

The American Dream

is
Dead



HOOVER HIGH SCHOOL

THE CHALLENGER

VOLUME 53

ISSUE 2

WINTER ISSUE

2020-2021



Letter from the Editor 4

News 6

Feature 10

Opinion 22

Sports 30

We are angry.

We are

heartbroken.

We are tired.

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THE AMERICAN DREAM NEVER EXISTED



Letter to the Editor *The Challenger*

This year has felt like it would never end, and I'm sure I speak for the rest of the staff when I say that writing this issue has been one of the last things on my mind. Especially when Black lives across the nation and the world are being taken needlessly by police brutality and acts of racism day after day. Immigrants have been separated from their families and placed in concentration camps. Once again, Indigenous people have been left with the bare minimum of resources to fight a pandemic. In America, it is constantly an endless cycle of violence against BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color) and though the new year is approaching,

the injustices will not end with the start of a new calendar.

Located in the most diverse school in Iowa, we at The Challenger are all too familiar with the BIPOC experience in America. The Challenger has never questioned whether Black lives matter, it has always been an indisputable fact to us that they do because Black lives are OUR lives.

After the recent murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Sean Reed, and many more, the need to fight for Black lives has become an "in-your-face" reality for the nation and world. America has finally come to realize that the "American Dream" has never

WE ARE ANGRY.

WE ARE HEARTBROKEN.

WE ARE TIRED.

existed for Black people.

Racism is a pandemic that infected the world long before COVID-19. No mask can cure the blatant racism that this country was quite literally built on. I don't know about you, but personally, I am tired of seeing people who look like me, look like my family, and look like my friends dying at the hands of white supremacy. But, staying silent on important issues will not keep Black people from dying.

2020 has left many of us gasping for air, feeling like it's more important than ever to share our stories, yet like the world is trying its hardest to silence us at the same time. So the staff of The Challenger did what we know best, we wrote. We decided to use our platform to incite change. As you flip through the pages of this issue, you will find many articles

addressing social justice issues that are important to our students.

Writing articles is already hard enough, but doing so in the midst of a pandemic and a race war has made it even more challenging. Our staff have persevered and worked tirelessly to bring you a magazine full of insightful articles.

Keep reading to find stories highlighting bodily autonomy (pg. 24-25), protesting rights (pg. 10-11), Latinx representation in universities (pg. 20-21), and more. As you read, think about the students behind the articles, think about the lives impacted by the social justice issues described here, and ask yourself: what will YOU do to create the change needed in this country?

ONLINE THEATRICALS

How is Hoover Drama putting on a production in the time of social distancing?

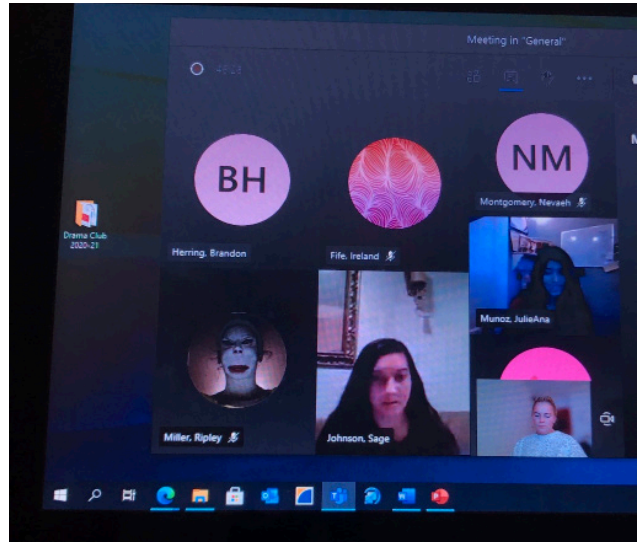
In unprecedented times such as these, the fate of school activities is far from certain. Drama is definitely no exception. How can we put on productions without an audience? How are we supposed to work together when we can't even be together? The drama department has found the answer.

Of course this year's production is going to be much different from plays and musicals in years past – but *how* exactly? Well, for starters, the play will be entirely virtual. The cast will perform and record on an application such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams then the production will be shown and watched similarly to a film. The play, titled 'Don't Be a Fly,' was written by senior Ripley Miller, the Thespian Board Vice President who has been involved in the drama department for seven years.

"I mean, it's virtual – it's going to be extremely different. Plus, it's more of a film than anything. It will be all prerecorded and there will even be camera work. I worked hard, film and script writing is something I love. So seeing something I spent a lot of time on creating come to life will be absolutely life changing and will truly let me know if this is the road I want to take the rest of my life," Miller said.

This play is something completely different from what audiences have seen before, and not just because of the presence of cameras and computers. This play is intense, dark, and powerful – not something an audience would expect from a high school production. Without spoiling too much, this is what members of the department have thought about this play.

"I am very excited about the play because this is the first time a student has written our fall performance, and I love the subject matter of the play. It's a little off the beaten path, but I think our audience will enjoy it,



A scene from a recent rehearsal of "Don't Be a Fly." Photo courtesy of Morgan King.

nonetheless," junior Mason Beckler, the Thespian Board secretary and technical crew head, said.

While the play is something new and exciting, it may not be for everyone.

"Something I have to add is more of a warning. If anyone is sensitive around the topic of suicide and death, then 'Don't Be a Fly' is not something for you to watch," Miller said.

These are confusing and frustrating circumstances for those involved in school activities, but the members of the cast and crew, as well as the department in general, remain excited and optimistic.

"I am most excited to have the opportunity to finally work on a production at Hoover. This year is very different from how I imagined it a year ago, so it will be nice to get some sort of "normalcy" by working to create a wonderful production," Director Morgan King said.

While it will be much different from the normal stage production, 'Don't Be a Fly' has great minds working behind it. The play is January 28th, 29th and 30th at 7 PM – keep an eye out for a link to get tickets!



CONNECT WITH HOOVER DRAMA:

TWITTER: @HOOVERDRAMA1

INSTAGRAM: @HOOVERDRAMA1

FACEBOOK: HOOVER DRAMA

DON'T BE A FLY

SHOWTIMES & DATES:

JANUARY 28TH AT 7 PM

JANUARY 29TH AT 7 PM

JANUARY 30TH AT 7 PM



ARE WE BACK



Last week became the first full week high school students were in person since March 2020. 100% online classes came to an end when the DMPS school board decided to bring back in person classes. This means students, teachers, and administration can all be in the building at once. Since more students will be in the building, there has to be precautions.

