

THE FANFARE



presents...


SPRING INTO 2024

Photo Credit: Noelle Booth '24

INSIDE TODAY: *MEANING OF THE THEME*

This year, The Fanfare highlighted what has been such an exciting year and semester filled with new beginnings, and thus, the spring issue was born. With the influx of trends sweeping over the school—water bottles and vintage vinyls—along with historical wins on the gridiron and shining

princesses gliding across the Lykes Center for the Arts stage, the 23-24 school year has been nothing less than eventful. This issue explores the new initiatives, trends and history that have influenced Berkeley students this school year, as we spring into 2024.



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INTRODUCING LAB!: LEADERSHIP AT BERKELEY

By Emma Colitz, Section Editor

This school year, a new leadership initiative is being introduced at Berkeley. Although leadership skills have always been taught in Berkeley classrooms, Upper Division is offering a dedicated leadership seminar for the first time. Starting with the Class of 2026, the Leadership Academy at Berkeley (LAB) is a requirement for students wishing to apply for a major leadership position in the future.

The LAB is divided into two modules—experiential and seminar. The experiential module focuses on teamwork, cooperation and communication. This module, led by Upper Division Physical Education (P.E.) Coach Sean Davidson, involves both indoor and outdoor team-building group activities. The session culminates in students climbing the catwalk of the high elements course. Belaying, or the process of steadying a climber by being their anchor on the ground, is a task usually done by P.E. teachers. However, the LAB teaches students how to belay safely, so the entire operation is run by students. “Students are not only belaying each other, but they are ‘running the show,’ said Davidson. “This forces students into a situation where they have to lead the group verbally. The fact that their classmate is thirty feet up in the air and they are the primary belayer adds an element of responsibility that helps keep everyone laser-focused!”

The seminar module of the LAB takes place over two days, during which Berkeley leaders such as Upper Division Director Ryan Jordan and Assistant Upper Division Director Caroline Lindsey teach students about leadership skills in a classroom setting. This module emphasizes the essential skills that all leaders need to have, while also discussing the different types of leaders and communicators. Students identify their own communication style and learn how they can use it to their benefit.

“I love seeing the students’ confidence build as they practice ways to engage in difficult conversations and further their skills by identifying their communication styles,” said Lindsey. Additionally, students navigate how to have difficult conversations and manage conflicts. At the end of the module, students have the chance to work in small groups in model leadership scenarios.

“THERE ARE SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-GROWTH AND DISCOVERY, AND THE SKILLS THAT STUDENTS WILL DEVELOP IN THE LAB CAN HELP THEM IN ALL AREAS OF THEIR LIVES—PERSONAL, ACADEMIC, ATHLETIC, ARTISTIC AND BEYOND.”

- CAROLINE LINDSEY

The LAB has only had a handful of sessions, but it seems to be effective thus far. Avery Metheny '26, who completed the experiential module, said, “The Leadership Academy at Berkeley was an exciting opportunity to get to know some of my

peers better outside of the classroom and prepare me for the leadership positions I am striving to hold as an upperclassman.” The LAB can help anyone learn about communication and leadership, and the benefits of the program go beyond helping students apply for key leadership positions.



HARD AT WORK: Students prepare to climb on the high elements course. (Photo Credit: Matthew Wedge '26)

“There are so many opportunities for self-growth and discovery, and the skills that students will develop in the LAB can help them in all areas of their lives—personal, academic, athletic, artistic and beyond,” said Lindsey. Clearly, the Leadership Academy at Berkeley is a new and exciting program that will only grow in the years to come.

THE TRUTH BEHIND TAMPA’S GROWING POPULARITY...

By Nora Clabby, Staff Writer

“The whole city has been transformed. . . I think the secret’s out on Tampa,” said Justin Houston, Berkeley’s Director of Summer Programs and Dean of Students for Grades 11-12, when asked about his experience growing up in Tampa.

According to Worth.com, Tampa experienced a “post-COVID population influx.”

Tourism and the arrival of new residents have risen exponentially following the pandemic. Now, Tampa is the third-most populous city in Florida. Tampa Magazine pointed to the appeal of Tampa’s landscape, cuisine, sports and beaches. Whether you enjoy shopping in Hyde Park, visiting museums in Downtown Tampa or running on Bayshore Boulevard—there’s something for everyone in Tampa.

“[TAMPA’S] A GREAT CITY. IT’S A CITY WHERE YOU CAN BE ANYTHING YOU WANT TO BE, AND THAT’S WHAT A CITIZEN DESERVES.”

- JUSTIN HOUSTON

than it seems at first. People come for the attractions, but they stay for everything. They find the inner Tampa.”

On a similar note, Houston said, “Those who have moved down aren’t looking to move the wheel, they’re looking to blend in. People at large care about Tampa and value all the beautiful nature and waterways we have to offer. It’s still a beautiful city with a lot of history.” In other words, the inner beauty of Tampa is what draws people. Newcomers are just as invested in preserving all that Tampa has to offer as those who have lived here their whole lives.

Tampa is what draws people. Newcomers are just as invested in preserving all that Tampa has to offer as those who have lived here their whole lives.

Visit Tampa Bay suggested that Tampa’s welcoming environment lends itself to a flourishing cultural blend. For example, Tampa’s Hispanic population increased following the establishment of Ybor City in the 1880s and thrived ever since. African-American contributions are celebrated every year during the Tampa Black Heritage Festival. Finding out more about Tampa’s native residents is possible through the Tampa Bay History Center. Diversity is a significant part of life in Tampa.

Another enjoyable aspect of Tampa is the food. For newcomers, Houston recommended historic places to get a sweet treat such as the Dairy Joy on Manhattan Avenue and La Segunda, both of which were established over a century ago. Bo’s Ice Cream and Mel’s Hot Dogs provide flashes of the past, while Bern’s Steak House is internationally renowned. Tampa is also home to the first Outback Steakhouse.

When discussing the allure of Tampa, sports are an unavoidable topic. Often referred to as “Champa Bay,” Tampa has seen great success with its major sports teams in the last few years. Just before the pandemic hit in 2020, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers found their footing and won the Superbowl with the addition of Tom Brady. That same year, the Tampa Bay Rays won the American League pennant. The Tampa Baseball Museum can be found in Ybor City, where baseball got its roots in Tampa. The Tampa Bay Lightning also took home the Stanley Cup in 2020,



A POSTCARD FROM TAMPA: The city’s iconic postcard mural was commissioned in 2003 and painted by Carl Cowden III. (Photo Credit: Unsplash)

Although this surge in popularity seems like a benefit, some Tampa residents do not see it that way. Laura Cooper, Berkeley’s Upper Division Counselor, who moved to Tampa a few months ago, said, “A lot of people are upset about people moving into [Tampa] and driving up prices. People who have lived here their whole lives now can’t afford to live here.”

