NEW BEGINNESS THE CHALLENGER

Volume 54 Issue 1 Fall Issue 2021–2022

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Introducing...

For many staff and students, Hoover has become a second home. Spending at least 35 hours a week in the building and getting involved with activities, the Hoover community continues to build. Though masked, the hallways are filled with new faces as Hoover welcomes 16 new staff members in the last two years.



Janelle Danner

or new associate principal, Janelle Danner, taking the risk to step into a new position has become a learning opportunity. Much

like students in the classroom,
Danner is learning something new every day in her new role.

"I learn every single day because this is my first admin job. And it is a completely different school from where I was previously so, I am learning every day how to deal with new people, how to deal with new systems. About myself, what strengths I have that I maybe didn't know I had and those kinds of things. So, I am just like a sponge right now!" Danner said.

As a former classroom teacher at Dowling Catholic High School for the past eight years, Danner had concerns about leaving behind what she loves the most: being with students! Luckily for Danner, her relationships with students have only grown as the new administrator.

"Leaving teaching I thought was going to be very hard but here, because we are always out in the hallways, when you go into admin you think you never see the kids, but I love that I get to see you guys every single day. Otherwise, I don't know if I would stay because I would go back to teaching," Danner said.

The big leap from chemistry teacher to administrator comes with days full of excitement for Danner.

"It's different every day. It really just depends on what I am trying to work on that day or what I'm trying to focus on. Like going on a field trip with [the newspaper and yearbook staff] or being in charge of testing, so like giving out ACT study materials and figuring all of that out, to just meeting kids and making relationships," Danner said.

Like any new job, adjusting to the environment and the people is the first step. For Danner, her new crew of coworkers have made her experience better. Danner hopes to connect with students on the same level.

"I don't think I've ever had a job where I have felt so supported and a part of such a cohesive team that works really well together. So that is super exciting for me. My main goal is to make relationships with kids and with staff so

that people understand who I am, how to deal with me, and what I stand for. Sometimes I can come off as 'Oh my gosh, she's just rules, rules, rules, rules.' But then once you're like 'Oh I get that!' I am super easy and relaxed," Danner said.

Not only is Danner working on connecting to her new environment, but she is also using her new position to brush up on her Spanish speaking skills! With Hoover's diverse population, Danner has taken advantage of her special skill to relate to the students that she interacts with.

"Some students may know because I speak with them, but many di not know that I speak Spanish! [Spanish] was my major but I taught science, so I really haven't practiced a whole lot. My sentences are pretty basic because I haven't been able to practice much but I love that part of my job that I get to use that again and practice it with other students,"

While only being here for a few months, Danner has already found a new home with the Hoover community.

I "I am super excited that I got to be at Hoover, that

Hoover chose me. We have the perfect size, and our student population is so diverse. I really love the population here and all the things we get to do because we are small. I am super proud of being at Hoover," Danner said.



Associate Principal

DISSECTING

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Breaking down Jennifer Davis' career.

Academic Interventionist Jennifer Davis is ecstatic to be in person after being online for her first year. She is ambitious to reach her goal of connecting with students and watching them become their best selves.

Q: What did you do before you worked at Hoover?

A: I taught at Callanan for the 8 years prior to Hoover.

Q: What made you come to Hoover?

A: I was a middle school math teacher for the past 16 years. I was ready for a change. Mrs. Wittkop is one of my best friends and she has always talked about how great Hoover is!

Q: How would you explain the atmosphere at Hoover?

A: High school is so much different than middle school. I appreciate the relaxed vibe.

Q: What are your favorite things about your job?

A: I like having the opportunity to help different groups of students. I just started teaching an English 1 class so that has been fun. I also have a group of 9th grade young men for Husky Time. They make me laugh every day!

Q: What is your favorite memory at Hoover so far?

A: Have you ever talked to Coach Henderson? He makes me laugh because he is so serious, and I am not! Last year I was on a team with him, Sal, and Wendy and we had so much fun! But really, my favorite memories are getting to see students I had at Callanan that are now at Hoover. It is a different bond

and I love seeing the adults they are becoming.

Q: Anything you're looking forward to at Hoover?

A: Seeing students graduate each year. It sounds so cliche, but if I don't look forward to that then why would they? It is one of the ultimate goals of high school!

Q: What is the long-term goal here at Hoover?

A: My forever goal is to help as many students as possible, but sometimes that is hard to realize. So, my long-term goal is to not only help educationally, but to help students realize all the life potential they have.



Jennifer Davis passing out computers to her students on the first day of school. Photo courtesy of Taysia Young

Jennifer Davis, Academic Interventionalist **HOOVERCHALLENGER.COM FALL 2021**

Chris King, Campus Moniter

Back in 2015, then senior basketball star Chris King was continuously being escorted to class by the campus monitors. Now, it's 2021 and King is back in a new role as a campus monitor chasing kids down and escorting them to class.

Q: What is it like returning to the school you went to as a staff member?

A: It's kind of weird now that I am staff and not a student because when I was a student, I was in the hallways. Now I'm telling everyone to get out of the hallways, so it's kind of weird.

Q: What is it like working with your old teachers?

A: There's not that many old teachers that taught me but it is kind of weird because they make little funny comments like 'get to class' and stuff like that but it's cool.

Q: How about your old coach?

A: Its's kind of like the same relationship. When I left Hoover, we kept in contact and he's kind of like a father figure or brother to me.

Q: What have you been doing since high school?

A: I went to college and played basketball at college for four years and I just graduated and came back.

Then vs. Now





Photos Courtesy of Alyssa Hull.



Photo Courtesy of Alyssa Hull.

Q: What are some of your best memories from going to Hoover?

A: Going to Wells Fargo to play in the state tournament my senior year.

Q: Why did you take a job and come back to Hoover?

A: I felt like I was perfect for the job because I went through a lot of the things these students go through and it just feels like Hoover is home so it was easy to come back.

Q: What is one of your goals for the next few years?

A: Become a head basketball coach somewhere.

Q: What is a piece of advice you would give students?

A: High school is one of the best times of your life so take advantage of the opportunity and live in the moment.