With students being virtual over the computer for months and doing everything electronically, you would hope there would be a relief when finally coming back into the school building.

Senior Tyson Luu felt relief for most students.

“I feel that transitioning to online to in person is good for some students because it’s a good way for them to stay on task in class instead of being distracted,” Luu said.

While students get a small relief by being in the building they still have to deal with the changes and precautions around the school due to Covid.

“Some big changes I saw was that if you were leaving the building, you have to stay off the school property until the next class starts. Another is the passing time. You are not allowed to stand in the student center like we used to,” Luu said.



K FOR GOOD?

Transition from 100% online classes to in person classes continue



Students aren't alone when it comes to following precautions and rule changes. The staff of Hoover were impacted by these changes too.

"My school experience since COVID-19 shut down schools in March of 2020 has been one of long meetings, support for students, families and staff as well as trying to navigate ever-changing rules, regulations, and laws," principal Sherry Poole said.

100% online classes could have some perks. For example, students can be at home the whole school day. But there also could be times where you just don't want to attend an online class.

"Attendance for our online classes for the most part was very good. Hoover students did their best. I feel that students really missed the social aspect of being at school. I also feel that students, like most people in the world, are very tired of being within their own home and want to get back to their normal lives," campus monitor Joe Salazar said.



Photos courtesy of Amber Hagler.

PROTESTING

101

A beginner's guide to protesting with attorney Nate Mundy.

**"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."
- Martin Luther King Jr.**

According to The New York Times, 50,000 to 80,000 people attended Black Lives Matter protests in Philadelphia, while 3-5 million people attended the Women's March in 2017. With all these crowds, many of which are surrounded by a police presence, anything can happen.

Mundy Law Des Moines practices in many areas including civil rights. Nate Mundy is the Owner/Attorney of Mundy Law Office, P.C. Mundy provides suggestions on how to stay safe and know your rights while protesting. One way you can protect yourself is by knowing your rights.

"Your First Amendment right to free speech is one of the most sacred rights to be prized in our country. That's the first one and its important because you have an absolute right to protest and merely being at a protest is not a crime nor anything you can be prosecuted for," Mundy said.



Photo courtesy of Mundy Law DSM.

Attorney/ Owner of Mundy Law Office, P.C.

Although this may be considered the most important right, there are several more to be aware of.

"The Fifth Amendment is the right to silence. An officer or anyone else cannot force you to answer questions or to make a statement. Period. If an Officer begins to question you or ask you for a statement merely state 'I am not making any statements or answering any questions until I speak to my lawyer.' and repeat until they stop asking you," Mundy said.

The next right listed is where an attorney such as Mundy would step in.

"The Sixth Amendment is the right to counsel. You have a right to an attorney at any phase of the interactions with police. Never get in a situation where you are alone with any police officers. State over and over



Feature | The Challenger

again ‘I request to have an attorney present,’” Mundy said.

Along with knowing your rights there are a few things to consider before attending a protest.

“Every person should be aware if they have any outstanding warrants for their arrest. If a person attends a protest and has an outstanding warrant, they can be arrested at the protest for reasons that are not related to the protest. You should also be aware of your legal status in the country. If you’re in the country illegally or if you’re in the country on some kind of temporary visa or other type of temporary status, you should be aware that an arrest or being taken into custody could jeopardize that status. You should also apply for a permit to protest or march if you plan on marching on a public street. Marching and protesting on public sidewalks or parks is allowed without a permit. Marching in front of or inside public buildings is also allowed without a permit,” Mundy said.

If you attend a protest, it is key that you know how to deal with law enforcement interactions such as being detained.

“Police have the absolute authority to detain anyone, legally or illegally. If an officer commands someone into custody, do not resist. You do not have a right to resist, even with an unlawful command,

WHAT TO

BRING:

- SIGNS**
- PETITIONS**
- PHONE**
- CONTACT INFO**

you can be detained. The challenge to the legality of the detention comes after the fact,” Mundy said.

“Repeat over and over a request to the officer. ‘Am I being detained?’ If the officer answers ‘No.’ to being detained then walk away. If you are being detained, you should only repeat the phrases ‘I do not consent to any searches.’ and ‘I am not speaking or answering any questions until I have a lawyer present,’” Mundy said.

Another thing you should know is what to bring with you and why.

“Any protest materials and literature or signs information, petitions, etc. You should have the ability to record (photo, video, audio, etc.) the protest or any other type of police interactions your fellow protesters may have during the protest. You should have the contact information of people you’re protesting with and the people who are organizing the protest. This will allow you to have the resources to find witnesses if you’re arrested during the protest that can provide testimony in your court proceeding,” Mundy said.

If you choose to attend a protest, stay safe while knowing your rights and how to interact with law enforcement. Do your research beforehand and remember to wear a mask.

RESOURCES

**- PRAIRIELANDS
FREEDOM FUND**

**- ACLU MOBILE
JUSTICE APP**

**- NATIONAL LAWYERS
GUILD KNOW YOUR
RIGHTS BOOKLETS**

- CAMPAIGN ZERO

Generational Differences

How the ever-changing world impacts generations.

Generation (noun) definition: a group of individuals born and living contemporaneously (Merriam-Webster).

In other words, a generation is made up of people that are born and living at about the same time. You may recognize them as Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials or Generation Z. These are all the different groups that currently make up and represent the different ages.

The Senior Vice President of Research at Quester, Andrea Joss, works directly with generational research by taking an annual deep dive into the experiences of each generation in order to help companies better understand their consumers.

“One thing that I always try to look at when we’re examining generational differences is what is truly driven by the cultural experiences that shape this group, verses what’s expected of the age they are or the life stage they’re in,” Joss said.

The contrast between generations and their general ideologies can cause a lot of tension within age groups. Junior Lilly Johns, a part of Generation Z, sees the generational divide within the United States.

“With the current issues in this country, it seems like you are on one side or the other and discussion and compromise seem to be harder than usual. I think this can affect relationships between generations a lot. I’ve seen multiple people my age drift from grandparents or older people in their lives due to issues like this,” Johns said.

Generation Z seems to be a big topic of conversation when it comes to generational

What are the different generations?

