

# Mustang Spirit

Hear our voice.

December, 2021



Kayla Stennett performs in the Thriller flashmob.  
Photo credit: Sandeep Hanoojman

## Technology Concerns Challenge Students

By Ashley Bonilla

Although students are back to learning in physical classrooms, the school is still facing several technology challenges as it recovers from virtual learning.

English, technology, and even math classes rely heavily on digital curriculums which must be made accessible to all students.

“We have a digital curriculum that we are not able to efficiently produce, not to mention the district-wide testing programs that we are having difficulty utilizing for the majority of our students,” said Assistant Principal James Elder.

The school year started out slow because of the lack of computers. More than 1000 laptops were distributed last year to accommodate virtual learning. Yet, only about half of them were returned in full working order, several missing chargers.

“There were new standards and a new curriculum. The start of the school year was very slow. There were no computers or books to teach the curriculum. The students are now behind on lessons that they will be tested on later,” said English teacher Joanna Herring.

Many students are struggling because they don’t have access to the technology necessary to complete required assignments.

“It makes it difficult to be able to complete assignments that need to be done on a computer because you have teachers sharing computer carts. Assignments will have to be done at home, even though a lot of people don’t have internet access at home,” said sophomore Brianna Scott.

According to Elder, there are still more than 300 students who haven’t returned their laptops.

“Every day this year we have devoted so much time and effort to getting back where we were, but at this time, that is looking like a long-term project,” said Elder.

## Theatre Starts Year Thrill-ing Students, Plans Future Shows

By Sabrina Magarinos & Alejandra Pinarete

It was a Thriller of an afternoon recently when the theatre class presented Michael Jackson’s Thriller dance moves during lunch festivities.

Under the direction of the new theatre teacher, and former Mustang, Emilia Vizcarrondo (Ms. V), the Thriller Flash Mob danced its way through the courtyard dressed as zombies.

“It took like a week and a half to learn it,” said freshman Kayla Stennett. “My favorite part was when we walked out like zombies.”

Performing is just one aspect of theatre. It’s also a place

where emotions, characters, and stories are brought to life. And, it provides a safe space where students can express themselves.

“I had theatre in middle school, but it was all book work, no acting. Now, I like it because I can be myself and also be creative,” said Kayla.

Freshman Juan Garcia added, “When I first started, I was like ‘ugh, it’s going to be boring,’ like Shakespeare and stuff like that but overall, I’ve actually had a lot of fun because it isn’t what you think.”

During the rest of the school year, Ms. V plans on introducing different stories and plays from a variety of genres.

“I enter the year with ideas of certain things I want to cover, but then, depending on the students, I may have to change that up. We’re doing another flashmob too, but the kids are picking the song,” said Ms. V.

She’s been looking into opportunities to do small performances for the community as well.

“I really have a heart for performances in the community. For example I have to look into doing a performance for nursing homes.”

Aside from the theater class, the theater club meets every other Monday. For further information, see Ms. V in the auditorium.



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## Creative Student Entrepreneurs Turn Ideas into Income

By Sweden Martin

Although the pandemic closed down businesses, it also inspired students to turn their creativity into money.

Sophomore Chelsea Lacoste started Chelsea's Glam, which sells mink lashes, sunglasses and purses.

"The pandemic really inspired me to start my business," said Chelsea. "I was always wearing lashes over the pandemic, and I was so bored that putting them on was time that went by and wasted. So, I wanted to turn a hobby, my passion, into a business."

Senior Donovan Manragh makes customized denim that fits the aesthetic of this era. His first real sale came when a classmate saw him wearing his design. He liked it so much he had to make a purchase.

"It felt pretty good, the

thought that someone likes my products so much, that they would buy it, is a very good feeling," said Donovan.

Chelsea's first sale, or sales rather, happened the same day she launched.

"I felt very happy and supported," said Chelsea.

Her prices for mink lashes and sunglasses range from \$8 to \$15, while her purses are \$35, "very affordable," according to Chelsea. Donovan's prices range from \$35 to \$110.

"The more labor I have to put in or the more difficult of a job I have to do, the more it'll cost. I know the value of my work, so the price is pretty much just for how it's supposed to be," said Donovan.

Once they had established their businesses, they both developed ways to promote it.

"I had to research a lot about vendors and speak to people I didn't know to help get my business going," said Chelsea.

They both also used their friends and family, as well as social media to build a following.

I use Instagram and I also use business cards," said Chelsea. Lastly, in order to maintain their businesses, they've had to learn to juggle school and work, as building their business is time consuming.