DeMarco Lowrey, Community Schools Coordinator

DeMarco Lowrey has worked at Hoover for about 6 months. He started at the end of last year and this is his first full year at Hoover.



Photo Courtesy of Lilly Johns.

Q: What have been some of your favorite things you have done at Hoover?

A: Teacher appreciation in May. That was one of my first projects, I coordinated chair massages for staff, provided bagels, and goodie bags for our maintenance and lunch ladies. I am also super proud of coordinating my first Freshmen Orientation.

Q: What are more things you want to do at Hoover?

A: I want to continue to put on monthly events for the community and our students, whether it's dodgeball, yoga, movie nights, cooking competition etc... Also, I want to continue to build resources for our building so that every student can eat, have clothing, and feel their best selves when they walk through these doors. Would love to see increased participation from our students with activities and joining sports and clubs.

Q: What are some of the things students could come to you for if they need help?

A: Anything and everything, but more specifically: If they are interested in joining Husky Crew, Silver Cord opportunities, have event ideas, need resources like clothing, snacks etc., transportation requests, or job opportunities.

Q: What are you in charge of?

A: I oversee Husky Crew, Silver Cord, Freshmen orientation, Transportation requests, events/activities.

Q: How have you liked being at Hoover so far?

A: I enjoy my role here at Hoover, and the administrators has been very good to work with and for. I love the diversity this school offers!

Q: What are some things you have done at Hoover so far?

A: JumpStart program over the summer, Recruited and trained our current Husky Crew members, coordinated Freshmen Orientation, Homecoming Tailgate, Homecoming Movie night(assisted with both activities), Track or Treat, assisted many students receive free transportation to and from school, provide silver cord opportunities for students, started the "Husky Zone" which has supplies, snacks, shoes, clothing, hygiene products for all students in need. Assisted with starting Esports, and Husky Hack Squad here at Hoover. I also assisted two Hoover Graduates Kaleb Nichols and Arabia Parkey put together their Black Art Mecca event that took place over the summer.



Photo Courtesy of Lilly Johns.

Tyler Brown, Learning Transitions Teacher

Coaching isn't the only thing Coach Brown can do; he is also a Learning Transitions teacher. This is Brown's second year teaching, and he just completed his second-year coaching baseball at Hoover. However, this is his first-year teaching in the building. Brown teaches his students and players to work hard and get involved.

Why did you want to become a teacher? I wanted to become a teacher because I enjoy helping students become successful young adults, and by being a teacher I allow them to seek support in their process of learning.

Why did you decide to teach at Hoover? I decided to teach at Hoover because I heard about the great community that has been built here at Hoover where the students are eager to learn and how they have a positive impact on those around them. Along with becoming the Head Varsity Baseball coach which would allow me to interact with my student athletes that I coach.

Why did you want to be a baseball coach? The reason why I wanted to be a baseball coach is because I have a love for the sport.

I feel that over my years of playing I have been able > to learn and grow, and with my passion for the sport, O I felt that I would like to help others that might share O that same passion. With my knowledge, I thought I T could help younger generation baseball players reach their highest potential.

Why did you decide to go to Grandview

University? I decided to go to Grand View University because I was offered a baseball scholarship and I also knew they had a good teaching program. Grand View was also a family school where my dad, uncles, and aunts have attended.

Did you enjoy your time there? I enjoyed my time at Grand View because it was a small school feel that allowed me to get to know my teachers which supported my learning. I also got to meet some great people in my years there, people I still talk with today.

Finally, the baseball program allowed me to follow my dreams of playing baseball as long as I could. I would not have changed my college experience for anything.

What is your favorite part about Hoover? My favorite part about Hoover is the fact that everyone is friendly at this school, and everyone is willing to help anyone out. Along with Hoover being a school that challenges our students to become successful leaders, which is a great quality to have.

Do you enjoy interacting with students? Why? I enjoy interacting and working with the students within the classroom and on the baseball field. I think Hoover students share their interests/passions, and that

> is seen daily. When you know the students are so passionate, it makes it enjoyable to come to school and help

them learn and grow.

Do you enjoy working with the staff at Hoover? I enjoy working with the Hoover staff, I know that every staff member has the school and student's best interests in mind, and they display that through their day in and day out dedication. I also feel that I can reach out to any staff member if I have a question or want to share ideas with them, I know that they will be a helpful resource that will share good advice.

Do you think the administration is doing a good job leading this school? The administrative staff at Hoover has done a great job leading this school and building wonderful community where I feel staff and students enjoy coming to school daily.

How do you hope to accomplish the statement "be the change"? I plan to accomplish the statement "Be the Change" by just being present and available to anyone involved with the Hoover community and being able to share my knowledge that have learned over the years. I will continue to look to lead by example and help others reach their goals.

What would be your advice to the Hoover students? My advice for students is to work hard, stay engaged, ask questions, and look to lead others. If you can do those things, Hoover will continue to be great with your help.

Photo Courtesy of Tyler Brown.

HOOVERCHALLENGER.COM FALL 202

A Day with Darryl

There's been a lot of new teachers who joined our staff but no one stands out like Mr. Nellum. Students describe social studies teacher Darryl Nellum as easy-going and fun to be around.

What got you into teaching?

I originally went to college to focus on history but then I then figured out that there weren't many jobs in that field, and plus also I wanted to teach kids who look like me.

Why did you choose Hoover High School?

I choose to come here to be around kids with diverse backgrounds and be able to teach government history and an opportunity to teach global black history.

What motivates you to do your job every day?

What motivates me that gets me up in the morning is to see students such as yourself come out of class and learn things how government is structured and in order for them to be productive embers of society and walk across the stage and be a high school graduate.

What are some things people may not know about you?

In my free time I like to read the newspaper.

What's your favorite thing about Hoover since you been here?

It's been the students, I like interacting with all the students. It's pretty cool hearing the different backgrounds and hearing their stories outside of school has been motivating me to



Photo courtsey of Jackie Rosas.

get them to be adults and I think that is special and seeing some of them go through this process.

Social Studies Teacher

As Hoover gets back to its normal antics, changes from last year are still around. This year, Hoover welcomed a new community member to the Hoover way. First year gym teacher Luke Starcevich helps students explore physical fitness as the new PE teacher.