Traditionalists or Silent Generation: 1945 and before

Baby Boomers: 1946-1964

Generation X: 1965-1976

Millennials or Gen Y: 1977-1995

Generation Z or Centennials: 1996-now.

differences. As the youngest generation, the older generations have placed a lot of pressure and expectations on them.

“Some of the research we did showed older generations describing Gen Z as tech-savvy, self-centered and lazy. Which felt so unfair because they describe themselves as tech-savvy, stressed, and diverse. And I see so much passion for justice from them,” Joss said.

As things advance and change in the world, the generations change right along with it. For example,



the large shift in technology advancements in even the last decade, younger generations such as Generation Z and Millennials have grown up with technology and are more familiar than the older generations.

According to a 2018 Dell Technologies study, 98% of people 16-23 say they have used technology as a part of their formal education.

The common agreeance of Gen Z being ‘tech-savvy’ has been proved by the large number of young people with access to technology. According to a 2018 Pew Research Center survey, 95% of 13-17-year-olds have access to a smartphone, and a similar share (97%) use at least one of seven major online platforms.

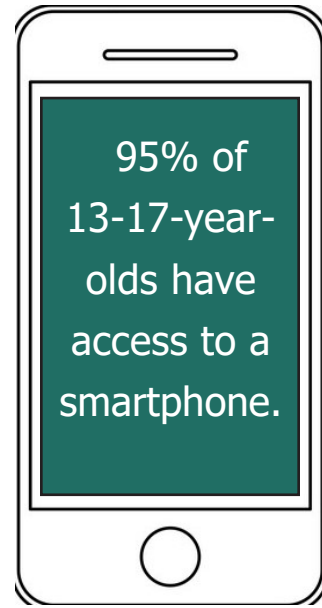
“I have heard a lot of negative things about how Gen Z has grown up in a world where things like smartphones have always existed and social media is a crucial part of growing up. I think there’s a lot to be said about how that can have a negative impact on kids’ minds,” Johns said.

As a generation, Gen Z’s high use and access to technology weighs a lot on mental health. A survey conducted by the American Psychological Association found the members of Gen Z are significantly more likely than other generations to report their mental health as fair or poor.

“All of this access to technology, along with social media, pressure from just their age, school, and trying to figure out your place in the world is a lot. And we see that while online connection is easier for Gen Z, true personal connection may be more difficult. Luckily, it looks like the age group is also really aware of ways to cope and mindful of mental health and is not scared to talk about it,” Joss said.

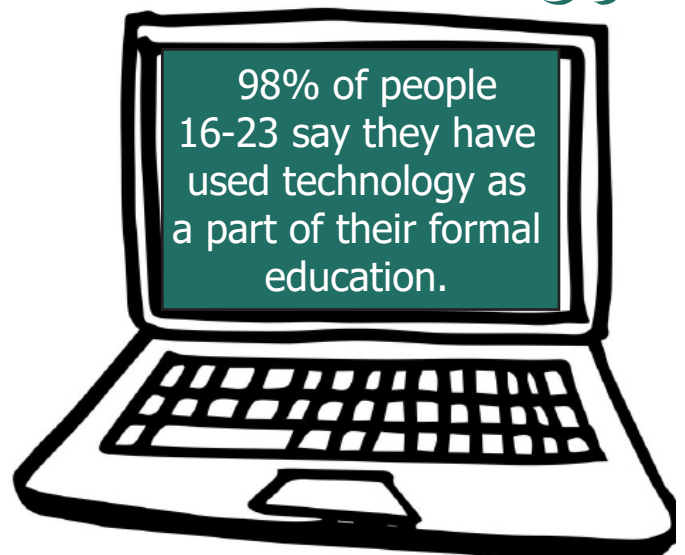
Johns points out the positives of her generational cohort and believes Gen Z should not be underestimated.

“We are the most accepting of the differences among people then any generation yet. I think that trend will continue as more generations come of age. Gen Z is on track to be the most educated generation so don’t disregard us just because we’re young,” Johns said.



Data courtesy of Pew Research Center 2018.

Gen-Z & Technology



*Data courtesy of Dell Technologies 2018.
Image sketches courtesy of VectorStock.*

Creating Community

How the Urban Leadership class at Central Campus creates change in the Des Moines community.

If you've been searching for a sense of community, an artistic outlet, or a place to discuss activism, the Urban Leadership class at Central Campus is the perfect place for you. The Urban Leadership program is open to all high school students within Des Moines Public Schools that are interested in activism and art.

"Urban Leadership is a discussion and project-based course focused on the intersection between art, identity, and activism. We have four major units (Indigenous & Immigrant Rights, Black Lives Matter, Women's Rights, and LGBTQ+ Rights), and produce two major events each year (Teen Summit and Summer Fam Jam)," Urban Leadership instructor Emily Lang said.

Lang has been teaching Urban Leadership at Central Campus for eight years and is the co-creator of RunDSM and Movement 515. Even with Lang's experience, she has learned valuable information from her students throughout the years.

"Personally, I have evolved as a

human and activist immensely in the last eight years, and it's beautiful to watch our classroom community speak their individual truths as well as develop a greater sense of empathy for marginalized communities," Lang said.

As well as learning and creating, students in their second year of Urban Leadership teach what they have learned about social justice to younger students in Des Moines Public Schools. Hoover junior Caliyah



Junior Caliyah Saxton performs at Teen Summit in February. Photo courtesy of DMPS Flickr.

Saxton is in her second year of Urban Leadership and she describes teaching younger students as her favorite part of the class.

"My favorite part about the second class has been the kids. They are so sweet and so smart. We don't think about how much young kids absorb at their age and how that effects their thinking when they grow up. So, teaching them about body positivity, loving each other, and equality is so important," Saxton said.

Lincoln High junior Dana Idan is also in her second year of the class. To her, the community and family that is created in



Urban Leadership class photo featuring Idan and Saxton. Photo courtesy of Idan.

each class has allowed for her growth as an individual.

"Personally, I don't usually enjoy speaking on my experiences and opinions, but this class helped me to realize that in order to grow as an individual and a community, you must apply yourself. I try my best to educate the uneducated. I also always allow others to feel safe around me to share anything they need to," Idan said.

While getting good grades is top priority for most classes in high school, Urban Leadership is about the impact that students can make within the community and the world.

"Urban Leadership students are often at the forefront of rallies, marches, and protest, from organizing city-wide walkouts after Trump was elected, to the newly formed Black Liberation Movement organization that was co-founded by members of Urban Leadership," Lang said.