Another Tampa newcomer, Maddy Gordon '27, had a different point of view. She said, “There’s a lot of tourist attractions, but it’s not just that. Tampa has so much more to offer

then won again in 2021, marking two years in a row.

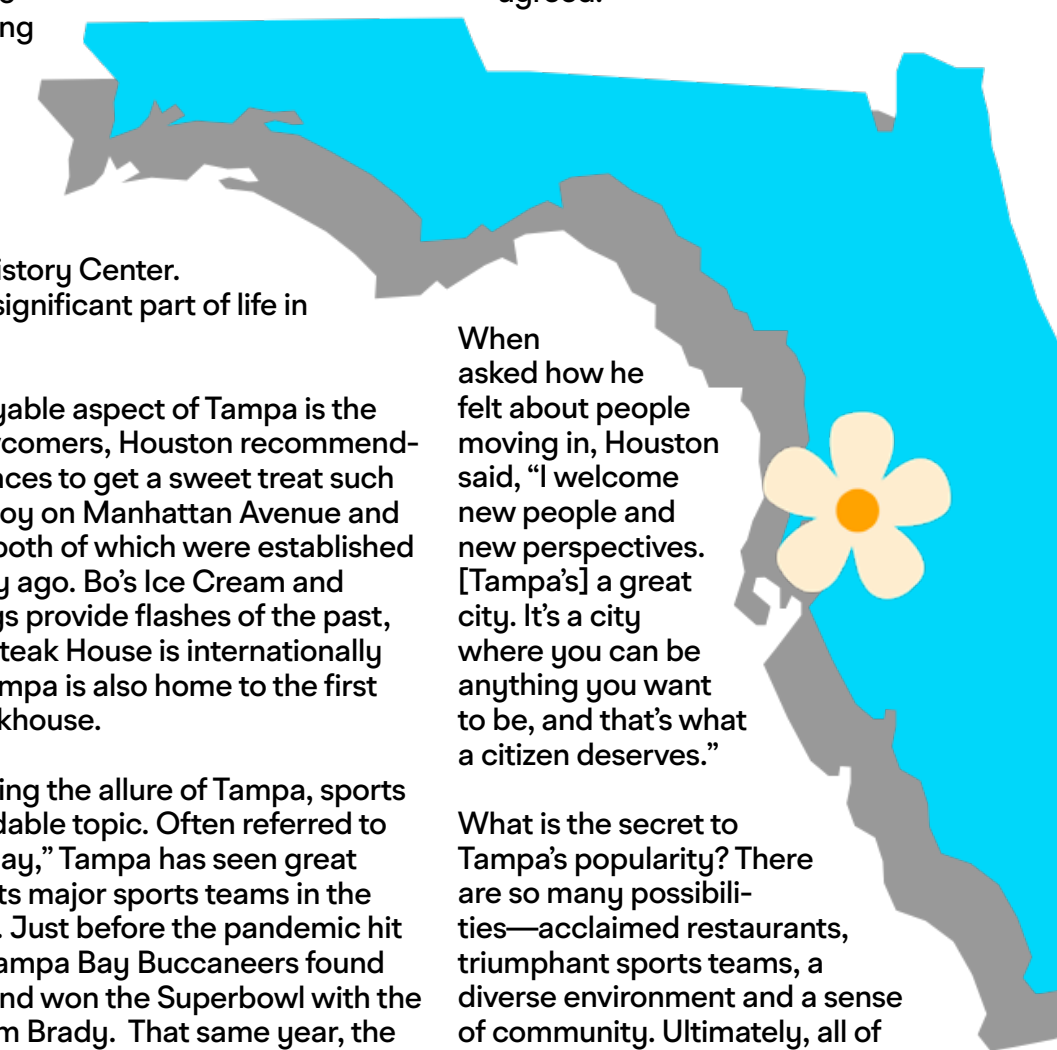
When it comes to sports, Tampa has undoubtedly made a name for itself among major sports teams post-pandemic. However, the biggest impact has been at home. Houston said, “What [our sports teams] have helped create is this small town feel where you’re all cheering for a common goal—it’s very impactful.”

Speaking of the pandemic, Berkeley freshman Kaylee Raffington '27, who recently immigrated from Canada, suggested that Tampa’s COVID policies had contributed to the increase of new arrivals over the past few years. She said, “There’s a lot of restrictions in Canada during Covid. You couldn’t do anything. So we came here, and we could go to school. It’s a lot more free.” She also added that Tampa has not only found success professionally when it comes to sports but also with its high school teams.

Houston commented on the freedom of Tampa as well. He said, “One of the best parts about Tampa is the airport. It’s one of the most efficient airports in America.” Cooper agreed.

When asked how he felt about people moving in, Houston said, “I welcome new people and new perspectives. [Tampa’s] a great city. It’s a city where you can be anything you want to be, and that’s what a citizen deserves.”

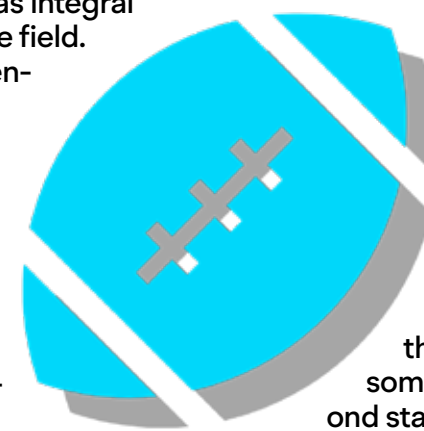
What is the secret to Tampa’s popularity? There are so many possibilities—acclaimed restaurants, triumphant sports teams, a diverse environment and a sense of community. Ultimately, all of these factors are what have made Tampa appealing to those on the outside looking in. Tampa has finally received the stardom it deserves.



BEHIND THE TROPHY: THE OUTSIDE FORCES CONTRIBUTING TO THE TEAM'S WIN

By Avery Metheny, Staff Writer; and Samantha Zophin, Co Editor-In-Chief

In the weeks following the varsity football team's state championship win, there was no shortage of celebration for the football players. Whether it was Mayor Jane Castor declaring a city holiday commemorating the win or the announcements across social media, the boys basked in lots of well-deserved glory. However, many people behind the scenes played just as integral a role as the boys on the field. The many teachers, mentors, parents, coaches, managers and cheerleaders who followed the team along every step of the way were imperative to guide the team to victory.