Q: What do you teach at Hoover?

A: PE 9-10 class I got fitness walking. I also teach unified which is a great class with peer help as well.

Q: What do you think of the school so far?

A: Yeah, I really like being here at Hoover. A lot of good kids, very diverse, a lot of different population,

Q: What is your favorite part of Hoover so far?

A: I would just say community feel. Everyone comes from all around the world and different backgrounds

A: Yeah, I really like being here at Hoover. A good kids, very diverse, a lot of different popul learn some new language. It's been a very fun adventure so far.

Q: What is your favorite part of Hoover so A: I would just say community feel. Everyone from all around the world and different background religions, and everything else and I think it's very diverse. Everybody comes together as one to be the change.

Q: Why did you decide to become a gym teacher?

A: I love physical fitness and helping people become better through physical fitness. I love being around students/kids help them get themselves better through physical activities and I love to coach. I think it's a great avenue for both.

Q: Is this your first job in your current ind

A: So, this is actually my second job as a PE

opportunities I had to coach.

Q: What are some hobbies you enjoy?

A: I like to hang out with friends. I like to go boating in the summer. Go to football games, barbeque just hang out, stuff like that in the summer, go golfing.

Q: Have you always lived in Iowa or moved here?

A: I grew up in Iowa and I always lived in Des Moines.

Q: What is your favorite travel destination?

A: Next summer actually, I'm getting married so we're going to Greece. So decided to go to Greece it'll

be a pretty fun adventure.

Q: What are you passionate

A: I'm really passionate about family life, good relationships with family and friends, athletics, I really enjoy athletics and obviously teaching that's why I'm doing this position.

Q: Do you have any pets?

A: I have one dog names Dax. He's a Husky-Pitbull mix, he's pretty energetic.

Q: Did you play sports in high



Photo courtesy of Luke Starcevich

Q: Is this your first job in your current industry?

A: So, this is actually my second job as a PE teacher. I was at Edmunds elementary last year, which is another school in Des Moines. But obviously being elementary I've always wanted to do high school PE so when this opportunity came about, I thought it would be a great opportunity.

Q: What college did you go to and why?

A: So, I went to Iowa State, my whole family went there I also wanted to go there for some athletic

school?

A: I played 4 sports. Baseball, track, football, basketball a little bit. Then in college I coached football for Iowa State as a student assistant for 3 years. It was awesome getting to travel with the team.

Q: Is there anything that to suggest that would make your stay at Hoover better?

A: Nah, I think it's been pretty good, just continue to keep on getting better and participate in everything we do and have an open mind.

hysical Education Teacher

here

The lady you go to for your I.D., your mask, parking pass, and also your locker. It's Mrs. Wendy.

Q: What were you doing before coming to Hoover?

A: I worked at Scavo down at Central Campus so I did a little bit of Central Campus, little bit of Scavo, I was the campus monitor down there as well. I live in the neighborhood and I always thought it looked like a cool school. I'm a supporter of Des Moines Public Schools, and I went to Roosevelt.

Q: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

A: Well, I am retiring at the end of this year. I have five grandkids and my husband is retired so I just want to hang out with them.

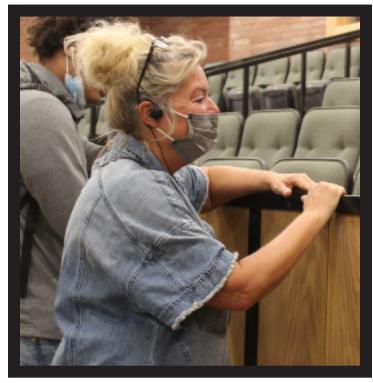


Photo courtesy of Ashley Ramirez.

Proposed to the diversity, activities, and making relationships with all the students but the worst part is being cranky to kids and having to break up fights.

Q: How do you keep students engaged/motivated?

A: Try and build relationships, show interest.

Q: What advice would you give freshman?

A: Go to class. Get your credits now and get involved in sports and activities.

involved in sports and activities.

Q: How do you think Covid affected students and staff?

A: Covid affected students a lot. Learning online is not for everyone, also not having activities or sports. I used to go out more but now I stay at home, which isn't necessarily a bad thing.

I love Hoover and I'm sorry to leave but I'll be back as a sub next year!

Campus Monitor

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

Hoover drama starts back up again with their fall play *I Hate Shakespeare*.

Hoover drama has returned to the stage after a year and a half of no live performances. *I Hate Shakespeare* is a comedic play that retells Shakespeare's most popular plays in a modern light full of twists and turns. Assistant Director Corey Spiess believes this is the perfect start to a new drama season.

"I think it will kick it off right, start with a little humor to get back into the spirit of theater," Spiess said.

Director Morgan King also shares this excitement and looks forward to a more normal year where students can grow and learn.

"My favorite part of the show is how huge it is. We have such a range of ability and background in theatre, and it really shows how theatre is really open for people of all backgrounds. I absolutely love getting to know all

of the young actors and helping them on their theatre journey," King said.

This year, Hoover drama members have many different theatre journeys. *I Hate Shakespeare* has several new actors. Freshman Andrew Geerdes is new to Hoover drama and his roles are Bill, Iago, and Messenger. Geerdes's favorite part of the show is the opening scene.

"I think my favorite part of the show would be scene 1 because of how many funny moments and deaths happen," Geerdes said.

Hoover drama also welcomed back returning members. Freshman Gavin Houchins-McCallum returned to Hoover drama after a year break due to COVID-19. His roles are Claudius, Polonius, Fleance, and Romeo. Houchins-McCallum's favorite part of the rehearsal process is watching his peers perform.

"I like when we get to watch other people act because we can see what people are doing well/not so well and apply that to our own acting. It is also just entertaining to watch," Houchins-McCallum said.

Along with returning actors, crew members also returned to drama. Junior Ireland Fife is the productions stage manager. Her duties include writing down actors blocking, assisting the director, and keeping everyone on task. Fife also runs the sound ques up in the booth during the shows. Fife's favorite part of the rehearsal process is watching the actors break character.

"Seeing actors break character is always funny to watch. Also, every time Hamida drops the dummy on Gavin is so funny," Fife said.

