

THE FANFARE



Photo Credit: Ned Averill-Snell

INSIDE TODAY: *MEANING OF THE THEME*

This year, The Fanfare is going *Off the Record*: highlighting the behind-the-scenes moments and off-script perspectives that defined the 2024-25 school year. From the dazzle and disco of Mamma Mia's sparkling debut on the Lykes Center for the Arts stage, to the

unfiltered realities of junior and senior year and the exciting launch of new exploratory courses, this issue peels back the curtain on student life. This spring, we're diving into the stories that don't always make the front page, but that have shaped our year all the same.

DEAR JUNIORS...

By Zoya Jooma, Co-Editor-in-Chief

When asked by my relatives what grade I'm in, my response unfailingly provokes groans of sympathy and head shakes of condolence. The words "junior year" tend to conjure up images of hours upon hours of homework, the precarious balance of extracurriculars on top of schoolwork and general exhaustion. As a second-semester eleventh-grader, I've got firsthand experience with what some might call the "year of abominations."

Allow me to address a common myth right here and now. Has this been my hardest year of high school? So far, yes. Real-life junior Ria Sahoo '26 has explained that this is because each year of Upper Division is meant to increase in rigor, so it's natural that eleventh grade would be the hardest year. Her reasoning makes sense, but I'm not so sure. There's just something about this year that's evoked an anxiety unlike any I've ever acquired from school.

results in two-week cycles during which the first week is a cyclone of tests, essays and labs,



Photo Credit: Lily Shirmohammad '25
Sanvi Soma '26 and Emma Colitz '26 comfort Zoya Jooma '26 after a rough math test.



Photo Credit: Lily Shirmohammad '25
Juniors Alice Sakhatky and Ria Sahoo enjoy some downtime outside the Berkeley Food Pantry.

and the second is so stripped of assessments that the days actually get a little boring.

It's not just the never-ending academic pressure that weighs us down though; that's something we've all been dealing with since freshman year. It's the added weight of leadership positions, summer applications and standardized testing preparation. These stack up into a precarious schedule that looms menacingly over each week, threatening to eat away at our sleep and leisure time.

Underclassmen, nervous yet?

I'm mostly kidding about junior year being completely terrible. There are things that I've loved about the past eight months. Getting to take more interest-specific classes, turning 17, sitting up in the balcony during Convo and of course, driving. Driving is great.

So yes, being an upperclassman does come with more opportunities and freedom. When I was a freshman and sophomore, everyone talked about the necessity of achieving leadership in extracurriculars as an upperclassman, but nobody explained what it's like once you've got the position. As someone who has filled out her fair share of leadership applications over the past year, I can say that having leadership opens up a lot of doors in clubs or otherwise to introduce new initiatives and further explore your passion.

However, the applications for leadership do stack up, especially when applying for one of the 11 major positions Berkeley offers.

"After a while, writing about what you have to offer to a position or why you would love to be a 'fill in the blank' starts to feel inauthentic," said Sanvi Soma '26.

As repetitive as these applications are, it's probably good practice for college essays next year. At least, that's what I tell myself as I spend another late night trying to get in a submission before midnight.

You would think that the most competition you feel in high school is during senior year, when applying to college alongside your classmates, but that feeling definitely sprouts in junior year.

One struggle I've faced this year is the level of comparison that the college process begins to trigger. At the beginning of this semester, on College Day, alum Makayla Doyle '23 gave our class some advice about approaching the college process. She reminded us to focus on ourselves and not to concern ourselves with what our peers were doing, academically or otherwise.

"You'll end up where you're meant to be," she said, but her words were easier to nod along to than to put into practice. From applying to summer programs and asking for recommendation letters to receiving test grades and talking to friends about extracurriculars, I feel as if I'm constantly being compared to my peers.

I know these processes aren't intended to foster competition, but in an environment like Berkeley's, it feels impossible not to compare ourselves to each other. Once again, this is possibly good practice for senior year, when tuning out the buzz of who is applying where will be beneficial for our own well-being.

As staggering as the year has been so far, putting a positive spin on certain unavoidable hardships has helped. Yes, the long trudge to the junior lot is unbearable in both 90 and 40-degree weather, but parking next to friends

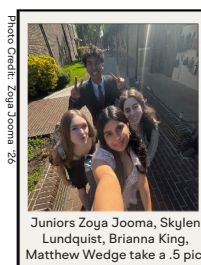


Photo Credit: Lily Shirmohammad '25
Juniors Zoya Jooma, Skylen Lundquist, Brianna King, and Matthew Wedge take a 5 pic!

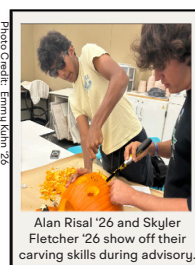


Photo Credit: Lily Shirmohammad '25
Alan Rial '26 and Skylar Fletcher '26 show off their carving skills during advisory.