One group well deserving of some credit for the win was the Berkeley Varsity Cheerleaders. "Cheering in a college football stadium was truly something special. Not only was it exciting to experience the greatness of a true football stadium, but also scary figuring out how to spread our voices and spirit to fans throughout stands triple the size of the ones we are used to. In the end, it was the most fun, rewarding experience hearing the excitement both on and off the field from players and spectators alike," says Sophie Adams '24, Cheer Captain. Between new coaches, uniforms, cheers, dances and a huge group of new members the varsity cheerleading team has had a big year. The win was certainly one none of them will forget. "Getting to go to the state championship game my senior year was such a cool experience! It was definitely different from cheering for a normal football game, as the crowd was much bigger and the stakes were much higher, but overall it was a great end to an amazing foot-

ball season with such an incredible group of girls!" says Lexi Martinez-Monfort '24, Cheer Captain.

A small but mighty group, the football managers were also of great importance and a large part of the boys' win. As managers, they perform many different tasks. When not in the games, managers are responsible for aiding the coaches in any jobs they need done such as writing down speeches and fabricating calendars and rosters. During games the managers work together to keep the players hydrated by giving them water on the sidelines, during timeouts and injury breaks and making sure their halftime is efficient and organized. There were seven managers for the 2023 season, and each one was able to see the amazing journey that was this year's football season. For some of the managers, this is their second state championship appearance after failing to take home the championship in 2021. Sydney Heller '24, the Head Manager during the historic run has been waiting for this moment since she became a manager her freshman year. Heller said, "The state championship meant everything to the team. The morning of the game was electric and the moment I walked into the stadium and saw the team run in, I knew they came to win it all. I was a manager when we made our first state championship appearance and lost so seeing the coaches' and team's hard work finally pay off has been amazing."

One of the most deserving groups of this amazing win is the Sports Medicine Department. An integral part of not only the football program but all of Berkeley Athletics, the Sports Medicine Department oversees the well-being of the many athletes at the school and on the team. Eddie Bunton, Director of Sports Medicine and Assistant

Athletic Director, has been waiting patiently for a state-championship win for Berkeley to call their own since he joined the Sports Medicine Department in 2000. Someone students visit before and after games as a necessary part of their performance, Bunton along with the other trainers are owed much of the credit for this win for keeping the team so healthy. Bunton said, "As I reflect on the journey, and realize all the blood, sweat, and tears that it took Berkeley football to reach the top it once again brings tears to my eyes. I'm so proud of the hard work and positive attitudes that this team had. Led by the seniors this team never rested on their laurels. They set a goal early on and worked tirelessly to attain it." It is truly exciting to see how this win affects so many people not only on the football team, but outside of it.

History has been made and the Berkeley community is beyond proud of both the football team and those around it with their helping hands. The once-in-a-lifetime experience was one enjoyed by many, both in uniform and behind the scenes. The win was certainly something everyone involved will never forget.



A HELPING HOIST: Following their win in the State Championship game, players hoist the trophy won with not only their amazing efforts but also the support of a community. (Photo Credits: Samantha Zophin '25)

nAHS MURAL

National Art Honor Society members paint a mural with elementary students!

Alexa Robles Cortes '25

Oscar Hoversten '24

@ Town & Country Elementary Catherine Zhang '26

Alexa Robles Cortes '25

By Noelle Booth, Head Photographer; and Argana Makati, Co Editor-in-Chief

Congratulations

Jianlin, Nico & Connor

2024 CHESS TOURNAMENT WINNERS



IF THE SHOE FITS: BTS OF THE SPRING MUSICAL—CINDERELLA

By Kiran Dhaliwal and Serena Kachhi, Staff Writers

Each year, the Upper Division Theatre organizes two productions: a fall play and spring musical. "Cinderella," a classic film originally released in 1950 was revived in Berkeley's Upper Division Lykes Center from March 14-16. The classic tale of this Disney princess was magically told through songs, dance and dialogue in the Broadway adaptation of "Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella."

"Cinderella" is the story of a young girl who is mistreated by her evil stepmother and stepsisters. Although the stepmom and stepsisters tell her she is not invited to the Prince's ball, Cinderella's fairy godmother grants her wish to attend through a series of magical events that prepare Cinderella with glass slippers, a gown and a ride. She meets Prince Charming that night, but she suddenly has to leave at midnight as the magical items fade back to normal. In a rush to return home, Cinderella loses one of her glass slippers, so the Prince ventures to find her. He eventually finds Cinderella, and they get married. The play showcases the message that kindness and purity prevail over selfishness and cruelty.

Chris Marshall, director of the performing arts, was in charge of organizing the musical. A student of Marshall, Skylen Lundquist '26, said, "Marshall is just an incredible director, and anyone who has a chance to work with him is so lucky because you can tell the passion he has for theater and the arts."

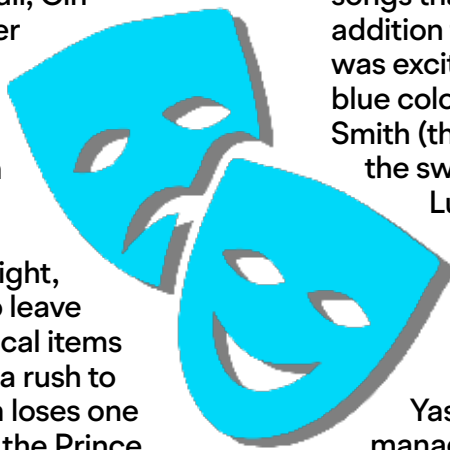
Lundquist stars as Madame, the evil stepmother. She finds it fun to play villains because she can lean into their comedic and overly expressive side. When asked what helps her "get into character," she responded that she "becomes" Madame by thinking of bitter and angry thoughts.

Lundquist also has a mix on Spotify with songs that mimic the vibe of Madame. In addition to the acting, she explained that she was excited about the various costumes of blue colors, floral patterns and frills. "Macy Smith (the costume designer) is absolutely the sweetest person you will ever meet," Lundquist said. "She has a specific vision for the musical, and she has done an amazing job designing the costumes, bringing her vision to life."