I Hate Shakespeare is the first production since COVID-19 and it's bigger than ever. This production involves over 40 students and has made the transition back to live theatre a fun and easy experience.

"Being back at show and doing a full show again is the best part. Having so many people in theater is awesome," Fife said.

HOOVERCHALLENGER.COM FALL 2

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LANE BASH

The cast's favorite lines.

"I-R-R-E-L-E-V-A-N-T, Irrelevant! Irrelevant! Shakespeare's so irrelevant!"

"What about that girl in Biology class whose name is Rainbow?"

"He's been away fighting wars against...who were those barbarians, lots of black eyeliner, very depressed?" "The goths?"





By: Callie Garcia (she/her), Design Editor in Chief

OUTSIDE THE LINES

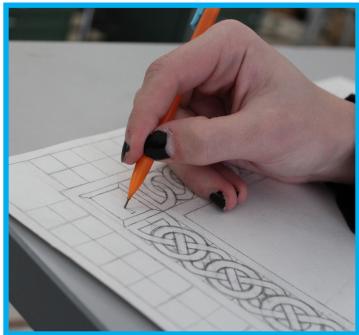
An inside look at Hoover students' artwork.

Carlie Jeffries coloring a self portrait (right).
Jeffries is a senior in the honors art class and has taken art classes for three years.





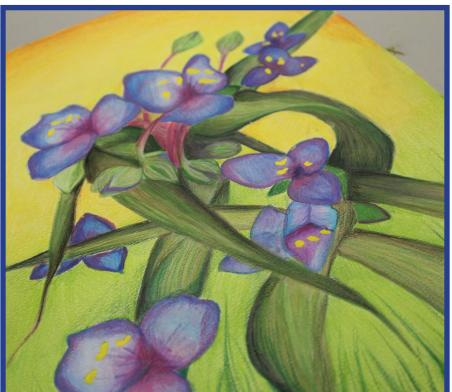
Kane Holmer drawing celtic knots (right). Holmer is a junior in the honors art class and has taken art classes for three years.





Kane Holmer, graphite celtic knot portrait (left).





Immanuel Carroll's sketchbook (above). Carroll is a junior in the honors art class and has taken art classes for five years.

Carlie Jeffries, watercolor pencil flowers (left).





Callie Garcia, graphite realistic waist up portrait (left).

Change is Upon Us

A new era of leadership has come to Polk County.

shift in power can be a tumultuous time, especially in a political setting.
If you live in Polk County, the name John P. Sarcone might ring a bell. He has been serving as Polk county's attorney since the year 1990. Sarcone never faced opposition in all seven of his elections, but the time for change is upon us. After all that time in office, Sarcone is deciding to not seek reelection.

Many people are not familiar with the role of county attorney, however, the part they play in our legal system is detrimental to the successes of a county. Their job is to take on the position of chief legal officer for the given area. For those in Polk County, racial and income inequality plague much of our justice system. A report put out by the Iowa Department of Human Rights in November of 2020, states that black kids are 6.5x more likely to enter the justice system over a simple misdemeanor, compared to white kids. Whoever is next to fill the shoes of Polk County attorney has the work cut out for them.

Voter Registration Info

- In order to register you must be at least 17 years old
- You can register online or get a form mailed to your home
- You can register on election day at the correct polling location and with proof of identification and proof of residence
- If you will be 18 by election day you can vote in the primarys
- A new Iowa law allows them to take you off of the voting rolls if you skip voting in even one election, this may mean you have to re register

Enter Kimberly Graham. Graham boasts a lengthy history as a respected attorney, former candidate for the US senate, and a trusted face in the community. She is hoping to fill the shoes left behind by Sarcone.

"I've been an attorney for 22 years in both the criminal defense side of things and also the juvenile justice system as well. Those are two of the main areas that the county attorney office deals with, they are areas I've spent a lot of time working in, in my career and then as the summer wore on and we saw all the protests happening here in central Iowa and I was watching how the county's attorney office was handling a lot of that. I was very disappointed by the things that I saw," Graham said.

The Polk County Attorney's office recently made national news when journalist Andrea Shouri was prosecuted over her reporting on the protests in the Des Moines area. Out of the 130 journalists arrested in the United States for the same thing, she was the only one that went to trial. Many viewed this a national embarrassment, Graham included. The current path of the county attorney's office seemed to be going in the wrong direction.

"There just is a lot we need to change and when county attorneys are in office for 20-30 years, I think that that amount of power that goes unchallenged can result in some things happening that maybe would be different if they were held accountable through elections and actually having to defend their record and talk about their record you know in a contested election. But something like 84% of the time in this country, district attorneys and county attorneys run unopposed. 84% of the time!" Graham said.

Many of Grahams calls for change seem way overdue in light of the recent public outrage over the lack of racial equity in the justice system. The overarching goal of her campaign seems to be coined in a slogan of sorts. 'We're increasing public safety through justice reform.'

"I think today, in these times, with the issues that we are facing now in the wake of Mr. Floyd's murder, in the income inequality in our justice system is horrific." wake of all the protests and another level of awareness which is far too long coming, that we as a people have reached an agreement that the way our justice system has been working. The way we've been doing it is not working. It's just not having the outcomes that we want to have. It's not making us safer; its destroying communities and it's ruining a lot of people lives so I think we've come into a certain time where people are looking to elect someone to reflect everything I just said. That change is needed, and we need it now," Graham said.

Speaking of change, Graham has many ideas spanning from stronger enforcement of sex trafficking laws to ending prosecution on low level marijuana possessions. All these changes really boil down to the main idea of making our county a safer area. Graham stands by the fact that none of our youth are disposable so the work must be done to shut down the systems that send them into the slippery slope of the juvenile justice system.

"You have to meet kids where they are. I talked earlier about how you have to meet people where they are, well you got to meet kids where they are too. One thing that I've noticed in the over 20 years I've been in and around the courthouses in Polk County and in the community is that you don't often see the current county attorney at a lot of community events. I would like there to be far more outreach to various communities from the Polk County's Attorney's office, and one thing that would make it more efficient is if the office had the trust of people and who are willing to talk to the office. I think that there is a lot of distrust unfortunately particularly and understandably from the black community," Graham said.