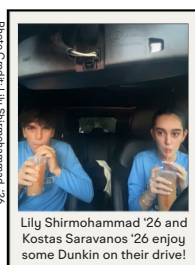


Photo Credit: Lily Shirmohammad '25
Lily Shirmohammad '26 and Kostas Saravanos '26 enjoy some Dunkin' on their drive!

makes the mornings much more entertaining.

And yes, attending a club every lunch period gets frustrating, but clubs really are what you make of them. If I could give some advice to the current and future juniors: use the support that you get from your friends, your college counselor and your family. My junior year has occasionally felt never-ending and overwhelming, but turning back to them for a laugh or some academic aid always helps.

Sometimes, it's going to be rough, I can't lie. But other times, if you lean on those you need to, it'll resemble Ethel Cain's "American Teenager:"

"It's just not my year, but I'm all good out here."

HOW DOES IT REALLY FEEL TO BE A SENIOR?

By Taylor Rauber, Section Editor

From the outside, many people think being a senior is the ultimate high school dream – with freedom, senior privileges and the promise of graduation just around the corner. However, what many people don't see is the endless hours of working that comes with college applications and harder AP classes. So is the idealized version of Grade 12 a reality, or is it really just more work than ever before? Do senior privileges actually make a difference? I asked Berkeley high school students in different grade levels, including seniors themselves, to find the answer.

“THE FIRST SEMESTER OF SENIOR YEAR IS TEN TIMES CRAZIER THAN JUNIOR YEAR.”
- NINA TORRA '25

Part 1: What it Means to be a Senior by Grade-Level

Throughout high school, and even in middle school, students often fantasize about the life of a high school senior, and imagine what it would be like with graduation at their fingertips. As I interviewed each grade level, I noticed that the freshmen and sophomores had a more idealized vision of it. "I feel like in senior year you would have the most freedom ever especially since most seniors are able to drive themselves to wherever when they get the chance," said Audrey Wagoner '28. And she's not wrong. Seniors have the privilege to go off campus for lunch, which makes a lot of students feel less trapped during the school day. "Senior year is probably also the time to make lifetime friends as you go through the same struggles and get ready to head into the real world," she said.

On the other hand, juniors seemed to have a starkly contrasting view of the meaning of 12th grade, recognizing more of the dedication that comes with it. "Being a senior means a lot of work, as in going to bed past twelve every single night and working super hard for three quarters of the year on college apps," said Sunshine Haedike '26. "I also think it means getting closer and closer to being treated like an adult every day," she said.

Part 2: What it Means to be a Senior: The Harsh Reality

Unfortunately, after interviewing many seniors, I found that the idea of a care-free year filled with quality bonding time and new privileges was proven false. "It's a lot more stressful than I thought it would be," said Nina Torra '25. "I thought it would be easy and the hard part is over, but the first semester of senior year is ten times crazier than junior year," she said. This has been proven to be the case for many other seniors as well, whether it be through perfecting a resume and learning how to serve in new leadership roles or balancing harder AP classes with seemingly endless supplemental essays.

Another part of senior year many people don't talk about is all the uncertainty. Going through such difficult classes and telling colleges so much information about yourself in the application process makes a lot of people question the direction they should travel in life.

Essay questions can ask students to reflect on anything from future career path and aspirations, to meaningful activities and elements of their background that have shaped their identity. Writing about these things paves the way for a lot of self reflection, and therefore new uncomfortable questions are inevitable.

Part 3: What It Means to be a Senior: The Freedom

Despite these negative viewpoints, there is light at the end of the tunnel. Not everything about senior year is bad. In fact, many seniors had positive things to say about the year. "Even though it's stressful now, I'm looking forward to second semester," said Anlan Xu '25. When college applications are over, it will be a huge burden off of students' plates.

"Being a senior gives you a sense of freedom. You get to go off campus for lunch, come late if you have study hall and leave early in the afternoon and have more flexibility with schoolwork because teachers are more understanding," said Dalia Halawani '25. This is one advantage of senior year many people don't realize: teachers understand students have a lot on their plates and many are more understanding because of it.

Part 4: Consensus

Overall, senior year comes with a whirlwind of mixed reviews, making it hard to know what to expect. Is it fun, miserable or somewhere in between?

Unfortunately, the truth is that it depends. At the end of the day, 12th grade is what you make of it. While, of course, being the oldest class at Berkeley means taking on more responsibilities than ever before as you approach adulthood, it also means creating memories that will last a lifetime. So, in many ways, the underclassmen perspective of senior year holds more truth to it than it



BEGINNING OF THE END: Seniors Taylor Rauber '25, Anlan Xu '25, Aryan Sethi '25, Ronak Mehta '25, Mariana Lopez del Valle '25 and Zach Haedike '25 gather together for Senior Sunrise on the first day of school. (Photo Credit: Caroline Tukuch Rodriguez '25)

may appear; everything is just a matter of perspective. Together, you'll go through your last homecoming game, last all school convocation and countless other milestones together. So, while it is easy to feel discouraged by the heavy workload, it is important to seize the moment and make the most of the experience. Being a senior is a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and no matter what you make of it, it will be over in the blink of an eye.