Yasmin Virani '26, the assistant stage manager, worked tirelessly alongside Isha Patel '24, the stage manager. Virani explained that she keeps track of the cast, props and "staging," which are the movements and positions actors make on stage. She also ensures the music tracks, microphones, lights and sounds function smoothly. Virani was inspired to take on this role because she is organized and thoroughly enjoys working with peers. As advice for students who are considering joining the musical in the future, she said, "Whether you are applying for a production role or auditioning for a character—Just go for it. don't be afraid because it is such a fun experience."

Veteran Emmy Kuhn '26 performed in Mean Girls, the musical of 2023, and enjoyed it so much she wanted to be a part of it all over again. Kuhn explained that during rehearsal everyone is always working: if some people are practicing their lines on the main stage, others may be working on their choreography or vocals. Alexis Carra Gírbés '99, the dance choreographer, helps the cast consistently learn complex dance steps.

“WHETHER YOU ARE APPLYING FOR A PRODUCTION ROLE OR AUDITIONING FOR A CHARACTER—JUST GO FOR IT. DON'T BE AFRAID BECAUSE IT IS SUCH A FUN EXPERIENCE.”
- YASMIN VIRANI '26



PIT STOP: Band Director Brian Panetta stands with several band members (both students and professionals) in the pit of the stage. (Photo Credit: Kostas Saravanos '26)

Helen Westerfield, the music director, helps to make sure everyone is singing in the right key. Kuhn said that one of her favorite parts of the musical is the song "The Prince is Giving a Ball" because "it tells the story about real life issues that girls go through, so it's really fun to pour all of our emotions out."

The Cinderella musical truly came to life through all the practice and hard work of those involved. In speaking with the cast, it is clear they were dedicated to their roles and excited to show off the production.



MOMENTS BEFORE MIDNIGHT: Prince Charming, Michael Ross '25, and Cinderella, Melanie Rusoff '24, share a dance at the masked ball. (Photo Credit: Kostas Saravanos '26)



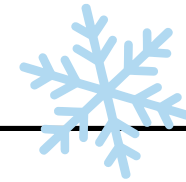
DOES IT FIT?: Civilians watch as Prince Charming, Michael Ross '25, fits Cinderella, Melanie Rusoff '24, for the lost shoe. (Photo Credit: Kostas Saravanos '26)

DECADES QUIZ!: 2010s vs 2020s

By Neha Varanasi and Sanvi Soma, Staff Writers

Pick an animated movie:

- 1** a. Frozen (2014)
- b. Encanto (2021)

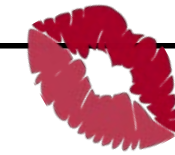


Pick a Taylor Swift bop!

- 3** a. "Shake It Off (1989)" (2014)
- b. "Is it Over Now? [(1989) Taylor's Version]" (2023)

Which makeup style do you prefer?

- 5** a. "Full Glam" Makeup
- b. "Clean Girl" No-Makeup Makeup



Which artist do you prefer?

- 6** a. Katy Perry
- b. Olivia Rodrigo

Which adaptation of Percy Jackson do you prefer?

- 6** a. "Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief" movie (2010)
- b. "Percy Jackson and the Olympians" show (2024)

Which classic game is your groove?

- 6** a. Subway Surfers
- b. Among Us



Which actor is your favorite?

- 6** a. Zac Efron
- b. Jacob Elordi

If you answered mostly As...

...you belong in the 2010s! You prefer old classics over the modern and aren't afraid to embrace old fashion, makeup, and music trends in your everyday life. You love to binge your favorite old movies and games, not caring that they might not be popular anymore. Keep doing you, girl. You rock those skinny jeans!

If you answered mostly Bs...

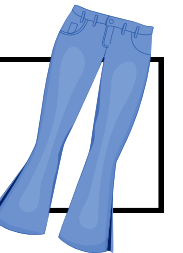
...you belong in the 2020s! You flaunt your love for modern brands and whatever's in style. You gather inspiration from your favorite influencers on apps like TikTok to keep up with popular topics and trends, and you wouldn't be caught dead without your Lululemon. Keep slaying queen, your skin is glowing from that 50-step no-makeup makeup!

Do you prefer the classics or sequels?

- 2** a. The Hunger Games (2012)
- b. The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes (2023)

Which jean type are you?

- 4** a. Skinny jeans
- b. Flare jeans



Which clothing brand do you prefer?

- 6** a. Forever 21
- b. Lululemon

Which TV show are you binging?

- 6** a. Liv and Maddie (2013)
- b. Wednesday (2022)



Which Marvel movie is your favorite?

- 6** a. Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 1 (2014)
- b. Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3 (2023)

Which social media are you scrolling on?

- 6** a. Instagram
- b. TikTok

Which actor is your favorite?

- 6** a. Emma Watson
- b. Margot Robbie



SPINNING BACK IN TIME: ALL ABOUT THE VINTAGE VINYL TREND

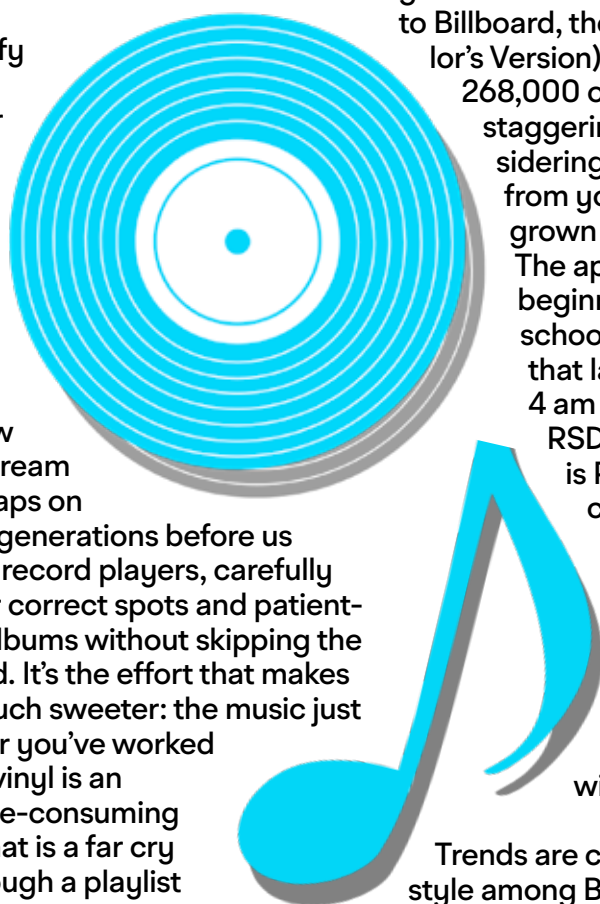
By Zoya Jooma, Section Editor

Listening to music through a turntable or digging through crates at a record store sounds like activities of the past, things that you might see in an 80s movie. However, the trend of collecting and listening to vinyl records has gained popularity in the last few years, especially among high schoolers.