Accountability through strict data keeping is an aspiration of Graham's if she were to enter office. Numbers don't lie and in order to properly measure the work they plan to do data tracking is crucial.

"And one more thing is transparency and easily accessible data it seems when journalists reach out to the office for varying types of data that they rarely if ever get a response. This is a public service job we are here to serve the public, if we aren't willing to talk to you then I don't think we should be the one serving you, it should be someone who is willing to talk to you. I also plan to invite researchers from drake and university of Iowa from Iowa State University whoever want to come, to keep data on the office, to keep racial disparity

data, to keep juvenile justice data, to keep income data hopefully, because I think some of the racial and

In order to transform our justice system into one of equality and transparency we need a strong leader with strong ideas, one that holds the conviction for change. Kimberly Graham hopes to be that person.



How will politics influence how you carry out this role, why do you feel that this is even an elected position in the first place, what importance does it hold for the Polk County Attorney to be a democrat or republican?

A I fundamentally don't consider myself or thinkof myself as "political" in the sense that I think one way because I am a democrat. I think that in general terms democrats have been historically the party on the side of everday, regular, working people. I think of it as how would I run this office in a way that is right, in a way that would help the most people, in a way that will create more saftey. What will get us closer to ending income and racial disparities in our justice system. I dont run anything through a lens of what would a democrat do, that doesn't even occur to me. I think what will allow people to live their lives free from fear because they feel safe in their communities

Making the Switch

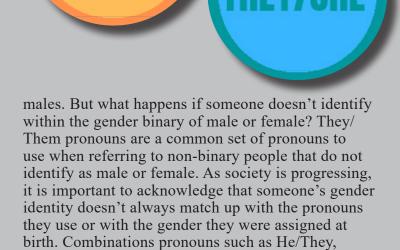
How respecting pronouns and using gender-neutral terms can make a

How respecting pronouns and using difference.

very start to the school year begins with a day full of introductions and get-to-know-you games. Not only is it important for teachers to get to know their new students, but for students to become comfortable with each other. A question asked in many classrooms this year was, "What are your pronouns?" Pronouns? After hearing giggles and the mocking of this question throughout classrooms this year. I felt like there was a throughout classrooms this year, I felt like there was a strong need for some more clarification.

deal? The Merriam Webster dictionary defines pronouns as any of a small set of words (such \triangleleft as *I*, she, he, you, it, we, or they) in a language that I are used as substitutes for nouns or noun phrases O and whose referents are named or understood in the Context. For example, Susie likes to ride her bicy-U cle, so she bikes to work every day. 'She' and 'her' > replace the name Susie in this context. Traditionally, O a person's pronouns are determined by their gen-

So, what is a pronoun and why is it such a big



Principal Sherry Poole (she/her) interacts with students of all walks of life on a day-to-day basis. Poole views pronouns as a way for people, especially students, to express their true identity.

They/She, or the use of any pronouns are also com-

mon forms of pronouns that make people feel more

comfortable with their gender identity.

"Pronouns that each of us use are part of our identity." They/them; he/him; she/her --whatever we use, help us all to openly be who we are. Most of the time, we use pronouns in place of our name which is typically assigned to our gender. Some people don't fit into one particular pronoun or the one they might have been



assigned at birth so using pronouns allows them to belong to where they identify," Poole said.

To make students feel more comfortable, Poole's staff is aiming to bring reassurance to students that how they identify matters and is respected.

"A lot of our [staff] trainings have us introducing ourselves with name and preferred pronouns, especially when we are on Zoom or TEAMS calls. We do need more in-depth training on this topic however, so that we consistently change the way we are addressing students such as 'Mathematicians, Historians, etc.' instead of 'ladies and gentlemen,'" Poole said.

Using gender-neutral terms in the classroom setting can be crucial for students that are trying to figure out who they are. Another aspect of this includes transgender students that use a name different from the one given at birth to feel comfortable in their new gender identity. A study completed by the University of Texas found that respecting young people's preferred name and pronouns can literally save their lives.

"Researchers interviewed transgender youths ages 15 to 21 and asked whether young people could use their chosen name at school, home, work and with friends. Compared with peers who could not use their chosen name in any context, young people who could use their name in all four areas experienced 71 percent fewer symptoms of severe depression, a 34 percent decrease in reported thoughts of suicide and a 65 percent decrease in suicidal attempts."

Not only will students feel safer at school, but they will also feel more welcome. Many people have a hard time trying to figure out gender-neutral terms such as they/them pronouns. It has been taught in English literature for so long that the proper way to address a singular person is with the terms he or she. For example, your English teacher might tell you that the sentence, 'A student must come collect their pencil' is incorrect and should be 'A student must collect his or her pencil,' because the singular 'student' in this case is not the plural pronoun of 'their'. But as society evolves, so does our language.

Many people stray away from using they/them pronouns because "it's not grammatically correct." John McWhorter, an American linguist and English professor, argues that there can be a shift of gender-inclusive language in his Atlantic article 'Call Them What They Wants'.

"...words' meanings are always changing—what Shakespeare meant by *generous* was "noble," not "magnanimous"—pronouns never sit still...in earlier English, *thou* was the second-person-singular form, and *you* was used only for two or more people," McWhorter said. "Pronouns change, just as we do. We celebrate language change that has already happened as pageant, procession, progress. Why not celebrate it while it's happening?"

Another reminder is that you don't always know what someone's pronouns are by looking at them. So, just ask! Sophomore Paisha Goodrich (they/she) has advice on becoming comfortable with using they/them pronouns.

"Some advice I would give to people who aren't completely educated on they/them pronouns is to first always ask for people's pronouns if you are unsure. Next, I would say to practice using they/them pronouns and practice saying them instead of she or he. (I used to practice saying they/them with my friends outside of school when our friend told us the pronouns they wanted to use). And also, it's not gonna be as flawless as you think, you may accidentally say the wrong pronouns but if you do say the wrong ones accidentally to make sure you correct yourself," Goodrich said.

Asking someone for their pronouns can be a way to get to know them, as well as make them feel comfortable and respected. Rather than asking the rude question of "What are you?", consider asking, "What pronouns do you use?"