Students continue to learn through experiences in the community about the importance of using their voice to create change.

"I believe to be able to live comfortably, there has to be change. For there to be change, you must realize that there is a lot wrong with the



Student artwork. Photo courtesy of DMPS Flickr.



Feature | The Challenger



world. Educating about social justice is the first step,” Idan said.

Saxton believes that Urban Leadership has helped prepare students for what comes next in the world of social justice.

“I would absolutely recommend this class to anyone. Not only do you gain new knowledge, but also a family and community that is there for you. It’s important for students to know about social justice issues because we are the next generation and as these issues continue to affect so many of us, we will play a big part in trying to solve these



Students cheering on their peers at Teen Summit. Photo courtesy of DMPS Flickr.

issues,” Saxton said.

There are plenty of opportunities for students to get involved in the empowering programs that have come out of Urban Leadership.

“Students can join Movement 515, our after-school workshop series, or find another organization that speaks to them, such as Please Pass the Love, Al Exito, Monsoon, Next Gen, Black Liberation Movement, I could go on and on! It’s important to find a community you feel a part of or in service of, no matter what it takes,” Lang said.

Former Student Spotlight: Linda Brown

Linda Brown is a 2016 Hoover graduate that found her voice in Urban Leadership. Today, Brown is still connected with the Urban Leadership community through Movement 515 and RunDSM.



Linda Brown

“In the Des Moines community, I am a teaching artist for DMPS students by way of RunDSM and am a part of the culture department with the Des Moines Black Liberation Movement, serving as an organizer and board member.

Urban Leadership changed my life. It saved it. It guaranteed the truth while other classes reinforce. Urban Leadership centered marginalized voices and has led me towards always learning and always growing! Social justice issues contrast and fight against the evil in the world that be right under our noses or fingers... it’s important because ensuring the truth is ensuring the future. Go read a book! Educate yourself outside what your school can provide! Learning is not limited to the four walls you all go through every day,” Brown said.

new year, new teachers

Round two of getting to know some of Hoover's newest teachers.

Q: How do you feel about teaching virtually?

A: "It's just not the same as in the school. I miss the interaction and joking around with my students."

Q: What's your favorite thing about teaching/being a teacher?

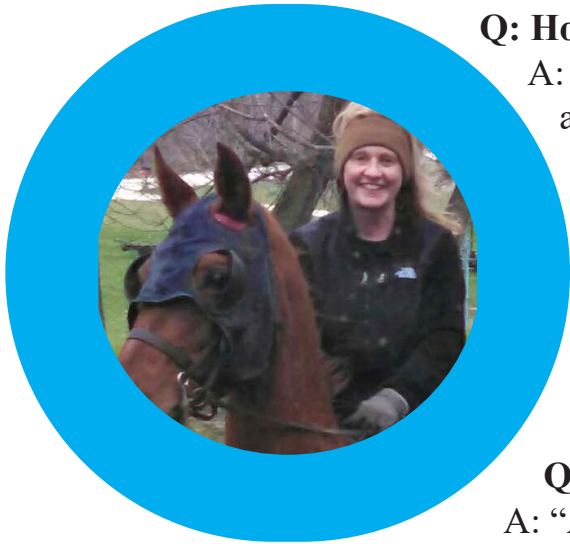
A: "My favorite thing about teaching is meeting new students and enjoying their sense of humor in the classroom."

Q: What are some of your hobbies/interests?

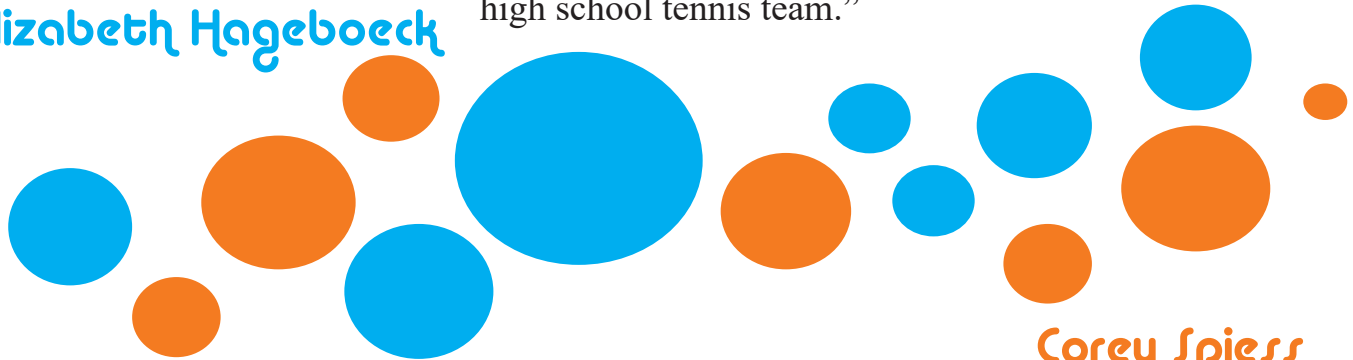
A: "My hobbies are horses, DIY projects, walking, religion, and my favorite is spending fun time with family."

Q: What is a fun fact about yourself?

A: "A fun fact about myself is in high school I was MVP on the high school tennis team."



Elizabeth Hageboeck



Corey Spiess

Q: How do you feel about teaching virtually?

A: "I found myself being easily distracted with teaching from home. I think some students feel the same way and that is why it is important to stay proactive while virtual."

Q: What's your favorite thing about teaching/being a teacher?

A: "I enjoy being able to work with students and to see the spark of realization when it comes to discovering and understanding what content is ahead of them."

Q: What are some of your hobbies/interests?

A: "Ballroom dancing, games, and cooking/baking."

Q: What is a fun fact about yourself?

A: "I competed in ballroom dancing for about five years."



ADMIN OF THE YEAR

Our principal, Sherry Poole, shares her thoughts on the title she has been awarded by the Iowa High School Press Association.

Describe the award you have won!

I was nominated for the Iowa High School Press Association Administrator of the Year Award. It is an award given to principals each year who demonstrate a partnership with young journalists and their advisor, and those who support their programs.

How do you feel about winning this award? Were you nervous?