BRIGHT AND EARLY: On RSD, hundreds line up outside record stores for limited edition vinyl in the morning. (Photo Credit: Sanvi Soma '26)

In the age of Spotify and Apple Music, vinyl might appear antiquated. But in an era when everything is digital, having a tangible form of music is enticing particularly to us "screenagers" at Berkeley. We grew up being able to stream music with a few taps on our phones, while generations before us had to set up their record players, carefully place discs in their correct spots and patiently listen to entire albums without skipping the songs they disliked. It's the effort that makes the reward that much sweeter: the music just sounds better after you've worked for it. Listening to vinyl is an immersive and time-consuming experience, one that is a far cry from shuffling through a playlist online.



A unique aspect of vinyl is that it comes in different colors, shapes and sizes. Artists can choose colors that match the aesthetic of the album, such as Lana del Rey's cool green vinyl for her album Did You Know That There's A Tunnel Under Ocean Blvd, released in early 2023. Unlike the intangible online music we listen to, vinyl can be made into different shapes. Laufey, a newly popular singer-songwriter released a special heart-shaped vinyl for her fan-favorite song Valentine. Similarly, Taylor Swift released tie-dye blue and pink heart vinyl for her album Lover Live from Paris.

Many Upper Division Berkeley students are just beginning to start their vinyl collections. Mia Accardi '26 said, "I have four pieces of vinyl currently: folklore (Taylor Swift), Harry's House (Harry Styles), 1989 (Taylor's Version) (Taylor Swift), reputation (Taylor Swift) and Speak Now (Taylor's Version) (Taylor Swift) and definitely would like to get more." New collectors have a wide variety to choose from with many artists selling physical records. Vinyl can be a significant source of income for these artists because the revenue from streaming services is minimal for musicians. Additionally, artists entice purchasers with limited edition vinyls that have special artwork or bonus tracks such as Olivia Rodrigo's vinyl for GUTS. She released four different colored discs for the album, each of which contained an unreleased song.

Statistics reveal that vinyl has recently gained much more popularity. According to Billboard, the album Speak Now (Taylor's Version) sold 504,000 copies and 268,000 of those were on vinyl. That is a staggering amount, especially considering that many of Swift's fans are from younger generations who have grown up listening to music digitally. The appeal of physical music is just beginning to be revealed to high schoolers. Elizabeth Lai '26 said that last year she woke up "around 4 am to go line up to buy vinyl for RSD!" The holiday she refers to is Record Store Day which was created in 2007 to celebrate independently owned record stores, and many wait in line on this day for a chance to snatch up limited edition vinyl. This is a great opportunity if you want to begin or add to your collection: RSD will be on April 20th this year.

Trends are constantly going in and out of style among Berkeley students, but vinyl is one that may stick for a while. Not only is vinyl readily available for purchase as our



RARE FIND: Melodrama by Lorde can be found among the shelves of record stores in Tampa. (Photo Credit: Neha Varanasi '26)

favorite artists continue to sell it, but it also has an inherent cool factor that makes it desirable. This comes from its antiquity, the fact that it was the music of our parents and grandparents and is now being upcycled by today's artists and designers to appeal to us. Overall, there is something enjoyable in listening to a 2024 album on technology created in the 1940s. It is a connection to previous generations that we just can't get using Spotify.



Join **GOALS** club! Work with kids from RCMA. Participate in and host fun and community building activities.

Room U134 | Weekly meetings on Monday

Upper Division POLL RESULTS

BEST ALBUM RELEASED IN 2024 (SO FAR)

1. American Dream & Eternal Sunshine (tied)
2. Vultures 1
3. We Don't Trust You

BEST FOOD NEAR BERKELEY

1. Chick-Fil-A
2. Las Californias & Tropical Smoothie (tied)
3. Wawa

BEST BREAK SALE TREAT

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

BEST MOVIE RELEASED IN 2024 (SO FAR)

1. Dune: Part II
2. Kung Fu Panda
3. One Love: Bob Marley

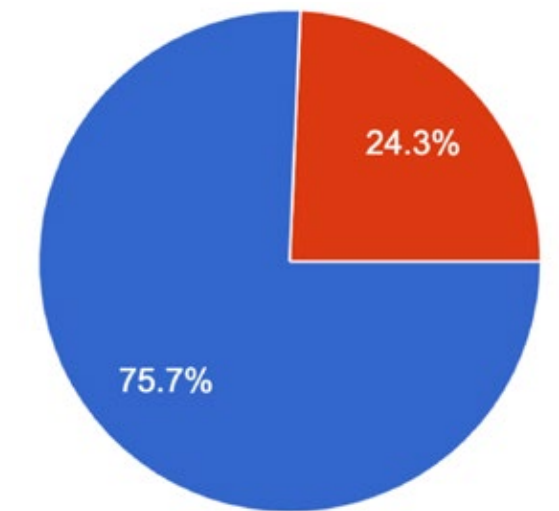
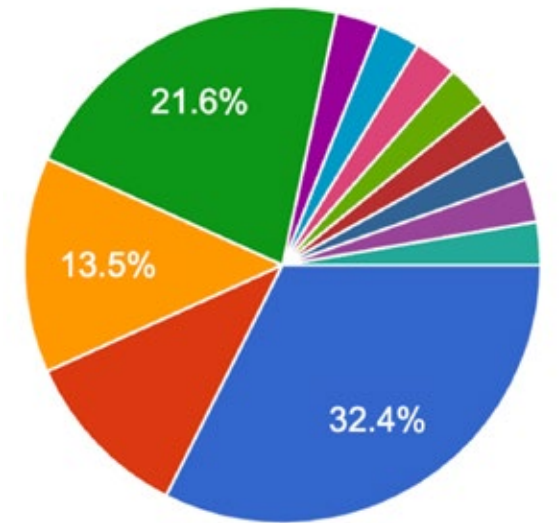
HAVE YOU KEPT UP WITH YOUR RESOLUTION?

Annie Graff and Laya Kumar, Staff Writers

It's been over three months since the beginning of 2024, and we checked in to see how your New Year's resolutions were coming along.