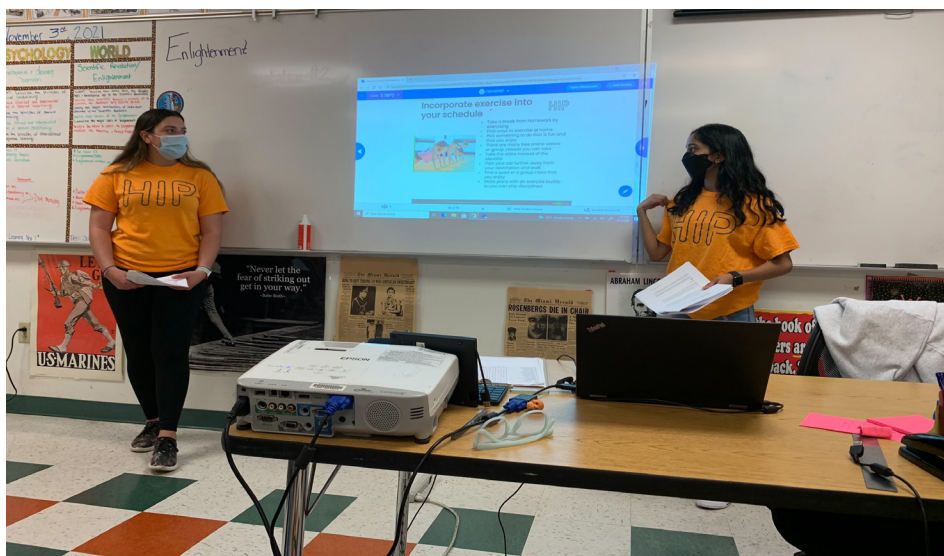
"Over the summer, it did cross my mind to quit, but I'm not a quitter. I'm going to keep going," said Chelsea. "It's not easy but it's maintainable, you have to pace yourself and manage your schoolwork. Once you have a plan, you're good."

Visit Chelsea's site at [chelseasglam.com](http://chelseasglam.com), and follow Donovan on Instagram @dmdenims.



## HIP Program Turns Students into Teachers, Promotes Health

By Tyler Kent



Health education has been part of the school's curriculum for years, but now, students may actually listen. This is the reasoning behind a new program called the Health Information Project (HIP).

Teens are often resistant to health education, so HIP uses students as teachers, allowing their classmates to feel comfortable opening up.

According to their website, HIP trains high school juniors and seniors to teach health education to their classmates. It focuses on giving presentations regarding suicide, stress, anxiety, bullying, depression, abuse, obesity, and mental health.

"I feel like since we're the ones doing the presentations and we

can really relate to what kids may be going through, that the students engage more with us and are more open to listening," said senior Whitney Noel, a member of HIP.

There are eight separate presentations that include the juniors and seniors going to select classrooms and interacting with the class.

The presenters play videos and explain serious mental and physical issues that creep up on them. They let the students know that they are heard and not alone.

"Being a member of HIP has shown me that I'm not alone in the crazy madness of being a high schooler, and as I am presenting to the freshmen, I am also learn-

ing more about myself. I feel more open to discussions about mental health and other issues," said junior Katricia Joseph, a member of HIP. "I have extremely high beliefs that HIP is making a huge difference in our school and I'm glad to be a part of it."

Putting the upper-class students in charge of the presentations also gives them the chance to develop leadership skills, classroom management, public speaking, and curriculum knowledge.

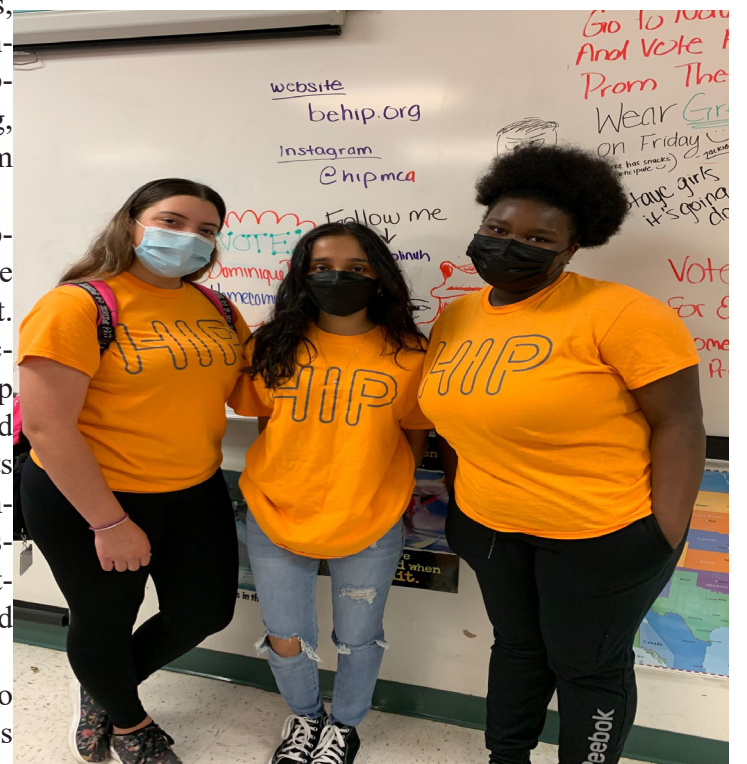
"I think the topics we discuss are very important. So creating activities that help them stay focused on the topic, gets them to really understand the message we're getting across," said Whitney.