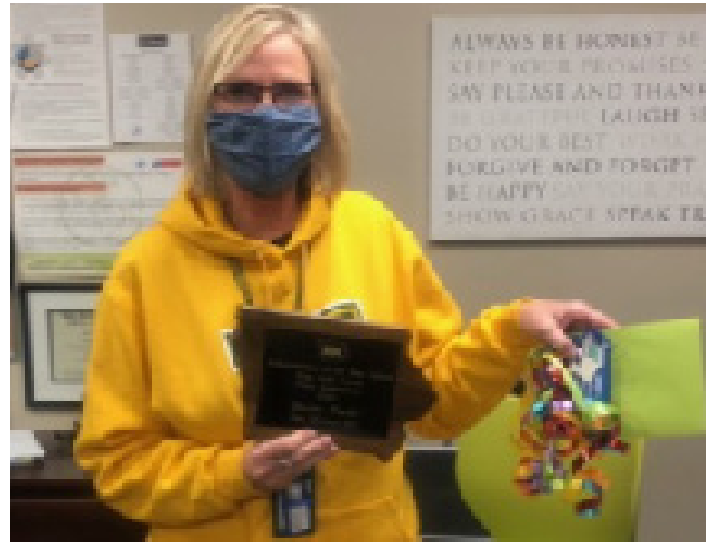
I was so humbled to win this award. I felt that the award really goes to all of you and Mrs. Hamilton who are doing the amazing work.

Why is this award special to you?

This award is so special to me because it shows that school leaders, advisors/teachers and students, while working together with the same vision, can do remarkable things. It also shows me that I am valued as a principal by Mrs. Hamilton and the journalism community who took the time to nominate.

Why do you find journalism important?

Journalism is important in our schools because it is truly student driven and their passion shines through in the articles they write. They give perspectives that as adults, we often don't think about and it is their voice that truly matters. We need to make sure we empower all journalists to see the power written words have for those that read them.



Why do you feel that journalism is important for students?

We are lucky in that Iowa allows students to write stories freely and gives students the true opportunity to have freedom of the press which I believe respects students' judgments with their editorials and gives them autonomy.

What do you enjoy most about Hoover publications?

I love seeing Hoover through the lens of students. I read them cover to cover, word for word to better understand what students are feeling, how they are reacting to policies and world events, and get to know them better. I often make changes to Hoover because of their articles.

VISUALLY THRIVING

Following a Hoover alum through her professional life.

Thinking about after high school can be terrifying. As students, all we know is school and to get good grades for our future, but what happens after high school?

Many Hoover alumni have successful careers and adult lives after high school. Class of 2016 graduate Lily Smith is a great example.

After graduating Smith went to the University of Iowa. At college, Smith participated in the newspaper. While she did just about everything in the paper, she gravitated towards visual journalism. Now, Smith is a visual journalist at the Omaha World-Herald.

Smith's professional journey started at Hoover. Smith always found herself in the Hoover newsroom when she wasn't supposed to be in there. She had a passion for writing but, hadn't discovered her true passion for visuals. She was

encouraged and pushed by the Hoover staff for the better.

"Werth and Hamilton were the people who encouraged my love for visuals; both of them were so willing to push me," Smith said.

In college she met a friend that pushed her even further. This friend inspired Smith when she probably needed it the most. This friend is the person that made Smith realize her love from photography.

"So, as he and I became closer friends, and he eventually pulled me into being on the photo staff at The Daily Iowan. I was hooked. In the beginning, I was a terrible photojournalist. I wanted to get better so badly, and that motivated me when it may have scared others away. I felt like he knew so much about how to make good pictures and I absorbed as much knowledge from him as I could while we were coworkers," Smith said.

The biggest part of her success

was the challenges she put upon herself. She has overcome many things to get her a job in the field she wants. She took the path to the life she wanted, and she is happy where she is.

"I've been through a lot to get to this point, and I know I'm only in the beginnings of my professional career. But at the end of the day I love my job, the things I've learned and the friends I've made along the way. I can genuinely say I have my dream job," Smith said.

Smith has the job of her dreams. She worked hard for everything she has, and her success can only be blamed on her perseverance. Looking at journeys, such as Smith's, it is inspiring to know that someone can leave Hoover and be successful.

"Perseverance is the name of the game," Smith said.





Smith immediately after the last Hawkeye football game against Illinois at Kinnick Stadium last November. Joseph Cress Photo

"I WOULD LATER LEARN IN COLLEGE THAT THIS CULTURE SHOCK AND FEELING OF NOT BELONGING IS CALLED IM-POSTER SYNDROME, AND IT IS UNFORTUNATELY SOMETHING THAT MANY MARGINALIZED STUDENTS EXPERIENCE."

- ARIADNA DELGADO- RUIZ, 2016 HOOVER GRADUATE



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons



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Fish Out of Water

The importance of representation for BIPOC students at a collegiate level.

Diversity is one of the most beautiful things a community can have. For as long as I have been at Hoover, I have always felt that diversity is a celebrated trait in our school's community and that it is what makes us stand out.

From our annual diversity fair and Global Gala to the different opportunities and experiences offered to minority students, it creates a space where we can feel welcomed and appreciated. Being surrounded by a variety of different cultures and lifestyles really puts into perspective just how diverse our city and district is. So understandably, the transition from a community like Hoover to one that may not have such a multi-cultural student population may be challenging for the students that are apart of that group.

Former Hoover graduate Perla Kim Carmenate shared how natural this type of diversity felt while in high school.

"As a student at Hoover, I did feel represented. So represented that I didn't notice it. Kind of like a fish living in water. The fish doesn't know it's in water or how much it needs the water until it's not in the water anymore," Carmenate said.

To her, the transition from high school to Iowa State University (ISU) was a complete "hot-cold difference."

"I didn't realize what I had when I had it. Diversity was celebrated at Hoover. And in other places like ISU, diversity and conversations on diversity are often muted or toned down. It's actually frustrating. At ISU, the process to get help if you differ in any way from the status quo student is jumping through lots of hoops," Carmenate said.

According to Insidehighered.com, "A study found that, when compared with states' proportions of Latino residents, Latino students are underrepresented at both community and technical colleges and at four-year institutions in most states."

This type of underrepresentation can create a massive effect on how Latinx students are able to view themselves in those environments. It contributes to the mindset of "Am I supposed to be here?" or "Will I even fit in with everyone else?" leading to a sense of uncertainty about belonging at a university.