Out of all the resolutions, the most common was unsurprisingly to **get more exercise**, with a close runner-up of **focusing more on school**. Coming in third place was **spending more time with family and friends**, with learning a new skill or hobby coming in last place. However, we got some more answers aside from those common four. Three people devoted themselves to drinking more water, and have kept their resolution up to this point. Brianna King '26, said, "I wanted to make my New Year's resolution to drink more water because I was drinking very little and feeling the side effects. I've been able to keep the resolution by being more active, and by paying more attention to tracking how much water I'm consuming."

We are happy to announce that a vast majority of people have **stuck with their resolutions**, with only 24.3 percent of people having **given up**. As we continue through 2024, we hope that we can all continue to improve and challenge ourselves with our goals!



E U I D W J C Y Q G L C S J R
 S S S H O A O A W H R T K M G
 I N V U J H M D Z I K G J H O
 R O F F C A M P U S L U N C H
 N X U U P D E I Y G V X S M M
 U B W U Q B N K Q C X C T D I
 S E D A S L C S T X X V Q G S
 R Y S I G L E R H D Y Y I R H
 O H T O A T M O E Q T B A X P
 I L Q M V A E I J I L W K Q J
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 E G B X R M T E Z E P C H J Y
 S Y M D W Q G S T J K F M D C
 T E T A E R U A L A C C A B M
 B E I D R X W Q J R Z L Y J N

Senior [SCAV]ENGER

Baccalaureate Commencement

Off Campus Lunch Senior Skip Day

Senior Sunrise Water Wars

By Riley Zophin, Staff Photographer

SPRING SEMESTER FUN



THUMBS UP: Mateo Brink '26 is hopeful about winning the Writing Center Valentine's Day Jeopardy and taking home the Crumbl Cookie prize.



KITE CREATION: Ronak Mehta '25 and Aryan Sethi '25 celebrate the Indian kite festival of Uttarayan by decorating a unique kite.



PIPING POINTERS: Bailey Higgins '24 receives cookie counseling from Scarlett Ray '25.



SEISMIC SNOWBALL: Noah Sams '25 prepares to launch a snowball at the opposing team.



VALENTINE'S DAY SMILES: Johnathan Poisson '25, Drew Powell '25 and Harris Rankin '25 are ready to play Jeopardy!



ZOYA & SANVI'S WATCH PARTY: PERCY JACKSON & THE OLYMPIANS

By Zoya Jooma, Section Editor; and Sanvi Soma, Staff Writer

WARNING: Contains Spoilers (and controversial opinions).

Episode 1: I Accidentally Vaporize My Pre-Algebra Teacher

Zoya: First off, I love how the episode names refer to actual chapters in the book. I feel like it pays tribute to the book series that the readers know and love.

Sanvi: I couldn't agree more. These books made up our childhoods, and it's amazing to see them finally brought to life.

Zoya: I would say the first episode was pretty accurate to the books, plot-wise. We got clips of Percy's childhood, an introduction to Grover (Percy's satyr best friend) and Sally (Percy's mom), and of course, the Minotaur scene.

Sanvi: I loved those scenes! Also, I was so excited to see Percy reaching Camp Half-Blood after the minotaur attack. One thing I noticed that was different from the books was that Percy's stepfather Gabe was less of an antagonist in the show towards Sally and Percy.

Zoya: Totally. I almost felt bad for him, with the "losing at imaginary poker" and all. Overall, we give this episode a 9/10. It was a great introduction to the show and definitely left me excited for Episode 2.

Episode 2: I Become Supreme Lord of the Bathroom

Sanvi: Episode 2 kicked off with Percy's arrival at Camp Half-Blood and the introduction of new characters like Luke Castellan (son of Hermes) and Annabeth Chase (daughter of Athena). Luke was quick to welcome Percy to the camp as an unclaimed demigod in Cabin 11. Meanwhile, Annabeth maintained her distance observing Percy from afar.

Zoya: It was nice to see Luke acting like a big brother to Percy, but I was also so glad they included some scenes of Percy struggling to find his place at Camp Half-Blood at first. In the books, we don't get a lot of Percy's anxiety about fitting in but it was nice to see it in Episode 2. For example, we see him being bullied by Clarisse, a hostile daughter of Ares.

Sanvi: I loved the actress for Clarisse! I feel like she portrayed the character well, especially during the scene of Percy snapping her spear in half during Capture the Flag. Author Rick Riordan put a lot of thought into his

casting, choosing talented actors who brought these characters to life.

Zoya: I agree 100%. On the same topic, I loved the interactions in this episode between Annabeth and Percy. You can tell the actors have great chemistry. They're the perfect pair to bring 'Percabeth' (the fans' name for the couple) to the screen.

Sanvi: The ending left the audience in suspense after Percy was claimed as the son of Poseidon at the end of Capture the Flag. As the son of one of the three major gods, Percy found himself chosen for the task of retrieving Zeus' lightning bolt to prevent the outbreak of war among the Olympians. Overall, we rate this episode a 9.5/10.

Episode 3: We Visit the Garden Gnome Emporium

Zoya: This episode was pretty controversial. It covered the beginning of Percy's quest to find the bolt, as he faced monsters and other threats. We were anticipating the iconic Medusa scene exactly as the books had portrayed it, but we were robbed! In the book, Percy, Annabeth and Grover stumble upon Medusa's lair (Auntie Em's Garden Gnome Emporium) by accident and have no idea what enemy they are facing. However, in the show, they know exactly what they are walking into and willingly enter Medusa's home.

Sanvi: I agree that there is a big difference in the plot. Additionally, I noticed that Medusa's character was given more of a background, and treated as a victim rather than a monster, similar to Gabe. Medusa tells her sob story of how she was mistreated and cursed by Athena, whom she had previously idolized. A parallel between her character and Annabeth's can be observed, as Medusa warns Annabeth against idolizing her mother as she once did.

Zoya: There were definitely some pros and cons to the changes they made with Medusa. This episode also showed us some tension between Percy, Annabeth and Grover. Back at camp, Percy is told he will be betrayed by someone he trusts and therefore hesitates to get close to his questmates. This was another key difference between the book and the show because the book trio had an immediate connection that allowed them to trust each other implicitly.

Sanvi: We also get a glimpse of Percy's sassy side in the well-known scene of Percy mailing Medusa's head to Olympus. It was comforting to see this scene survive in the TV series with all the changes made in the episode.