DANCING QUEENS AND SHOWSTOPPING SCENES: BERKELEY'S SPRING MUSICAL DAZZLES!

By Kiran Dhaliwal, Section Editor; and Yasmin Virani, Section Editor

Dance party AND sing along?! On March 6, 2025, Berkeley Preparatory School's theatre department made history again! Actors, actresses, tech and other special members behind the scenes premiered Mamma Mia in the MacKechnie Family Theater. Every scene was fluid with beautiful choreography, spotlights that shimmered with the help of a four foot disco ball and impressive vocals by all that moved the audience. It is no surprise that this spectacle was a sold out show all three nights.

The cast had practiced for hours after school from January to the day of the show, perfecting each scene and detail for the audience to enjoy the revival of the 2008 classic. Through practicing to perfection, Mr. Marshall's ideas for the stage became reality. One of his favorite parts of the show was the large diversity in the student body, ranging in athletes, grade levels and experience. Together, the group was able to join together to form bonds like no other.

To take a deeper look into some of whom made the production so special, members of the cast share their experience. Kylan Cot-

ton '27 explained that one of the more bizarre pieces of direction she received during rehearsal to nail her show was to stare at her castmate as seriously as she could to get any sort of nervous laughter out and prepare herself to get into the rhythm of her character, Donna.

Not only were the vocals live, but the instrumental background was as well. In the pit, Mr. Pannetta conducted a group of band members through multiple pieces of music, adding to the magic of the show. Jude Kasti '25 expressed he has been grateful to perform throughout his Berkeley career both from within the pit as well as on the main stage-for this show, he was Bill Austin. Kasti gives his insight on comparison between the roles: "The pit will always feel like my home. Getting to make the music that the audience hears show after show is such a rewarding process, especially after doing it for years. It was somewhat scary to leave the pit and jump on the opportunity to be in the musical. Being on stage for the musical was such an extraordinary experience, and was for sure different from the pit."

The inside scoop of the experience of acting on the Mamma Mia stage will intrigue

you. The cast danced and sang through 27 songs throughout both acts. This required intense choreography rehearsals and choral training with the professional dance and choral choreographers. Cotton shared that one of the hardest parts of playing a lead in the musical was maintaining her vocal cords so she would not lose her voice the days of the performance. One of the major factors that kept the cast motivated and engaged during the rehearsal process was the reward of having a live audience on show day. Kasti described the vibrant energy by the audience as something that initially "caught him off guard", but it fueled him to give his all in his performance and gain a new sense of confidence in his acting.

This musical had one of the largest sets in the entirety of Berkeley theater, spanning the entire stage and beyond. To create this spectacle for the audience required months of building and designing to reach the desired outcome. Without the help of Chris Cook, the success likely would not have been attained.

The show will forever be in the hearts and minds of all who participated and had the opportunity to watch it. It will go down in history as one of the most successful musicals at Berkeley.



FREE ON TUESDAYS AT LUNCH? TRY OUT A NEW CLUB!

FIBER ARTS

Join us Tuesdays in the Jean Ann Cone Library!

Club activities include learning new crocheting techniques and creating a variety of projects.

Contact:
mclead@berkeleyprep.org
zafaraaz@berkeleyprep.org
wilsoame@berkeleyprep.org
dostsar@berkeleyprep.org

S.T.O.P

Standardized Testing
Organization and
Preparation Club

Join us Tuesdays in U250!

ACTIVITIES

Weekly presentations with resources and strategies to improve standardized test-taking skills

Alternate between math, reading, and verbal sections

SWEET TREATS

At every meeting if you complete the worksheets!



UPPER DIVISION'S NEW EXPLORATORY COURSES

By Emma Colitz, Co-Editor-in-Chief

On January 15th, 2025, the Academic Counseling Office announced that graduation requirements are changing for the 2025-2026 school year. In previous years, students have been required to complete two courses in the Physical Education department and two courses in the Visual and Performing Arts department to graduate. But moving forward, the graduation requirements are as follows: a year of Personal Fitness/Health, one Visual and Performing Arts elective, one additional PE or art elective and one choice elective. The introduction of the choice elective category allows students to choose an academic, PE, art or exploratory elective.

Nine new exploratory courses have been developed for the next school year. The new model of exploratory electives allows students to do their own independent work under the guidance of faculty members. Most coursework is done during the day, and there is little homework for students to complete outside of class.

Business of Sports, taught by Richie Warren, will teach students about the sports marketing strategies and business operations behind their favorite sports teams. The course will dive into relevant topics in the sports world, such as Name, Image and Likeness (NIL), and analyze their legal and ethical implications. Through an emphasis on problem-solving and critical thinking, this class will prepare students for careers in the ever-changing world of sports management. Additionally, a variety of guest speakers will provide students with their perspectives on their careers in sports. Speakers will include social media managers, sponsorship agents and even professional athletes themselves. "This is an invaluable opportunity to learn from those who have achieved success in the industry and gain insights that you won't find in textbooks," said Warren.