"The scary thing is that these feelings of not belonging can cause somebody to drop out, because they feel like college isn't for them. I went from being an honors/AP student to

second guessing whether or not college was for me. I saw many of my high school peers drop out within the first year of college," 2016 Hoover graduate Ariadna Delgado-Ruiz said.

Delgado-Ruiz is a Mexican American student that recently graduated from ISU. She believes that there is a lot to be done for BIPOC student representation at the collegiate level. She believes it needs to start with university staff members that are equipped with resources to guide students of color.

"I was a DACA student when I entered college and found that very few people in enrollment even knew about DACA and what financial assistance was available for me. I had to find all of my resources myself because nobody was properly trained/prepared to meet the needs of a non-conventional student," Delgado-Ruiz said.

Although the lack of aid for BIPOC students is still an obstacle, Carmenate was able to persevere and discovered that she was not alone.

"I found people who could help students like me. I went to my college MLO, which means Multicultural Liaison Officer. They connected me to other people and resources that could help me" Carmenate said. "If anyone is considering college, remember that it is a privilege and you are now becoming a form of representation for your family, friends, and anyone else who resembles you. And you can always find the help you need wherever you go."

Receiving her degree motivated Delgado-Ruiz to keep pushing through the four years that she attended school. She encourages others with a similar mindset to keep pursuing their final goal.

"College is really tough for students with marginalized identities. It is difficult financially, emotionally and mentally. People say to go to college to get a degree so you can get a better paying job, and yes, that is part of it. However, I would argue that the most life changing part of college is learning about you and about the world. The sense of accomplishment you feel once you hold that degree in your hand is something out of this world," Delgado-Ruiz said. "You have defied all odds against you, you are not just a stereotype, you are not just a statistic, and now you can help others get to where you are. I did it, you can do it, and I am here in any way that I can help any of you. SI SE PUEDE."

THE AMERICAN DREAM

Who can truly live the “American Dream?”

Essentially, the American Dream is the idea that anyone can attain their own version of success through hard work. This “success” is typically defined by things like having a good job, a nice house, plenty of money, and so on.

Many people say that the American Dream is dead. For a multitude of reasons, people believe that the concept isn’t applicable to them, or that it’s an all-around false statement.

According to [yougov.com](#), only 54% of Americans see the American Dream as achievable for themselves, and 28% believe that it is unachievable. Around 9% reported that they did not believe in the American Dream at all.

Additionally, there are patterns to the types of people who feel that they can attain the American Dream versus those who do not. According to [gallup.com](#), white Americans (56%) are more likely than Black Americans (43%) to see the American Dream as achievable, and around 17% of Black Americans say that there is no American Dream. The same website showed that those living in households making \$100,000 or more a year (80%) are more likely to see it as achievable than those in households making under \$40,000 a year (61%), men under 50 years of age (73%) are more likely to see it as achievable than women under 50 (58%), and so on.

Notice how the data shows that minorities and other marginalized groups generally feel less optimistic about their ability to live the American Dream than majorities and the more advantaged. This is no coincidence. The systematic oppression that

many of these groups face plays a direct role in their likelihood of achieving the same amount of “success” as others. For example, according to [americanbar.org](#), women of color are 35% less likely to receive a referral for a job than white men. The way that American society tends to give less opportunities to minorities inhibits their ability to put in the “hard work” that is expected in order for them to become successful.

By definition, the American Dream claims that anyone, regardless of where they were born or what they were born into, can put in the work to reach a certain level of success. But can this ever really be true when certain groups are still placed at an inherent disadvantage?



Illustration by:
Rylie Meyer, Design Editor in Chief

What do Americans associate with the American Dream?

43.42% - Success through
hard work

17.61% - Equal opportunity

13.16% - Homeownership

11.67% - Happiness and
material comfort


10.88% - "Rags to riches"

3.26% - High employment

Data courtesy of GOBankingRates.

"The promise of the American Dream requires that we are all provided an equal opportunity to participate in and contribute to our nation."

- Charles B. Rangel, U.S. Senate



MY BODY, MY CHOICE

Today in the media things look very scary. We see the possible overturn of legal same sex marriage, church beginning to rule over state, conservative states thinking about making abortion illegal and many other things. I'm not sure if anyone has noticed yet but, most of our government officials are old white men. This is a problem for many reasons but, we'll focus on specifics.

When it comes to talking about providing feminine products for everyone, we hear radio silence from these and many men. None of them want to talk about the cycle that has to happen every month in order for there to even be a pregnancy in the first place but have everything to say when it comes to laws on the woman's body and her pregnancy. Oh, right the red sea that floods every month

is too gross to talk about.

Women should be the only one having a seat at that table. No one feels like they should point out that there are laws- as in multiple, - on women's bodies. THERE ARE LAWS ON WOMEN'S BODIES. If anyone thought to put laws on men's bodies that idea would be thrown out and called crazy.

It is important that people keep their body autonomy. What is body autonomy you ask? Well, I'm here to answer: According to RCHSD.ORG, "Body autonomy is the right for a person to govern what happens to their body without external influence or coercion." I can hear the pro-life argument already. "What about the baby's body autonomy?" The fetus doesn't have any conscious thoughts and is not a person in society. A fetus is inside the women and the mom will pick

what happens to it as it affects her and nobody else.

Abortions will not stop happening just because it is made illegal. It will be more harmful.

25,000,000
unsafe abortions
take place worldwide.

Amnesty.org

1 in 4
pregnancies end in
abortion
worldwide.

Amnesty.org

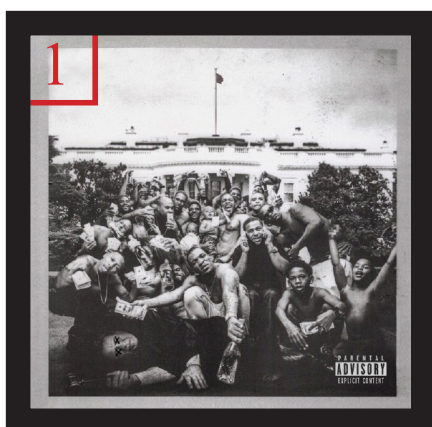


Top 5 Rap Albums of All Time.