According to [behip.org](http://behip.org), HIP's official website, more than 260,000 ninth graders have participated in the program. It is also a reliable health resource

website, providing easily accessible, relevant health information.

The HIP presentations create near pod slides and also a paperbased template to further get the message across to the students.

The presenters relate nutrients and diets to obesity and eating disorders. They also relate technology and other issues to bullying, depression, anxiety, and so much more.



HIP has made its way into 85 schools located throughout Miami-Dade and Broward Counties.



## InterClub Council Returns, Unites Clubs

By *Anaiyah Frederick & Kajol Rajpaul*

The ICC (Inter Club Council) held a meeting for the first time in two years to introduce the different clubs and discuss ideas they would like to present to the school.

Held in early October, ICC benefits many groups.

“The Inter Club Council is the umbrella for all school clubs where all agendas can be organized, and information disseminated in a timely manner,” said club sponsor Kevin Martin. “The ICC meetings allow for structure and uniformity within the school environment. Duplication of activities, fundraisers, etc. will be eliminated.”

Latinos in Action (LIA) sponsor Jessica Santos added, “We’re always going over the best fundraising ideas. We also want to make sure we don’t clash with anyone. So, if we come together and say, ‘hey, this is what we’re doing,’ we’re not going to step on each other’s toes.”

Fifteen clubs attended the first ICC meeting, and there were two representatives per club. Some clubs included LIA, Student Government Association (SGA), and the Black Student Union (BSU).

“We discussed how Mustang Fest was going to be run between the different clubs. We also discussed how we’re going to build money during our different fundraisers and the free prizes we would like to distribute to the guests that attend the event,” SGA president Emily Soto said.

Junior Nyael Jones attended the meeting representing BSU and the Women of Tomorrow, where she serves as event coordinator and historian respectively.

“ICC ensures that every club is effective in their fundraising and events. All the clubs come together and we can present a balanced calendar,” Nyael said.

Students who have any questions can contact Mr. Martin. ICC meets monthly in room 973.



Senior Annie Farooq speak at ICC meeting.

## Get to Know- Black Student Union

By *Omari Pierre-Rene*

Black Student Union (BSU) was established in 2017 by club sponsor Vanessa Wilson.

However, according to club members, many students are unaware of its existence, especially since the club was unable to host events during the pandemic. The group now has a full calendar of events and is open to everyone.

“Students of any race can be involved with BSU as we are just trying to educate people about the culture and bring fun to McArthur’s campus,” BSU president Melitia Sutherland said.

For example, the group recently hosted a Skate Night at Galaxy Skateway in Davie. They are also planning a Black history showcase, a brunch, and Soul Train Fridays.

“We are trying to make it to where you see or hear the BSU name on a fundraiser or an activity every month,” Melitia said.

“Our main goal, being that we are trying to make Black Student Union more known throughout the school, is to raise the school spirit and interact more with the students,” BSU treasurer Farrah Mccloud said.

The biggest challenge for them now is functioning in a Covid controlled environment trying to stick to its guidelines. This can have heavy implications for the club as fundraising is a main source of gaining money on campus.

“When it comes to fundrais-



Students and teachers celebrating during Skate Night, which was held at the Galaxy Skateway in Davie.

ing, I feel as though the school is stricter because of COVID,” Farrah said. “Then, certain things you cannot do as you did before. For example, food has to be prepackaged and it cannot be sold if it was not prepackaged. Activities are also harder to plan to because we have to keep in mind all the Covid guidelines the CDC enacted such as social distancing and keeping the capacity of certain spaces at a minimum.”

Even with these challenges, BSU wants to continue its mission and promote social conversations.

“Black Student Union represents unity, culture, and history. We also partake in the performing arts and have social conversations about what is going on in the world that people do not address. We rep-

resent the community, while also giving back to it,” Melitia said.