The Media Lab: Podcasting, Editing and Storytelling, taught by Christine Ortega Gaurke and Library Director CD McLean, allows students to build their own podcasts from the ground up. This class guides students through the research, recording and editing processes of podcasting and leaves them with a professional final product. Students will be able to work in groups to choose topics and interview guests that interest them. The independent nature of this course will provide students with the resourcefulness they will need for a career in media. "The skill that will be most necessary is grit. I imagine that for students, there will be hurdles that come up, and we will have to figure out how to solve them," Ortega said.

Modern China, taught by Daniel Allegri, will study China's rise in modern politics and economics. Students will address misconceptions about China in the media and develop balanced perspectives. The class reads and analyzes primary source documents (written in English) about US-China relations, and students create capstone projects that demonstrate their findings. Modern China is a great option for students interested in studying political science or international relations.

Advanced Topics in Computer Science, taught by Vincent Cimmino, is designed to expand upon the AP Computer Science syllabus. The course emphasizes research, collaboration and real-world problem-solving. Throughout the semester, students will hone their research and innovation skills by creating a presentation about a computer science topic of their choosing. This course is a great option for students who are pursuing college-level research and careers in the technology field.

In Sports in the Digital Era: Media, Marketing and Engagement, taught by Associate Athletic Director Dayna Crawford and Upper Division Visual Arts Chair Jamie Farkas, students will curate animated video graphics and promotional social media content to improve student engagement in sports as well as the Berkeley game-day experience. This course provides students with hands-on experience in graphic design and video production, as they will be using professional software such as Adobe After Effects and Adobe Photoshop. Students will have the opportunity to develop a portfolio of work, which can be used for college applications and in the professional world. "Additionally, they gain experience in storyboarding, keyframing and timing, all of which are essential skills in careers such as graphic design, digital marketing and broadcast media," said Farkas.



TOUCHDOWN: In Sports in the Digital Era, students will create game-day graphics such as this one. (Photo Credit: Zach Haedike '25).

The Craft of American Furniture, taught by Peter Vogel, focuses on traditional woodworking techniques and explores how the American experience has influenced furniture design. The course's format (a 55-minute meeting on one day of the week and a three-hour meeting on another) allows it to be much more efficient than a typical class on the rotating four-day block schedule. Over the course of the year, students will ideally complete an entry table, a wall-hung cabinet and two smaller projects, which they will be able to personalize. The class will also dive into the history of American furniture, from the early

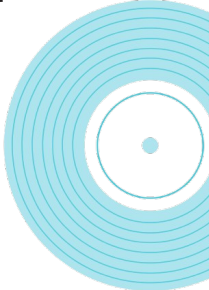
works of the Shakers to modern craft. "Before the rise of modern technology, handcrafted work was the only option. Today, technology has changed that reality, and with it, we risk losing the deep satisfaction that comes from working carefully with our hands and minds," said Vogel.

Modern Music Ensemble - Rock Band, taught by Band Director Brian Panetta, is a new musical ensemble that allows students to actively participate in selecting songs, arranging them, and handling technical elements like sound design. The student-led rock band will explore a variety of genres and is open to students with experience on the guitar, bass, keyboard and drums. Enrollment in this ensemble is by audition only.

Introduction to Songwriting, taught by Upper Division Choral Director Helen Westerfield, will teach students how to write and perform their own songs. "We will study songs from a variety of genres - including jazz, blues, rock, R&B, folk, and country western - as a way of building a foundational understanding of popular music," Westerfield said. Students in this course will improve their skills in lyric writing, musical composition, song structure and recording as they collaborate to develop original songs. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to perform their songs in a casual coffeehouse setting.

Stretch and Strength, taught by Aaron Smith and Joanna Miller, is a great option for students who want to improve their flexibility and strength and develop lifelong fitness habits. With time spent in both the weight room and the yoga room, this course helps students find a balance between training and recovery. The Stretch portion of the class emphasizes the importance of breathwork while stretching. "In addition, students will learn yoga postures that properly stretch tight muscles to help create a more balanced body," said Miller. The Strength portion of the class teaches students how to structure workouts based on their individual needs and how to prevent injuries. This class appeals to any students seeking to maintain active lifestyles, rather than only student-athletes. "They'll learn how to train effectively, recover properly, and maintain mobility—ensuring they stay active and strong well beyond the class," said Smith.

These nine exploratory courses offer opportunities for Berkeley students to learn new skills in nontraditional formats. Since most work for these classes is completed during the day, the exploratory courses allow students to pursue niche interests or discover new passions without significantly adding to their homework load. Teachers have worked hard to ensure the success of these new courses, and they are sure to be a hit among students next school year!