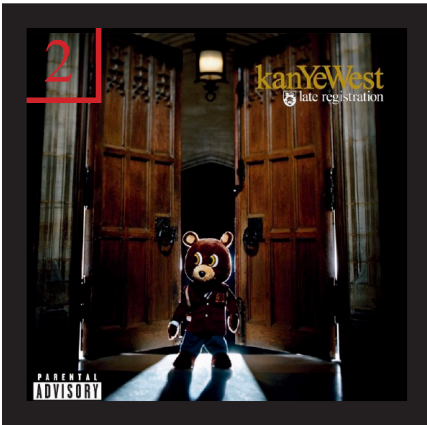
Rap Albums that Stand Above the Rest

Rap, a diverse multi-layered genre of music, has impacted the entire world in its short span of creation. Rap is diverse in its artist, overall sound and albums that come from the many sub genres. Rap affects all types of people and has a distinctive way of bringing people from all backgrounds together to share what they love about Rap. With that in mind, my friends and I decided to discuss albums. We all came to our own conclusions on what we each believed to be the “best” Rap albums of all time.

To rank these albums, we viewed many criteria such as level of creativity, overall impact on the world and music industry, production level, subject matter, substance of the album, sales, and longevity of the album. Each entry is a single album picked from our own personal top 5 rap albums.



"MY FAVORITE ALBUM OF ALL TIME IT IS TO PIMP A BUTTERFLY." junior Charles Walker said. To Pimp A Butterfly is a timeless classic. Kendrick cements himself as not only arguable the best rapper of this generation, but as one of the best rappers of all time! The album is a mixture of jazz, 808's, and modern hip-hop production. The album simultaneously highlights the black experience and gives us an introspective view into how Kendrick Lamar views not only himself, but what he has done for his people.



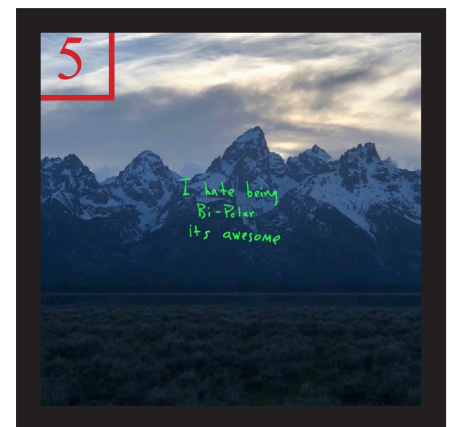
"LATE REGISTRATION TO ME, IS AN ALBUM THAT TAKES ME BACK TO THE PAST. IT MAKES ME REMEMBER MY CHILDHOOD WITH SONGS LIKE GOLDDIGGER." senior Amar Dzaferagic said. Kanye released a world-renowned classic with his sophomore album "Late Registration." The album excels in top tier production, with tons of live instruments and vocals. With Kanye's lyricism and his ability to highlight his passion for uplifting the black community, it's easy to see the beauty of this album.

"ALTHOUGH IT HASN'T BEEN OUT FOR LONG, 'PLEASE EXCUSE ME FOR BEING ANTI-SOCIAL' IS DEFINITELY IN MY TOP 5 RAP ALBUMS." sophomore Joshua Nichols said. Roddy Ricch steps into the rap game like a an experienced veteran. Roddy's debut album skyrocketed in popularity and reached heights that may have seemed impossible for the artist. With BIG hits like "The Box," Roddy finds his voice and style in mastering the newly found genre of melodic rap. Roddy Ricch puts his mark on the rap game and is here to stay. A promising artist for the future of



"REDEMPTION IS A PERFECT ALBUM TO ME. IT HAS A GREAT BALANCE OF GOOD STORYTELLING AND SONGS THAT ARE FIRE." senior Gabe Peterson said. Jay Rock manages to create a body of work that indulges into his life and reminisces over his past in Watts, CA. Jay Rock blends his album with so much variety that it has something for everyone. From songs like "OSOM" to "Rotation 112th," Jay Rock mixes his original sound with the rapidly growing Trap sound that has become a staple in Rap throughout the recent years and creates something nothing short of amazing.

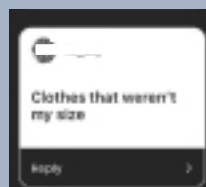
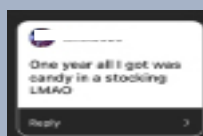
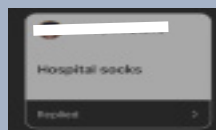
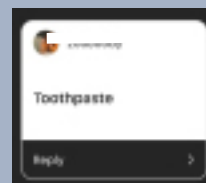
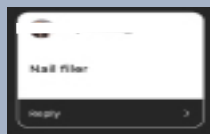
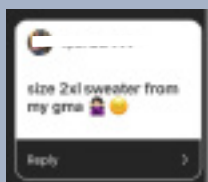
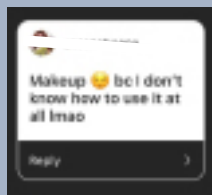
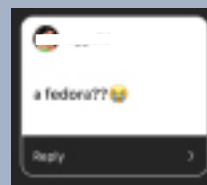
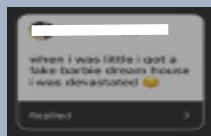
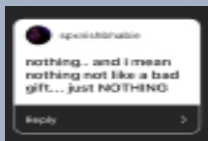
"YE" IS AN EXAMPLE OF AN ALBUM THAT HITS EVERY NOTE. IT SHOWS A NEW LAYER OF VULNERABILITY IN KANYE," college freshman Manny Vargas said. Ye is one of Kanye West's latest albums. It is one of his shortest as well, but it doesn't lack in any typical "Kanye" fashion. The album shows a different side to the artist. We are exposed to some of his inner thoughts about his own personal mentally health, fatherhood, and his daughter. The album manages to convey all of these ideas and more into seven songs which is very impressive and highlights Kanye's artistry.



Gift Giving 101: with Julie

Birthdays, the holidays, graduation, anniversaries, Valentine's day or just tokens of appreciation for friend or family. The number of opportunities we have to gift someone a present is pretty crazy. But the amount of people that dread this type of exchange is even crazier. Searching for the perfect gift can be challenging but hopefully some of these tips will make it a little easier for you next time you are stuck in this tough situation. Here are some do's and don'ts in this gifting edition.

What was the worst gift you've ever received?



1.

Bigger is not always better.

One of my very favorite ways to give a gift is to make the person a basket of some of their favorite things. This can include candy they like, gift cards, smaller products they use, etc. "Think about what your friends/family enjoy in their day-to-day life and then think of what you could get them that would add to that," junior Lilly Johns said. Not only does it give them a nice present that's more personalized, but it also won't break your bank completely. Also putting them together is way more fun.