Wilson added that “the vision of BSU is to build positive self-esteem, build encouragement, gain friendship and create leaders, achievers and believers.”

So, even though planning certain events and fundraisers has become challenging, the group plans to move forward.

“It is challenging to raise school spirit this year. We need more kids who want to support their school, and more teachers being involved in spreading the word. When trying to raise the school spirit, we need the whole school’s involvement. If we have that, this school year can be a lot brighter,” Melitia said.

## Students, Staff Opting for Masks

By *Omari Pierre-Rene & Karina Exposito*

As covid-19 keeps developing, high school students in Florida can now decide whether they will continue to wear their mask on campus.

Meanwhile, according to a survey of faculty and students, most still consider wearing masks necessary to stay healthy.

“I don’t want to get corona because it is still running rampant now. So yes, I will continue wearing my mask during school because it has not yet disappeared. The vaccine does not stop you from getting it,” said senior Shania Brown.

She was part of the majority of students who said they would continue wearing their masks, even though some may question their decision.

“I feel like that was a very

inconsiderate idea (changing the mask mandate) because if you examine it, there are so many students here and you do not know what they are carrying in terms of illnesses,” said Shania. “Everybody has family at home, including the teachers who are obligated to come here every day. So to put our lives and theirs in danger is reckless.”

When school opened in August, a mask mandate was in place. However, Broward County recently reported that the amount of new cases reported had stayed at or below 3 percent for 10 days. As a result, the Broward School Board voted to eliminate the mask mandate and make mask-wearing optional. Some teachers still share Shania’s opinions.

“Yes, I’m going to continue to wear mine,” A.P (Advanced Placement) psychology teacher

Robin Roopchand said. “Only because I have unvaccinated children at home who can’t yet get vaccinated. So I’m trying to protect them.”

Meanwhile, there are staff and students who feel that wearing a mask should be optional.

“I feel as it is amazing right now because you should get to decide if you want to wear mask or not since it (Covid-19) affects people differently,” said senior Natalia Pares.

“At certain times during my day, I will choose not to wear my mask because it causes irritation on my skin, strains my ears, and I barely can breathe. And, I enjoy applying makeup before school. However, I will keep my mask on around strangers and expect them to respect my personal space,” Pares said.





## Poetry Corner

Featured Poet- *Christopher Hoyos*

### *Babylon*

To the top I'll rise to the top I'll reach.  
 Graduation on the top floor I simply cannot seek.  
 We are all climbing up to heaven tonight if we don't frustrate.  
 But some of us will simply collapse under the pressure from Babylon on this date.  
 Those who fall are kicked, they are abused for they simply have no place.  
 Continue climbing until you can't feel your feet.  
 Don't worry about your friends,  
 they'll simply hang onto you with a needle and sheet.  
 Lose your motivation and you'll start to slip.  
 Don't fall now or else you'll get kicked.  
 I never imagined myself falling.  
 I thought I'd reach the top floor in no time.  
 But here I am slipping on the cold, wet concrete.  
 Falling and falling I see the grades and those I'm jealous of at their peak.  
 Babylon why have you done me as so, am I simply that weak?  
 Falling isn't an activity I enjoy but I seem to be the best.  
 I can barely see heaven, but we all know it's barren.  
 The ground seems much more enjoyable at Babylon tonight  
 and it almost feels like my fate.  
 But I know I'm supposed to rise.  
 I know I'm supposed to be the best.  
 But how can I be when I'm all I do is stress and rest?  
 The first floor seems so close now.  
 I can see the achievements of others from here and I feel oh so jealous.  
 I wonder what would happen had I not fallen.  
 But here I am as the ground approaches.  
 It seems nice so I embrace it with open arms.  
 Here I go, my life decision brought me here yet why do I still fear?  
 It'll all be over soon just let it happen,  
 Just close your eyes and feel the cool air as the next thing you hear  
 is the bone-chilling sound of a failure.



## My Favorite Recipe



### Banana Nut Bread

#### Ingredients:

4 overripe bananas  
 2 1/4 cups of all purpose flour  
 1 small teaspoon of baking soda  
 a pinch of salt  
 3/4 cup of brown sugar  
 2 eggs  
 1/2 cup of butter  
 peanuts, walnuts, pecans and honey (optional)

#### Step 1

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and lightly grease or butter the pan you are going to use.

#### Step 2

Mash your bananas and beat your two eggs. Then in a big bowl, combine the flour, baking soda and salt. Also crush your nuts to be ready later on.

#### Step 3

In a separate bowl, stir together the softened butter and brown sugar. Stir in eggs and mashed bananas until it's all well blended.