By Sanvi Soma, Section Editor; and Neha Varanasi, Staff Writer

WHICH SAGE DINING FOOD ARE YOU? DEPENDING ON YOUR GRAMMYS PREFERENCES

SONG OF THE YEAR A. A BAR SONG (TIPSY) - SHABOOZEY B. NOT LIKE US- KENDRICK LAMAR C. GOOD LUCK, BABE!- CHAPPELL ROAN D. FORTNIGHT- TAYLOR SWIFT	BEST POP VOCAL ALBUM A. SHORT N' SWEET- SABRINA CARPENTER B. ETERNAL SUNSHINE- ARIANA GRANDE C. THE RISE AND FALL OF A MIDWEST PRINCESS- CHAPPELL ROAN D. HIT ME HARD AND SOFT- BILLIE EILISH	RECORD OF THE YEAR A. ESPRESSO- SABRINA CARPENTER B. NOT LIKE US- KENDRICK LAMAR C. GOOD LUCK BABE!- CHAPPELL ROAN D. FORTNIGHT- TAYLOR SWIFT	BEST POP DUO/GROUP PERFORMANCE A. THE BOY IS MINE - ARIANA GRANDE, BRANDY & MONICA B. GUESS- CHARLI XCX AND BILLIE EILISH C. DIE WITH A SMILE - LADY GAGA AND BRUNO MARS D. US- GRACIE ABRAMS FT. TAYLOR SWIFT
ALBUM OF THE YEAR A. SHORT N' SWEET- SABRINA CARPENTER B. BRAT- CHARLI XCX C. COWBOY CARTER- BEYONCE D. TORTURED POETS DEPARTMENT- TAYLOR SWIFT	RAP ALBUM OF THE YEAR A. ALLIGATOR BITES NEVER HEAL - DOECHII B. THE DEATH OF SLIM SHADY - EMINEM C. WE DON'T TRUST YOU - FUTURE AND METRO BOOMIN D. MIGHT DELETE LATER - J. COLE	COUNTRY ALBUM OF THE YEAR A. F-1 TRILLION- POST MALONE B. HIGHER- CHRIS STAPLETON C. COWBOY CARTER- BEYONCE D. DEEPER WELL- KACEY MUSGRAVES	BEST NEW ARTIST A. SABRINA CARPENTER B. DOECHII C. BENSON BOONE D. RAYE
MOSTLY A YOUR SAGE FOOD IS BURGERS! YOU LOVE THE CLASSIC OPTION AND ENJOY A TRADITIONAL AMERICAN MEAL WITH TOPPINGS AND FRIES ON THE SIDE! THIS MEAL WILL NEVER LET YOU DOWN, AND HAS THE ABILITY TO TURN A LOUSY DAY INTO A BRIGHT ONE. YOU LOVE CATCHY SINGLES AND UPBEAT TUNES THAT PUT A SMILE ON YOUR FACE. DON'T LISTEN TO THE HATERS THAT CALL YOUR TASTE OVERRATED; SOMETIMES ALL YOU NEED IS A COMFORT SONG/MEAL!	MOSTLY B YOUR SAGE FOOD IS GYROS! YOU TEND TO PREFER FOODS RICH IN FLAVOR, CULTURE AND DIFFERENT INGREDIENTS. WHILE SOME PEOPLE MIGHT NOT AGREE WITH YOUR TASTE, YOU DON'T NEED VALIDATION TO THINK THAT YOUR PREFERENCES ARE THE BEST. YOU PREFER SONGS THAT ARE CATCHY AND FAST-PACED BUT ALSO WITH A DEEPER MEANING. KEEP UP THE CONFIDENCE!	MOSTLY C YOUR SAGE FOOD IS ITALIAN! YOU LOVE THE WIDE VARIETY OF SPAGHETTI, MEATBALLS, SALAD AND BREADSTICKS, AND AREN'T SATISFIED WITH A ONE-DIMENSIONAL MEAL. YOU PREFER SONGS THAT ARE UNAPOLOGETICALLY LOUD AND PASSIONATE, AND BELT THEM IN THE CAR WHEN NO ONE'S WATCHING. DON'T LET ANYONE TRY TO DULL DOWN YOUR TASTE FOR BEING DIFFERENT AND FUN. KEEP BEING BOLD!	MOSTLY D YOUR SAGE FOOD IS CHEESE PIZZA. YOU'RE THE TYPE TO BE RUNNING LATE AND HAVING TO CHOOSE A SIMPLER MEAL. THE LAST RESORT. YOUR MUSIC CHOICE IS SLOWER, THOUGHTFUL, AND SOMETIMES... DEPRESSING. DON'T LET ANYONE MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE YOUR TASTE IS BLAND AND FLAVORLESS THOUGH. JUST LIKE A PIZZA SLICE, YOUR SONG TASTE IS LAYERED WITH MEANING, AND IT'S EASY TO OVERLOOK ITS SIGNIFICANCE WITH ITS SIMPLE SURFACE APPEARANCE! AND SOMETIMES, WE ALL JUST NEED TO WALLOW WITH A SAD SONG AND BOX OF PIZZA

FOURTEEN BERKELEY STUDENTS SIGN FOR COLLEGE THIS SPRING

By Megan Juld, Staff Writer

Like their classmates three months ago, fourteen proud students looked into the crowd of Upper Division students on February 5, 2025, at 10:10 AM. As their names were called, each of them signed a paper cementing their bright futures for the next four years.