2.

Personalized gifts are always flattering.

It is always nice to know that a gift was made with you in mind. Senior Jamieann Camps agrees that gifting a meaningful gift is the way to go. "Some times the perfect gift kind of depends on the person honestly. Like for me, the perfect gift would have to be something that's thoughtful," Camps said. Personalized gifts can come in so many different forms, even handmade (which can be very sentimental) so you are bound to find something they will love!

3.

No one wants socks.

Now, it is very unlikely that someone is going to tell you that your gift is not exactly what they were hoping for to your face. But I am here to tell you right now, no one wants to unwrap a present just to find 12 pairs of ankle socks. Now this is not to be confused with fuzzy socks. Fuzzy socks are always a good idea. The appeal of gifting someone a practical present, such as socks or a toothbrush, may be tempting. But, trust me, getting them something that they would not usually buy themselves is probably a better

4.

Don't be afraid to ask!

Asking the person that you are buying for what they want is not such a bad idea. Wish lists are always a great thing to reference when purchasing gifts, especially during the holidays. "I do make a holiday gift list. I have a really big step-family who always asks for one. They haven't known me super long so it's a good way for them to get to know me while not wasting money on things I don't necessarily want," senior Amber Hagler said. Some may feel awkward asking and may think "Well, shouldn't I know what they would like?" Asking what their preferred gift would be does not mean that you care less, it just shows that you truly want to gift them something you know they will enjoy.

Overall, gifting should not be extremely stressful or dreadful. There have been so many times where I have walked around the mall for hours, looking for gifts for some of my closest friends and was completely stuck on what to buy. Overthinking can be your worst enemy when not shopping for yourself but all in all, a lot of the time people will be grateful that you even took the time to get them something. The thought really does count the most. Gift giving is a process that should be fun and enjoyable because in the end it is worth it. And if not, make sure you keep the receipt.

LIFTING LARGE

Senior Logan Reel is a teen power lifter on his way to dominate his competition

Senior Logan Reel is on track to lift 1,250 pounds total at only 17! Power-lifting isn't a normal sport for teenagers, but Reel has found his passion for it and is determined to get better.

Power-lifting is a sport that involves lifting the most weight combined out of three lifts - the dead lift, squat and bench press. It's a very physically demanding sport and requires a good diet and workout plan to succeed.

Reel has a very strict workout schedule. He has been working out on that schedule for over a year now and has seen great improvement.

"I workout six days a week for 1-3 hours," Reel said.

Just like any other sport, Reel also has a coach who helps him with his form and workout routine so that he can get the most out of each workout and doesn't hurt himself.

Staying motivated can be hard for most people but he is very motivated to achieve his goals.

"I watch others online who are lifting way more and he wants to get to that point and be at the level they are," Reel said.

Reel has a strict diet so he can gain muscle and not gain too much fat and stay healthy.

"My diet is all high protein and high carbs; I also make all



Reel can dead lift 405 lbs here. The dead lift is one of the main three lifts along with bench and squat.

my food," Reel said.

Doing this all alone can be hard so he has some great supporters and workout buddies to help push harder. Senior Asante Gordon works out with him daily and is a great supporter.

"I help him by making him push harder and help him with spotting when he does heavier weight," Gordon said.

Having that person there can really help because you always need a spotter when lifting heavy and just need that extra support.

Olivia Odson, his girlfriend, works out with him daily as well and is starting to power lift with him.

"When it comes to helping Logan get better, it usually comes down to spotting, watching his form, and giving critique, and making sure he isn't too hard on himself," Odson said.

Reel is a very motivated person and wants to reach his goals. Currently his lifting goals are 500 lbs on dead lift, 300 lbs on bench and 450 lbs on squat. He hopes to reach those goals by the end of the year and with his workout schedule and diet, he should easily reach that.



Reel is shown bench pressing 242 lbs or 110 kilos.



WRESTLING IN A PANDEMIC

Can these seniors reach the ultimate goal during this pandemic?

The North/Hoover wrestling team has been on the rise these recent years and they are looking for a shot at state this year. Covid 19 has slowed them down but it surely won't stop them. Senior Asante Gordon is finding it challenging but that isn't stopping him.

"Covid has been a pretty big setback but I've been working around it around it just buy lifting weights, getting stronger and staying in shape," Gordon said.

North senior Aime Mukiza has shown great progress over these years and even making it state last year. He has big goals for his final year and has a game plan to achieve those.

"My goals are to make a statement regardless of the outcome, and to become an example for what's possible to come out of Des Moines schools and do something big. Place high at state and continue that culture into college atmosphere and lead by example," Mukiza said.

Gordon has some big goals he has set for himself as well this year.

"I have four goals for this season. Upset the number one wrestler in my weight class, win a medal at state, win a second conference title and qualify for Fargo nationals in the summer," Gordon said.

Both Mukiza and Gordon have had to make some serious changes to their training during this pandemic.

"I have to do more things on my own now than ever before. Working out, watching film, and mental preparation for any and every situation to obstruct my



Mukiza wrestles at 113-120 lbs is about to take down his opponent to win the match in this 2020 photo.

Mark Clark photography

goals," Mukiza said.

Gordon agrees and has had to make his own adjustments.

"Since I can't wrestle as often as before, I've been mainly been focusing on my strength and conditioning. I also study a lot of film from college wrestlers, so even though I'm not wrestling as often, I'm still improving as a wrestler by absorbing knowledge," Gordon said.

Not only is it challenging for the players, it's also really challenging for the coaches as well. Head coach John Bingham is in his second year coaching this team and hopes to make great strides of improvement. This pandemic has forced him to change things up but he's up for the challenge.

"So many changes have been made due to Covid. The way I teach, coach and interact daily has been changed. Wrestling will look a lot different this year when we are able to do it and I'll take that over not being able to do it. Lots of safety protocols we will have to follow. Our wrestlers deserve to be able to be able to compete. I am hopeful we will get too soon, because I think those who make the decisions will end up making correct decisions for the wellbeing of everyone," Bingham said.

This season will be challenging but these guys are up for it and ready to shock everyone!



Gordon is about to take down his opponent and get two points for the take down and going for that winning pin in this 2020 photo!

Mark Clark photography

WHAT CHANGE WILL YOU MAKE IN THE WORLD?

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