#### Step 4

Pour the banana mixture and the nuts into the flour mixture. Stir it until it's all well mixed, then pour your batter into the pan. Sprinkle the crushed nuts on top (this is optional).

#### Step 5

Bake in the oven for 60 to 65 minutes (Check with a toothpick. If it's ready it comes out clean). After you take it out of the oven, let it sit for 10-15 minutes.

#### Optional step

Drizzle some honey on top and then it's all ready to eat.

-Ashley Bonilla

## Poul Fri Ak Banann Peze (Fried Chicken with Fried Plantains)



#### Ingredients:

Plantains, drumsticks, oil (any preference of oil to fry chicken and plantains), Haitian epis (Haitian seasoning), Lawry seasoning salt, Onion powder, garlic powder, chili powder, chicken bouillon seasoning pack, cayenne pepper, vinegar, lime, and salt.

#### Directions

##### Cleaning the chicken

1. Place chicken in huge metal bowl.
2. Season the chicken drums with salt and cover in vinegar.
3. Cut limes in half and squeeze the limes into the chicken covered in vinegar.
4. Place those squeezed limes into the vinegar also. (We are going to use them later)
5. Boil water in a large pot.
6. Skin the chicken then rub the cut lime on it.
7. When finishing this, the water should be boiling. Empty the vinegar out of the bowl and throw the limes away and dispose of the chicken skin.

8. Get the boiling water, pour it over the chicken, and let it sit for four minutes.

##### Seasoning the chicken (measurements not included. Just add until your soul tells you stop)

1. Use a good amount of the Haitian Epis. then add Lawry seasoning salt, chili powder, garlic powder, cayenne pepper, and a chicken bouillon pack.
2. When finished adding all these seasoning, you are going use your hands (your hands needs to be washed properly or use gloves) to mix all the seasoning together.
3. Let it sit and marinate while you move on to the banana peze (fried plantain).

##### Preparing the Banana

1. Peel the skin of the plantain.
2. Angle cut the plantain into equal pieces.
3. Fill a bowl with hot water and add salt and a tsp of vinegar. Set the bowl aside for later.

##### Frying both the chicken and plantains.

1. Pour oil into a pot and fill until there is enough to fry the chicken.
2. Now set the pot unto a stove and put the stove on a medium/high heat.
3. Wait until oil gets hot. You can test that the oil is ready by putting a wooden spoon into the oil and see if its sizzling.
4. When oil is ready, put the seasoned chicken into the oil and let it fry until it is brown.

##### Plantain

1. Put the angled cut plantains into the oil and let it brown on both sides.
2. When it is browned, remove it and get something to flatten the plantain. Ex. Tostonera, or the back of small clean plate.
3. When flattened, use the water we set aside to dip it in there and put it back into the oil to fry a little bit more (for about 3 to 5 minutes)
4. Once browned, remove them from the oil and remove excess oil.

Serve both the fried chicken and plantain hot and ready to eat.

-Omari Pierre-Rene



## Good Deed Winners



*Adriel Rodriguez*



*Alex Bermudez*



*Analise Guagenti*



*Ashton Belnap*



*Aydan Morla*



*Bradley Charles*



*Calisia Douglas*



*Cesar Obrera*



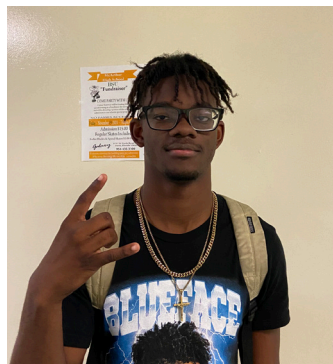
*Debora Chavez*



*Dedrick Davis*



*Dylan Deleon*



*Geoffrey Jones*



*Gerald Hernandez*



*Hennessy Robles*



*Jaylani Roman*



*John Kelly*



*Jorge Mora-Reynoso*



*Jude Appolon*



*Katricia Joseph*



*Lioana De Jesus*



*Paula Clermont*



*Riley*



*Ryan Jean-Louis*



*Savannah Phillips*



*Shamar Shaw*



*Shawn Francis*



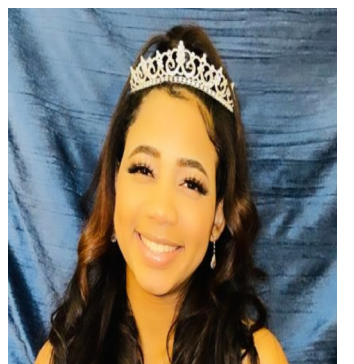
*Sunil Ragnauth*



*Victoria Lopez*



*Vincent Barney*



*Yorleyvi Rodriguez*



# Homecoming 2021