This spring, a total of 14 Berkeley student-athletes from six different sports programs signed to continue their athletic careers in college. Below is the list of students, the sports they play and the college they chose to sign with.

During the ceremony, Melaney O'Carroll '84 (Athletic Director) wholeheartedly congratulated the group of hardworking student-athletes in her comments.

"This is such a tremendous group of student-athletes...with your own tenacity, grit and plain old hard work and commitment, you secured these exciting future opportunities. In just a few short months, those of you on this stage will become a Swarthmore Garnet, A Union Charger, a Colgate Raider, a Rhodes Lynx, a Bowling Green Falcon, a Notre Dame Fighting Irish, two Penn Quakers, two Tufts Jumbos, a Babson Beaver, an MIT engineer, a Wesleyan Cardinal and a UNC Tar Heel... but you will all be Buccaneers for Life!"

Kate Anderson	Soccer	Swarthmore College
JuJu Aurelien	Football	Union College
Ronav Benak	Golf	Colgate University
Will Ford	Lacrosse	Rhodes College
Rico Garcia	Football	Bowling Green State University
Dallas Golden	Football	University of Notre Dame
Liam Jordan	Cross Country, Track & Field	University of Pennsylvania
Ella Malin	Softball	Tufts University
Blake Miller	Soccer	Babson College
Zahir Orozco	Football	Tufts University
Holland Poe	Softball	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Ryan Pope	Football	Wesleyan University
JoJo Troupe	Football	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Owen Watts	Lacrosse	University of Pennsylvania

UNWAVERING DEDICATION AND PERSEVERANCE PAYS OFF: This February, 14 Berkeley student-athletes signed to continue their athletic careers in college.

O'Carroll also gave a synopsis of these students' high school sports careers.

Kate Anderson began her Berkeley Varsity Soccer career in 8th grade. She has earned a coaches award, a co-MVP and two-time all-state honors in addition to her 49 career goals and 38 assists.

JuJu Aurelien is a 4-year letterman in the Berkeley Varsity Football program. Playing in multiple positions as cornerback, free safety, strong safety and running back (in addition to contributing to the special team), he has over 100 tackles, 3 interceptions, 3 forced fumbles and 10 pass breakups.

Ronav Benak first joined the Berkeley Varsity Golf team in 7th grade and has since been the team MVP three times (2020, 2023 and 2024). A member of the team that won the past five District competitions, he won individual medalist honors twice (2021 and 2024), won individual medalist honors in 6th grade, qualified in Regionals all seven years, qualified for States twice and finished 7th individually during his senior year.



BUCCANEERS FOR LIFE: Kate Anderson '25, JuJu Aurelien '25, Will Ford '25, Ronav Benak '25, Ryan Pope '25, Holland Poe '25, JoJo Troupe '25, Owen Watts '25 (top row), Rico Garcia '25, Dallas Golden '25, Liam Jordan '25, Ella Malin '25, Blake Miller '25 and Zahir Orozco '25 (bottom row) seated onstage at the Lykes Center for the Arts on Signing Day. (Photo Credit: Christopher Woods)

sive back and special teams, he is one of the best playmakers and tied the school record for most interceptions in a single season (six).

Dallas Golden is a 4-year starter, 4-year letterman and captain in the Berkeley Varsity Football program. Playing as running back, wide receiver, defensive back and punt returner, he has received numerous awards: MVP in the state championship game in 2023-2024, consensus 4-star athlete across all publications, Max Preps pre-season All American 2023-2024, Max Preps All American, winner of the Florida 2m Title, Hillsborough county player of the year, 2024 Rivals Top Prospect, Freshman Rivals top 100 underclassman, All-State player and 2023 Big County Preps Player of the Year. In 51 games played, he has a total of 5,644 all-purpose yards, 70 catches for over 1,000 yards, 521 carries for 3,874 rushing yards over three seasons and 59 touchdowns.

Liam Jordan is a 7-year letter winner in Cross Country and Track & Field. One of the best Berkeley distance runners, he holds the school record in the 5K (14:57) and is a 2-time first team all-state runner. In Track & Field, going into his senior season, Liam currently ranks third in school history for the 1600-meter run and second in school history for both the 3200-meter run and the 800-meter run. Recently, he received the Dr. Ben Walker Award, given to the top male cross country runner in Hillsborough County from all schools, regardless of being public or independent.

Ella Malin has been Berkeley's second baseman in the varsity softball program since her freshman year. As leadoff hitter, captain of

the infield and leader of the dugout, she has recorded 78 hits and 40 RBI's in her 82 starting games.

Blake Miller is a 4-year varsity letter-winner in the varsity soccer program. A two-time captain and defensive leader, he played over 63 games as a buccaneer and scored five goals and seven assists. He received the Best Defender Award winner in 2022-2023 and the overall team MVP winner for the 2023-2024 season.