Making space for conversations about pronouns is the first step of making others feel included. By simply introducing yourself with your own pronouns or putting your pronouns on your social media or educational platforms are just a few simple ways to help make people who may have different pronouns more comfortable.

Practicing using gender-neutral terms in all aspects of your life will not only help you to become more inclusive, but it can also generate conversations of inclusivity with those around you.



Climbing High!

Hoover needs clubs for more interests, students hope for a biking club and other clubs like skateboard to fullfill those interests.

students? Or will they be boring, or could they

Does Hoover need more clubs for its students? Or will they be boring, or could the be a great opportunity?
Hoover is currently in short of clubs for students to participate in for after school event. The most common clubs at Hoover are Dungeons and Dragons, skateboarding, and drama.

"I'm unaware of the amount we have so I couldn't say if there's too many or too little, but it doesn't hurt to have more," junior Tristan Stephen said.
Some students think that Hoover needs mor after school physical activities that fulfill specific interests.

"I feel like it would be a good way for students to be out there and be able to have for while also staying physically active," junior Cameron Yin said.

Yin believes a mountain biking club would event. The most common clubs at Hoover are

Some students think that Hoover needs more

students to be out there and be able to have fun

Yin believes a mountain biking club would be a good fit for Hoover students.

Students could enjoy more variety in clubs with a diverse student body, and specifically, a mountain biking club. Yin thinks it can help students socialize after Covid and help people both physically and mentally.

"It helps people build their social level back up because of less interaction with others since the pandemic," Yin said.

According to the CDC, "Spending time outdoors can improve overall health



and wellness. The outdoors offers many opportunities to be physically active. Time outdoors may also promote mental health and stress reduction."

More clubs can also help with reintegrating back into society. During the pandemic many students had little to no interaction between people in their age range.

This can damage sociability; thus, more clubs could be helpful.

"Physical activities build confidence and outdoor and social things build communication," junior Tristan Stephen said.

When it comes to mountain biking, it's a

great interest in today's society. Mountain biking is a sport of endurance and stamina. You do your best to stay on the dirt path while riding over obstacles and tight turns like logs and switch backs. For people who like the adrenalin it would be a good sport because it can be dangerous at times.

I think mountain biking would be a great sport for lots of students at Hoover and lots of people already do it. Accord to Bikehike.org as many as 8 million people ride unpaved trail annually in the US. And during the Pandemic many people bought so many bikes there was a shortage. In my experience it's both a relaxing way to pass the time and a great way to relieve stress.

"My belief is set on the fact that every student needs to feel like they belong at Hoover. One of the best ways to do so is to have something that meets the student's personal interest, whether that a Latino Dance Club, Skateboarding Club, Cooking Club, or any other club!" Associate Principal William Montgomery said.

Hoover is a beacon to belonging to other school in the district and outside. Belonging to a club at Hoover can help students feel like they belong

"I think it would be a great club to have at Hoover! Mountain Biking is a fun, outdoors activity that can be done in so many places. I think a ton of kids would benefit from a unique activity like mountain biking!" Montgomery said.

However, I think the cost of the club could deter students. Each student would have to bring their own bike or if some places were to sponsor it, a biking club could have the ability to use nice bikes for road and off-road activities. By partnering up with a local bike club, it could help Hoover connect more to the community and allow students to participate in activities anyone can do

Current clubs:

- Academic Decathlon
- A.C.E. (Architecture Con- struction & Engineering)
- Unified Sports & Special Olympics
- Best Buddies
- BIG3 Basketball
- Brother 2 Brother
- Chess Club
- Dance
- Debate & Speech
- Dream to Teach
- Dungeon & Dragons
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)
- Gender & Sexuality Alliance (GSA)
- Global Gala
- Husky Media Group & The Challenger Newspaper

- iJAG
- Movement 515
 - National Honor Society (NHS)
- Pep Club
- Racial Equity Group
- Science Bound
- Silver Cord of Service
- Sisters for Success
- Student Council
- Student Spirit Crew
- Weightlifting
- Youth for Understanding

See Mr. Burke for additional information on how to join a club.



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia Commons



LCJ BOOK CLUB

Eighteen book reccomendations from yours truley. Whether you like the good old classics or something fun and magical, there is something here for you. Below you'll find breif three word descriptions of the books but more in depth descriptions live online. Enjoy!

- Northanger Abby
 By: Jane Austen
 Classic, Romance, Fiction
- 2 Sapiens
 A Breif History of Humankind
 By: Yuval Noah Harari
 Non-fiction, Science, Reflective
- Where the Crawdads Sing
 By: Delia Owens
 Fiction, Mystery, Emotional
- Little Fires Everywhere

 By: Celeste Ng

 Fiction, Contemporary, Reflective

- Six of Crows

 By: Leigh Bardugo

 Fantasy, Adventurous, Fast-paced
- The Strange and Beautiful Sorrows of Ava Lavender
 By: Leslye Walton
 Magical realism, Young adult, Fiction
- 7
 The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid
 By: Bill Bryson
 Memoir, Funny, Lighthearted
 - 8 Rnow My Name
 By: Chanel Miller
 Memoir, Feminism, Inspiring



- East of Eden
 By: John Steinbeck
 Classic, Historical fiction, Emotional
- The Fire Next Time

 By: James Baldwin

 Non-fiction, Essays, Informative
- Anxious People

 By: Fredrik Backman

 Fiction, Contemporary, Funny
- Daisy Jones & The Six
 By: Taylor Jenkins Reid
 Historical fiction, Music, Emotional

- Rebecca
 By: Daphne Du Maurier
 Classic, Mystery, Dark
- The Whisper Man

 By: Alex North
 Fiction, Thriller, Tense
- The Silent Patient

 By: Alex Michaelides

 Fiction, Dark, Fast-paced
- Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You
 By: Ibram X. Kendi & Jason Reynolds
 Non-fiction, History, Informative
- Such a Fun Age

 By: Kiley Reid

 Fiction, Reflective, Contemporary
- Born a Crime: Stories From a South
 African Childhood
 By: Trevor Noah
 Memoir, Funny, Reflective

New Possibilites

How one class can help students' futures.