Zoya: We both loved the last scene, which featured Lin-Manuel Miranda as Hermes the Messenger God. He was seen delivering Percy's special package to the Empire State Building, or Olympus. We would rate this episode a 6/10, for all of the seemingly unnecessary changes they made.

Episode 4: I Plunge to My Death

Sanvi: This episode confused me. There were many changes in the plot compared to the book. One example is that the episode starts on a train where the trio is chased by Echidna, mother of monsters, and her pet Chimera. This did not occur in the book, where instead the kids encountered the monster in the St. Louis Arch while sightseeing.

Zoya: I agree. Another huge change was that when Percy was fighting the Chimera in the show, he fell through a hole in the floor that the Chimera had burned and dangled there before falling through. In the book, Percy prays to his father and chooses to jump out of the Arch into the Mississippi River below, escaping the Chimera after admitting that fighting it would be futile.

Sanvi: In addition, I noticed that Riordan changed this plot detail for the live-action series to account for the fact that it would be impossible to jump from the St. Louis Arch into the river as it is much too far. In the show, when Percy falls out of the hole, a hand of water snatches him up and breaks his fall.



Zoya: That was a change that made sense. One scene that I really liked in this episode was when Annabeth told Grover and Percy to save themselves and leave the Arch. Instead of leaving, Percy deceived Annabeth by offering her his sword, Riptide, and then quickly turning around to push her to safety. It was a cool maneuver to watch, and it showed the audience Percy's loyalty and bravery, traits that are emphasized in the book.

Sanvi: The episode concludes with Percy drowning in the river, when he hears a mysterious voice that tells him to breathe, and he discovers his underwater breathing abilities. Overall, due to the surprising setting change, we rate this a 7/10! The fighting and interactions between the characters were on point, but some details were confusing as they steered away from the book a lot.

Episode 5: A God Buys Us Cheeseburgers

Zoya: The beginning of this episode was adorable, with Percy's reunion with Annabeth and Grover after he fell from the Arch in the previous episode. We see a lot of relationship development between Percy and Annabeth in this episode, as they are separated from Grover for much of it. They have deeper conversations and hug for the first time, which I'm sure the audience loved.

Sanvi: The episode continues as the trio discovers that they must travel to Santa Monica for the next step of their adventure. On their way, they meet the war god Ares, who makes an offer to help them if they retrieve his shield from an amusement park. I love the casting for Ares, as the actor truly exemplified the fiery personality of the god through his dialogue along with his signature leather jacket and motorcycle.

Zoya: The casting for Ares was definitely on point. Some of my favorite scenes of the series occurred in the amusement park that Ares sent the group to. However, in the show, only Annabeth and Percy go to the park, and Grover volunteers to stay behind with Ares. This was a surprising twist, as Grover plays an integral role in the park in the book. I wasn't sure what to expect with the interactions between Grover and Ares, and I was once again taken aback. Grover tries to fool Ares into a confession, as he thinks Ares is the one to steal the bolt. Seeing this manipulation from Grover felt odd, as Annabeth, Athena's child, is usually the schemer of the group.

Sanvi: I agree. Another huge difference between the book and the show was in how they retrieved Ares' shield. In the book, they find the shield in the Thrill Ride O' Love which is secretly a trap placed by the god Hephaestus. Percy and Annabeth face robotic spiders and are broadcast live to Olympus as a form of humiliation. None of this occurs in the show, however, where one of them must sacrifice themselves by turning to gold

while the other leaves with the shield. In this version, Percy turns to gold and Annabeth faces Hephaestus himself, convincing him to let them both leave. This was an interesting change that strengthened the bond between Percy and Annabeth but felt unnecessary as the book scene also provided this.

Zoya: I think the acting during that scene was skillful, and I can appreciate what the show was trying to do by adding more tension. However, I would have loved to see the robotic spiders portrayed in real life. At the end of the episode, after Annabeth and Percy return the shield to Ares, we get another huge cliffhanger. Grover claims he knows who stole the master bolt, which was a huge shock to me as none of them knew this until the book's last few chapters. I give this episode an 8.5/10 for the great acting, but the lack of the Thrill Ride O' Love scenes was disappointing.

Episode 6: We Take a Zebra to Vegas

Sanvi: The episode picks up with the trio taking a ride to Las Vegas in an animal transport vehicle. They manage to message Camp Half-Blood and reach Luke, who warns them about tension in the camp which is accurate to the book. The trio ends up at the Lotus Casino and falls under the trance of the Lotus spell, where they become distracted and forget about their mission. This scene is the same as in the book, however, it directly contrasts with the infamous Lightning Thief movie where the three kids fall into the same trap by eating lotus flowers which then distract them from their mission.

Zoya: I'm glad you mentioned the movie because the Lotus Casino scene was one of the things that fans enjoyed from it, even though it was not accurate to the books. Many, including me, were hopeful that "Poker Face" by Lady Gaga would be playing in this episode as it had in the movie. However, we were met with "Levitating" by Dua Lipa. Looking back, this song was probably a better fit for the younger audience as it was recently popular.

Sanvi: I have to admit, despite the more relevant song, I was secretly hoping for a return of the iconic "Poker Face". After the "Levitating" scene, fans were met with the reap-

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pearance of star Lin-Manuel da as Hermes. This was not a portrayal of the books, as the trio never with the god at all in this chapter. After Hermes refused to help them, the kids decided to steal his magical car to reach Santa Monica. During this scene, fans were gifted with a hilarious scene of Percy's attempt at driving.

Zoya: Percy's driving was probably one of the best parts of this episode for me. I was just annoyed that there were so many other inaccuracies. For example, in Santa Monica, a naiad tells Percy that his team has missed the summer solstice deadline and has failed their mission. I was appalled by this, as Percy makes the deadline in the book. Another weird occurrence was that Naiad gave Percy four magic pearls that would save him, Grover, Annabeth and Percy's mother from the Underworld in the next episode. Percy is only gifted three pearls in the book, which heightens the tension as he is forced to choose who to save. I just felt that the extra pearl was unnecessary and irksome.

Sanvi: I would rate this episode fairly low, around 6/10 due to the inaccuracy and audacity of the plot changes. However, despite the changes, the episode brought back nostalgic scenes of the casino as well as new hilarious interactions between characters.