Zahir Orozco is a 4-year letterman in the varsity football program. Able to play on the offensive line and spot play on the defensive line, he used a run-heavy offense strategy to help pave the way for two 1,000 yards plus rushers in the 2023 state playoff run.

Holland Poe has been the starting center fielder for varsity softball program since her 8th grade year. A power lefty hitter, she has recorded 115 hits, 72 RBI's and a career batting average of .417 with eight home runs and 28 doubles.

Ryan Pope is a 4-year letterman in the varsity football program. The 6'7, 300-pound offensive lineman was a part of the offensive line that paved the way for two 1,000-plus yard rushers.

JoJo Troupe is a 4-year letterman, 4-year starter and a captain of the varsity football program. He has been named one of the premier running backs in the state of Florida, an Under-Armour Camp MVP and 3-star running back across multiple publications, in addition to being nominated as a Tampa Bay's Florida high school football Player of the Week. One of the top running backs in Florida, he paved the way for two 1,000 yard rushers (during his freshman year), amassed 3,444 total yards and made 42 touchdowns. His first down at 3rd and 18 secured our football state championship in 2023.

Owen Watts is a 4-year starter, 4-year letter-winner and 2-year captain for the varsity lacrosse program. Named a USA Lacrosse Academic All-American in 2024 and Offensive MVP the past two seasons, he amassed over 60 goals and 25 assists playing for Berkeley.

Congratulations to these 14 student-athletes in the Class of 2025!

Upper Division Poll Results

BEST ALBUM RELEASED IN 2024

- 1. Chromakopia
- 2. The Tortured Poets Department & Short n' Sweet (tie)
- 3. GNX

BEST BREAK SALE TREAT

- 1. Chicken Minis
- 2. Xtreme Juice
- 3. Dippin' Dots

BEST STUDY HALL SPOT

- 1. Library
- 2. Gries
- 3. Café

BEST FOOD NEAR BERKELEY

- 1. Chick-fil-A
- 2. Las Californias
- 3. Chipotle

BEST MOVIE RELEASED IN 2024

- 1. Wicked
- 2. Deadpool and Wolverine
- 3. Twisters & Inside Out 2 (tie)

BEST BERKELEY SPORT TO WATCH

- 1. Football
- 2. Basketball
- 3. Soccer

MOST FUN AP CLASS

- 1. AP Psych
- 2. AP Lang
- 3. AP Physics (1. 2 & C)

BEST SAGE MEAL

- 1. Fried rice & noodles
- 2. Spaghetti & garlic knots
- 3. Burgers & fries

ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB
Join us Wednesdays in G217



ACTIVITIES:

- Beach clean-ups
- Environmental fundraisers
- Recycled artwork
- Eco-Friendly Fridays in convo
- Encouraging sustainability

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A YEAR WITH THE ADVANCED THEATRE ENSEMBLE

By Lily Shirmohammad, Social Media Manager; and Kylan Cotton, Staff Writer

Advanced Theatre Ensemble (ATE) is a Berkeley art elective offered to juniors and seniors who have completed Performance and Production I and II. The class is taught by Chris Marshall, Berkeley's Director of Performing Arts. In ATE, students utilize their skills learned in Performance and Production to produce shows as a company of actors. These shows are displayed during the ATE Black Box Series, consisting of two pieces every season, each with two showings.

This year, they performed Alice vs Wonderland by Brendan Shae in the fall and are now working on Art by Yasmina Reza, to be performed on April 29th at 4 pm in the Berkman Flex Studio. This class pushes students to the next level of theatre and encourages them to explore their creativity. To succeed in ATE, one must be motivated and willing to experiment, while also having fun. "I love being able

to walk into a class full of equally curious and creative people who are passionate about acting," says Adeline Richardson '25. ATE is a truly one-of-a-kind experience with one-of-a-kind people.



ATE's production of Alice vs. Wonderland is a perfect example of the ingenuity that this class explores. The play is a fun, light-hearted twist on the original tale of Alice in Wonderland. It follows a girl named Alice who is forced to replace the lamented Mary-Ann in Wonderland. Not only did the actors need to channel comedic elements into their performances; they had to release their inner child. The rehearsal process was rigorous with research, character work and costume production taking up much of the students' class time. Although the play may seem simple enough to pull off, things like lighting and sound production took many hours to perfect.

According to ATE students, staging was one of the trickiest parts of production. Because all of the ATE performances are in the black box, actors must be careful not to obstruct the audience's view during the show. So, although movements may look natural on stage, everything is meticulously planned for weeks and rehearsed hundreds of times to ensure that everything flows smoothly. These were some of the things discussed in the "talk-back", a Q&A held at the end of performances, allowing the audience to ask questions about the show's production.

Art is very different as it is a play about three intellectuals navigating life in high society when one of them buys a painting. This piece of art is impactful on their dynamic with one another, potentially having the ability to destroy their friendship.