From internships, resumes, and job experience, IJAG offers students a wide variety of experiences for college.

"[We] work on career pathways and career exploration, we work on getting ready for college," IJAG coordinator Julie Johnson said.

Johnson helps students find success who are trying to get into college and find jobs to lead them to success.





Junior Cameron Brooks said he enjoyed this course because it gives them experience what life after high school is like.

"It gives us chances to explore our interests," Brooks said.

Not only does IJAG help students with careers and job experiences, but it's also gives them a place to be themselves.

"We really work on being good leaders within our school," Johnson said.

Senior Mercer Carter-Shields is a quiet guy during school but when he goes to IJAG, he's able to feel comfortable and outgoing.

"It's a place that I can relax and feel open and feel like talking to other people," Carter-Shields said.

In IJAG, you just get an outlook on life and be more of a person and fit into society better.

"Our job is to set an example and step up to the plate and be responsible," Brooks said.





With the rise of upcoming rappers, it's hard to determine who's the G.O.A.T.

Who he is: American rapper from Atlanta, Georgia, who was first recognized in 2017 when he put out "Perfect Timing"

Albums: With his #1 albums being "My Turn" and "Voice Of The Heroes", he's produced "Drip Harder", "Harder Than Ever", "Street Gossip" and many more.

What people say about him: "I like his choice of lyrics and how he presents himself," junior Tatiana McMillan said.





who he is: Durk is an American rapper from Chicago, Illinois, who was recognized when he dropped "Signed To The Streets" mixtape

Albums: With "Voice Of The Heroes" being #1 album along side "Just Cause Y'all Waited 2" & "The Voice" topped out #2, he also produced "Love Songs 4 The Streets 2", "Signed To The Streets" and many more.

What people say
about him: "He has longevity
and will be around even longer because
of how successful and how impactful his
music is to these young people," senior
Chevelle Ruchti said.
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What Happened in Afghanistan?

How twenty years of war came to an end.

ecently, Afghanistan's 20-year long civil war was finally brought to an end. On August 15th, 2021, in the wake of the complete disintegration of the Afghan National Army, the Taliban captured Kabul and proclaimed the establishment of a new government of Afghanistan. Thousands of deployed American military personnel will be coming home, followed by many tens of thousands more Afghan refugees. According to the Des Moines more Afghan refugees. According to the Des Moines
Register, Iowa has already agreed to receive 700
Afghan evacuees in the first wave of resettlements, and it is likely that more will be on their way in the future. Of course, to many Americans, who for the last twenty years have been lied to by government and media claims about the Taliban, the war, and the Afghan national government, this chain of events has been understandably shocking. Although a withdrawal by US military forces from Afghanistan had already long been determined, the narrative that was handed down to the American people gave the impression that the Afghan national government was a strong and legitimate state and that they would continue to hold out against the Taliban and eventually defeat them (as a result of twenty years of US military aid and advisement).

The truth of the matter is that the

• The truth of the matter is that the O American government has been I propagating a completely false narrative about the invasion of Afghanistan from the very beginning of the war all the way up until the present day.

did not refuse to extradite Osama Bin Laden, and had made tentative attempts at negotiation with the US over the terms of the extradition of Bin Laden and other suspects in the 9/11 attack. Exploring these offers or engaging in serious diplomatic negotiations with the Taliban was never entertained. Against the word of international law and that of international aid organizations, the US planned and executed an invasion of Afghanistan within less than a month of the attack.

The evidence that we have today strongly indicates that the US had intended an invasion of Afghanistan far before the events of 9/11. According to insider accounts published in British, French, and Indian media, US officials threatened an invasion as early as the summer of 2001. Overseas reports immediately following September 11th claimed that US intelligence agencies had been warned about impending terrorist attacks involving the use of hijacked airplanes and ignored them.

> The real reason for the invasion appears to have been the advancement of American economic interests. As the New York Times has reported, beginning in the 90s, the US had been engaging in talks with the Taliban for an oil pipeline going through parts of Afghanistan, but those talks broke down at the same time as the USof Al-Qaeda's attacks on US

embassies. This, along with

Afghanistan's vast natural mineral wealth, provided ample motivation to invade the country and install a client government favorable to the US.

Following the invasion, the Taliban were quickly beaten back by the US and allied forces, and a new government was formed in Kabul. In 2011, the US



A US soldier patrols Afghanistan alongside soldiers of the Afghan National Army. Courtesy of Taliban relationship as a result Flickr.

The war in Afghanistan began when the US and its allied forces launched a joint invasion of the country in late 2001, following the September 11th attack on the twin towers by Al Qaeda. The US claimed that this invasion was in response to the refusal of the Taliban to extradite Osama Bin Laden for his crimes. However, contrary to US claims, the Taliban in fact

finally succeeded in its operation to kill Osama Bin Laden, and NATO began an exit strategy for withdrawing its forces, although a sizable portion of US military personnel remained in the country. The Taliban, rather than being gradually crushed under the superior military of the national government as expected, gained significant footholds in the country. This resulted in a protracted military conflict that amounted to a bloody standstill. The Afghan national government continued to be propped up by the money, arms, training, and personnel they were given

by the US. Propaganda flooded out from the US government about the progress being made in Afghanistan, but investigations such as that of the Washington -FORMER VICE PRESIDENT MIKE PENCE Post have

"BUT WHEN MR. BIDEN BECAME PRES-IDENT, HE QUICKLY ANNOUNCED THAT U.S. FORCES WOULD REMAIN IN AF-**GHANISTAN FOR AN ADDITIONAL FOUR** MONTHS WITHOUT A CLEAR REASON FOR DOING SO ... ONCE MR. BIDEN BROKE THE DEAL. THE TALIBAN LAUNCHED A MAJOR OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE AFGHAN GOV-**ERNMENT AND SEIZED KABUL."**

shown those claims to have been false.

Finally, in 2020, under the Trump administration, the US came to an agreement with the Taliban called the Doha agreement, promising a US withdrawal from

the country in exchange for several other terms. However, Al Jazeera reported, the Biden administration repeatedly violated that agreement that had been reached with the Taliban, both by maintaining the sanctions on Taliban leaders and officials that had been promised to be removed under the agreement, as well as by violating the deadline for US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. In response, the Taliban cut off negotiations with the US and began a final nationwide offensive. When the US military finally did withdraw,

the Afghan national military experienced a complete collapse and the nation was conquered by the Taliban within weeks.

