panthers dropped all three sets, losing the first set 25-18, the second 25-21 and the third 25-16. The 3-0 defeat concluded the Panthers’ season.

Next year, the team will have to adjust to the absence of Olive O’Beirne and Alexis Papachan, both graduating seniors. Though the loss will be difficult, the team is in good hands under the strong leadership of next year’s seniors, including standouts Maggie Jameson, Zoey Mao, Ella Maio and Kate Salembier.

Regarding the graduation of the seniors, sophomore libero Debbie Hong said, “As usual, losing seniors is tough but I think we have good players ready to step in their shoes and leave an impact of their own next season.”

Despite impressive performance in league, girls’ tennis team suffers CIF loss

By BECKETT NEWTON

Staff writer

The girls’ tennis team’s phenomenal season recently finished at the CIF semifinals. Due to the Panthers graduating seven key seniors, the team won their momentum to carry themselves to the CIF semifinals, where they eventually lost to Huntington Beach High School 11-7.

The team swept the Prep League, winning all eight of their matches, as well as five non-league games. The Panthers’ impressive performance in league earned them a Prep League championship.

The squad maintained this high level of play throughout their CIF run. The team defeated St. Lucy’s Priory High School 13-5, Royal High School 11-7 and Hart High School 12-6 before finally losing to Huntington Beach, who went on to win the championship.

While the team hoped to win CIF as well, one of their goals was to go farther in playoffs than they did last year, when they lost in the quarterfinals.

Head coach Natalie Langan attributed their success this season “to the heart of the team had.” In addition, Langan noted, “The hard work they were willing to put into the matches was amazing.”

While the team’s season is over, doubles partners senior Tara Adakar and junior Caitlin Wu have continued their postseason run. They recently won the Prep League doubles tournament, and they, along with a Chadwick team, represented the Prep League at CIF Individuals on November 19, which included schools from all over Southern California.

Girls’ cross country competes at CIF finals; Evan Hayes represents the boys’ team

By ANDREW DESCHENES

Staff writer

The girls’ team looked to qualify as a team for the state tournament, and junior Evan Hayes sought to qualify individually. During an injury-riddled season, the girls’ team embraced the underdog mentality.

Sophomore Alessia Checcone echoed this sentiment, saying, “We didn’t know if we were going to make it to finals, but we did, even though we were missing two of our best runners.”

This mindset created a dynamic within the team that brought the girls closer together in the face of adversity, upon which they certainly leaned in the CIF finals—heading into the race, the girls’ team was ranked seventh, and only the top seven qualify for State.

Despite the doubts surrounding the boys’ ability to qualify for finals, Hayes performed spectacularly, and he contributed significantly to the boys’ overall success. At finals, he finished three miles with a time of 17:13.1 and placed 66th out of nearly 200 runners.

Filippone, another sophomore, also achieved a personal record with a time of 20:08.5 despite feeling under the weather, and Lucia Innocenti, a senior, was ready to step in their shoes and leave an impact on their own next season.

Despite successful regular season, football loses early in CIF

By BRENNAN SHIN

Student contributor

Poly’s varsity football team fell to the Palmdale Knights 35-7 in the first round of CIF playoffs, ending their season with a 7-3 overall record and league record of 2-1. Blowing out the competition in the first two games of their season with scores of 34-7 and 52-0 against Village Christian and La Canada, respectively, the Panthers were off to a dominant start. After dropping the next game to Brentwood 37-27, they bounced back to maintain their dominance as they continued their season without another non-league loss until the playoffs.

Despite the early exit, the Panthers were proud of how well the team fought the entire year as they surpassed most expectations—including a blowout win against rival Rio Hondo Prep (28-7). Senior quarterback Robbie Wilson credits the success they had to the overall team chemistry and effort with which the unit played.

Wilson said, “A huge reason for our success is the incredible teammates we had as well as an extraordinary coach. Everyone did a great job putting the team first, and there was an expectation that everyone would give their all.”

Due to the Panthers graduating seven key seniors, the team will have a hard time adjusting to the losses. However, the strong showings this season from juniors such as Jackson Treister and Thomas McConnell help to ensure a softer transition into next season.

Wilson concluded, “We had an awesome group of seniors that anchored every unit. Ryan [Khazra] led the receivers, Franco [Alonso] was a great runner, Henry [Ryan] on the defensive line, Jack [Stellwagen] and Sheldon [Williams] bulldozed on the offensive line and Jono [Xie] stopped the run. Sophomore Alessia Checcone set a course personal record with a time of 20:08.5 despite feeling under the weather, and Lucia Filipponi, another sophomore, also achieved a personal record with a time of 21:51.5.

Nonetheless, the team’s performance in CIF gave the underclassmen assurance that hard work yields visible results.

Because of the general youth on both the boys’ and girls’ teams, the leaders are already optimistic about next season.

Hayes reflected, “This year, we had a lot of good underclassmen with a lot of potential, and next year, we hope to transfer the unity we had this year, as well as our good work ethic, to next season.”
While he no longer can be seen walking Poly's halls, Griffin Carter '14 certainly left his mark on Poly athletics. As a three-year varsity starter on the football team and a four-year varsity player on the basketball and baseball teams, Carter dominated every sport he played throughout his career.

On the football field, Carter led the team to a 6-3 record during his sophomore year. He then followed that with an outstanding junior year, rushing for 1,105 yards and scoring 20 touchdowns on 103 carries. That year, Carter's 177 yards and five touchdowns against rival Rio Hondo Prep helped the Panthers finish the regular season undefeated. In the 2013-2014 season, Carter, a junior guard, led the Panthers to a third place finish in league with a 15-9 record. As the fifth-seeded team in CIF, the Panthers made it to the second round. In his senior year, Gri

Vanessa Christopoulos has not only handled the pressure but also excelled in her matches. Christopoulos played as second doubles team with her partner junior Anais Singh-Gee. The duo had an overall record of 13-2 and an 8-0 record in league play. Even though she is the youngest player on the team, Christopoulos is one of the most supportive and enthusiastic. Senior captain Tara Adarkar said, "Vanessa has always been an encouraging teammate, supporting us when we struggle and commending us when we succeed."

Rounding off an already impressive freshman campaign, Christopoulos was named to First Team All-League in doubles play. However, Christopoulos’ Prep League run came short as they lost to another Poly doubles team in league playoffs. Despite the loss, Christopoulos and Singh-Gee continued to play other Prep League teams, helping Poly to secure a top spot in the CIF rankings.

Though Poly was later eliminated by Huntington Beach in CIF semifinals, Christopoulos still has a bright future ahead of her. With much varsity and even CIF playing experience already under her belt, she can go into her next season with more poise, confidence and leadership.

Junior Saya Desai said, "I have loved getting to watch her play tennis this season and cannot wait to see her thrive and become an even better player throughout the rest of her high school career." - Marc Panosian

POLY VS. PREP BASKETBALL
Friday, December 14
in Poly's Girls' Gym
5:00 pm

The Panthers compete against the Rebels, who are ranked first in the Prep League.

POLY VS. PREP WATER POLO
Friday, December 14
at the Poly Aquatics Center
3:30 pm

Senior captains Lily Maechling, Shaya Naami and Ella Cornwell hope to lead the team to another Prep League title.