It is a must-see performance consisting of emotion, sarcasm, and unique physicality. Art will undoubtedly meet the standards that ATE's previous work has set.

Photo Credit: Audrey Daniels, Staff Photographer; Layout Designer: Zoya Jooma, Co-Editor-in-Chief

By Zoya Jooma, Co-Editor-in-Chief

HOW LOW CAN YOUR ATTENTION SPAN GO?

A Short Quiz Perfect for Those with Short Attention Spans

YOU'RE EATING DINNER AT HOME. WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

A. I'm scrolling on TikTok, watching a show, texting and somehow still managing to get the food in my mouth.
B. I'm half-focused on my food, half-focused on my phone.
C. What? I'm just eating.

YOU CHECK THE TIME ON YOUR PHONE. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

A. I forget to look at the time and end up scrolling for 20 minutes.
B. I check the time, but somehow end up in another app.
C. I look at the time and calmly put my phone back down.

YOU OPEN TIKTOK TO A VIDEO OF SOMEONE TALKING SLOWLY. WHAT'S YOUR FIRST MOVE?

A. Swipe up immediately. I'm already understimulated.
B. Give it a chance, but I'm already thinking about scrolling soon.
C. I stick with it.

YOU'RE LISTENING TO A SONG AND IT HAS A SLOW INTRO. WHAT DO YOU DO?

A. Skip to the beat drop.
B. Give it a few seconds, but then skip the song.
C. Listen to it from start to finish because the build-up is the best part.

YOU'RE WATCHING A MOVIE AND ALL OF A SUDDEN, YOU BEGIN FEELING A DEEP ANXIOUS URGE TO SCROLL ON TIKTOK, INSTAGRAM REELS OR YOUTUBE SHORTS. WHAT DO YOU DO?

A. Give in. The urge to death scroll is too strong to resist.
B. Try to fight it, but know eventually it'll overcome me and I'll have to stop the show to scroll.
C. This has never once happened to me. Are you guys ok?

YOU SEE PART 1 OF A STORY TIME ON TIKTOK BUT THERE'S NO PART 2. WHAT DO YOU DO?

A. Accept that I'll never get closure.
B. Do a quick search, but move on if it's not easy to find.
C. Turn into a detective until I track it down.

YOU'RE HALFWAY THROUGH THIS QUIZ. HOW ARE YOU DOING?

A. My mind's checked out (are you even reading this?).
B. I'm reading every- ooh! A notification.
C. I'm locked in.

YOU REACH THE END OF THIS QUIZ (FINALLY). HOW DO YOU FEEL?

A. Personally attacked.
B. Exposed.
C. Nervous for my generation.

IF YOU ANSWERED MOSTLY A'S...

Attention Span Level 0-3!
Your brain needs constant stimulation and if something isn't engaging within the first five seconds, you've already moved on. Hopefully, you're still here reading your results, but you might have checked out around question 5.

IF YOU ANSWERED MOSTLY B'S...

Attention Span Level 4-7!
If something catches your attention, you're all in, but the moment it gets boring, you're out. You can binge-watch a show in one sitting but also forget what you were talking about mid-sentence. You probably multitasked while taking this quiz.

IF YOU ANSWERED MOSTLY C'S...

Attention Span Level 8-10!
Your ability to focus and your patience are very impressive for a Gen Z. Are you sure you aren't really a millennial?

Diversity Club

★TOLERANCE★

Join us
Fridays in
U143!

≡EQUALITY≡

Discuss diversity-related current events and topics including but not limited to:
race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and gender

◀JUSTICE▶

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FROM OUR SENIORS TO OUR JUNIORS...

When should I write my college essays?

Stay on the deadlines! Create your list in the summer and knock out the supplementals.

What's some advice you wish someone had given you at this time last year?

Be kind to yourself and others during this stressful process! :)

How should you go about choosing a school to early decision to?

Prestige isn't everything. All that matters is if you love the school and know it would be a great fit for you.

SITES AROUND SCHOOL

CROSSWORD

By Nora Clabby, Staff Writer

ACROSS

5. Main entrance to Berkeley via Kelly Road.
8. This is the name of Berkeley's football field at Newman Stadium.
10. This athletic area is located inside the Straz.
11. Berkeley's tennis complex is named after this man.
12. Popular Berkeley spirit shop.

DOWN

1. This is where students gather in advisory groups during fire drills.
2. This field hosts Berkeley baseball practices and games.
3. This climbing wall is a highlight near Senior Deck.
4. This pickleball complex is a recent addition to Berkeley.
6. This is the official name of 'senior deck'.
7. Students often climb the stairs to this theatre to present during Convocation.
9. Where young Buccaneers experience early childhood education.

*Find the answer key on our Instagram @bpsfanfare

Club activities include learning emergency preparedness strategies, planning disaster relief events, and Red Cross Jeopardy and Bingo

Activities

Learn about first aid medical training, disaster relief, International Humanitarian Law, emergency preparedness, and the use of AEDs

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Interested?



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