How did the Kabul government fall so quickly, despite twenty years of extensive US support? Just like in Vietnam, no amount of foreign soldiers or new military technologies could prop up a regime which did not have the support of the people. In the end, the Taliban, a numerically inferior force composed almost solely of untrained rural peasants with guns, defeated a technologically and numerically superior military. The Afghan National Army may have been large and well-armed, but its soldiers did not support the cause of the US or the Afghan government.

> Without US support, there was no reason to fight, and many soldiers either deserted their posts or joined the Taliban after the withdrawal. In fact, according to Al Jazeera, the Afghan National Army had one of the highest rates of desertion in the world, with one estimate putting the attrition rate of desertions and casualties combined at 5,000 permonth. Additionally, the Washington Post reported that many local and lower-ranking government officials were happy to make deals with the

Taliban, enabling their lightning-quick and virtually bloodless offensive. In the end, the Afghan National Army and its government simply collapsed.

Ultimately, the reason that the Taliban were able

to win was that the US-sponsored government had no real legitimacy among the people. The Taliban promised to put an end to twenty years of bloody civil war and bring about a stable and legitimate government in the nation for the first time since 2001, whereas the Afghan

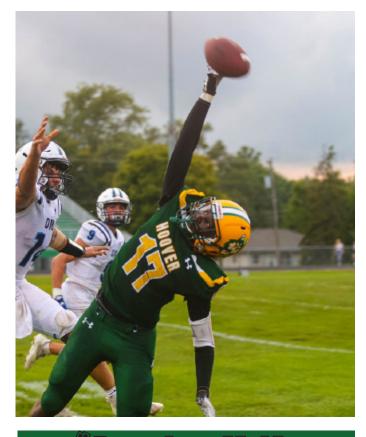


The Taliban encroach on an American encampment. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

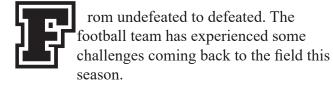
national government promised nothing but continued corruption, war, and subservience to US interests. It is clear to see why the people of Afghanistan chose the way they did.

The Rebound 4

The Hoover football team is back after a year of trying times.



"I go to all the
games to see the
players compete
and get better. I
see them improve
as a team and
individually. Go
Huskies!" - Jude
Smith



Last year was looking glorious. The football team had 22 seniors who were determined to win. The team played one game and won by 34 points and Hoover was looking to continue that streak this year.

Sadly, Covid-19 ended our season, causing the lights to go out on Friday night, ending everything Hoover had going for them. Players, fans, and students were devastated to hear this news.

"I was extremely sad at first. I felt worse for my teammates that weren't going to get the opportunity to play again," graduate Jerad Fischer said.

Now the lights are back on in the stadium and the fans are as loud as they've ever been. Everyone is excited to see the football team compete. Cheerleader and senior Kadee Collier attends every game to cheer on the team.



the Rebuild



"I'm always going to be there for them and always there to support them," Collier said.

Covid restrictions are lifted this year, making it easier to practice and play. "We don't have to make it a big focus distancing ourselves 6 feet apart and wearing mask during practice," senior Jiovanni Ellis said.

Along with fans, players are especially excited to get this opportunity.

"Just the competitiveness, it just gets me in the moment," Ellis said.

Players are finding every way possible to get hyped and gain momentum.

"I listen to classics like 'Sweet Caroline,'" senior Justin Imani said.

While challenges of Covid are out the window, there are still many challenges that this Hoover team is facing.

"We are dealing with players who are inexperienced and have never played football before," Ellis said.

Dealing with a whole new team of fresh young talent

can be a challenge to win with no matter what team it is. Our record is currently 1-6 but with the slow start the huskies have continued to put in the work to turn this season around.

Senior Jude Smith has been supporting the Huskies for years.

"I go to all the games to see the players compete and get better. I see them improve as a team and individually. Go Huskies!" Smith said.



Photos Courtesy of Hoover Football Facebook.

By: Chevelle Ruchti (he,him), Staff



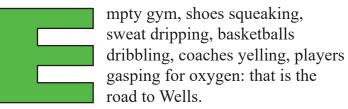
Pre-season Basketball on the road to Wells.



Last year, Hoover beats Valley, a game to look back as a starting point for this upcoming season. Photo cred to Amber Hagler







Hoover basketball is currently putting in the work and time to get on the pathway to Wells Fargo Arena for a state title.

After players and coaches have come from a decently 13-5 season with adversity along the way, returning players and coaches have high expectations and goals to meet and exceed this upcoming season.

"Our biggest goal is a state championship," assistant coach Chris King said.

This goal is wanted by most, if not all, of the basketball players this upcoming season.

With these expectations for this upcoming season comes big time preparations and showing up consistently to build a healthy successful season.

"As we get closer to the season, I start developing a system of plays to develop an offensive system for different players offensive capabilities and a strategy defensively," head coach Courtney Henderson said.

Putting in the time and work in pre-season benefits the team more than anything and it gets them ready for the hardships of the regular season.

"Pre-season is beneficial because it gives all the new guys something to expect for what the season will be like and it gets the older guys kicked in the gear preparing for the season, also it allows you to walk into the season feeling much more prepared than you would if you didn't have a preseason," junior Elijah Vos said.

After all these preparations and expectations, the official season eventually ends up coming in and players have their own unique way of getting ready for a game.

"I get my mind right, go home and eat 2 bags of fruit snacks, then I listen to some G Herbo and SZA and then I get going," junior Chase Henderson said.

While that's how the young point guard gets into the playing mentality before a game, the veteran point guard has a different way to go about things.

"I have to listen to Fireflies and Party in the USA, say my prayer and then I get down to business," senior Justin Imani said.

For boys basketball, success will have to come from focusing on and off the court because, in Coach Henderson's famous words, change is coming.











Autumn





Serving at volleyball



First Day



Activities Fair



Golf Meet



Halloween Spírít Week



Hoco Night



Swim Meet



Fall Sports Procession

Festivities