Episode 7: We Find Out the Truth, Sort of

Zoya: This episode's start was very jolting. We find Percy, Annabeth and Grover in a mattress store which they claim is the secret entrance to the Underworld. I didn't love this, as the entrance is the Hollywood sign in the book, which feels much more appropriate. They somehow already know that the owner of the store is Procrustes, an evil son of Poseidon. Contrastingly, in the book, the trio enters the store not knowing the monster that lives inside. The struggle between Percy and Procrustes, or "Crusty" as he is referred to, is very quick in the show, but it is more of a drawn-out battle of wit in the book. Overall, I entered the episode feeling disoriented and unsatisfied.

Sanvi: I felt the same way. The scene seemed rushed and unfinished, leaving many viewers confused. (Continued on Page 13)



SENIOR Advice

24

Start early on your applications. Make the right decisions. Be genuine.



No one's process looks the same so don't compare them.

Don't be scared to apply to colleges for fear of rejection- the feeling of regret at never applying will be so much worse than the feeling of rejection (or possible acceptance).



Being committed to college is not the last step, you have to keep pushing, find something interesting, and maintain your passions; the end, the finish line is where you close your eyes for the final time. I believe in you.

LOCK IN

Start early and take your time.



Long story short, through my experiences I believe very strongly that... 1. stats get you in the conversation. 2. ECs/awards outline stories and can catch eyes. 3. essays paint those stories and can get you admitted.

Write 2-3 drafts of each essay that are complete unique from each other. Then choose what stands out from each to make your final essay.

You're going to end up where you belong, so don't stress too much.



Everything will work out!!



**anonymous submissions by seniors



The episode becomes more puzzling as it continues, showing the trio entering the Underworld that resembles neither the book's description nor the movie's portrayal. The setting depicts a rocky desert, whereas in both the book and movie the Underworld appears as a fiery inferno. This change in the environment was perplexing, as it did not represent the danger and peril that the characters faced. The disappointing CGI of the three-headed dog, Cerberus took away from these elements as well. This scene included Grover getting eaten by the dog, causing him to lose his magic pearl which brought them back to the book-accurate number of three total.

Zoya: Yeah, I really disliked the whole getting-an-extra-pearl-then-losing-it plot. The show also added a scene where Annabeth becomes trapped in the Fields of Asphodel and must use another pearl to escape. This left Percy and Grover alone in the Underworld with only two pearls. This situation was similar to how Percy and Annabeth were alone in the amusement park in Episode 5. Dropping the trio down to two people multiple times in this first season was odd, as fans rarely imagine them separated.

Sanvi: This choice to send Annabeth home was surprising to me. With the trio down to just Percy and Grover, the pair found themselves at the familiar scene of Grover being dragged into the pit of Tartarus by the shoes that Luke gifted Percy. This allowed Percy to discover that the one behind the upcoming war was the titan Kronos. It was relieving to see accuracy in this scene, as it is a major plot point of the book. However, the later scene was portrayed differently with the sudden discovery of the lightning bolt in Percy's backpack. In the book, it was in front of Hades where it was revealed that Percy had been carrying the bolt the whole time, making him look guilty. However, in the show, Percy and Grover use the bolt to bargain with Hades to return Sally Jackson.

Zoya: Honestly, the Hades scene was difficult for me to watch. He was funny and nice in the show, which was very uncharacteristic of the God of Death. He didn't seem menacing or even frightening to Percy, who easily bargained with him. This episode was made better by the interspersed scenes we got of Sally Jackson and Poseidon's relationship when Percy was a little kid. Although these were not included in the book, I enjoyed seeing Sally's perspective on raising a demigod. I would give this episode a 5.5/10 for the 'crusty' CGI and odd plot changes.

Episode 8: The Prophecy Comes True

Sanvi: This episode was a roller coaster of a finale. It kicks off immediately with Percy confronting Ares in a duel that ultimately results in Percy winning Hades' helm of darkness with his use of water powers. This scene was very well acted out, with impressive stunts and dialogue on both sides. Percy then travels to Olympus to confront Zeus by reaching the 600th floor of the Empire State Building. The scene of meeting Zeus was interesting and well thought out. The actor of Zeus, Lance Reddick, mastered the portrayal of the intimidating and powerful character through his performance in this scene. This scene also featured the touching moment of Poseidon and Percy meeting for the first time, a significant point in both the show and the book.

Zoya: I feel like Percy is much more confrontational towards Zeus in the show. In the book, he is very nervous about approaching the god, but he does not hesitate in the show to criticize Zeus for starting a war between the gods. Poseidon appears here to save Percy from being destroyed by Zeus, and the father and son have a meaningful conversation. I liked seeing this new relationship begin between the two of them and hope to see more of it next season.

Sanvi: This ending broke me. The confrontation between Percy and Luke was possibly one of the most anticipated scenes in the show. It lived up to its hype and even went beyond in its details. For example, Luke's betrayal is especially heartbreaking after Percy apologizes for drawing Luke's blood in their duel. Additionally, in the show, Annabeth appears in the scene to face Luke and the breaking friendship between the two is especially painful to watch as the incredible acting truly brings the betrayal to another level. The episode ends with Percy, Annabeth and Grover parting ways for the year promising that no matter what happens they will be together next summer to face Luke and Kronos. I rate this episode a solid 9.9/10 for its incredible character performances and emotion.

Overall Thoughts:

Zoya: Both the beginning and end of this show were amazing, and although there were some scenes from the books that were cut out here and there, I definitely think it is worth watching.

Sanvi: I agree. Despite some inaccuracy, this show was binge-worthy and included impressive stunts, acting and nostalgia bringing joy to all Percy Jackson fans.

Zoya: I'm already missing the Tuesday night episode releases, and I can't wait for Season Two.

Cards n' Cookies

...A FANFARE BRAK EVENT



Alexa Cortes Robles '25

By Kostas Saravanos, Staff Photographer

WHICH WATERBOTTLES ARE REALLY WORTH YOUR TIME?

By Taylor Rauber, Section Editor

Be honest with yourself for a second. When was the last time you took a drink of water? Do you really keep track of your hydration, or are you just drinking water when you feel like it? As Berkeley students navigate the hustle and bustle of their busy lives in and outside the classroom, hydration can often be overlooked. One great solution many Berkeley students have chosen is to bring water bottles to school! Regardless of whether students bring them for peak functionality or to follow trends, water bottles provide an easy and fun way to stay hydrated. These bottles come in all kinds of shapes and sizes and are an effective way for the Berkeley community to express themselves. However, with water bottles becoming a trend amongst adolescents and the uptake in water bottle production, it is almost impossible not to feel overwhelmed with all the options at your disposal.

So, how can you tell which water bottle is truly the best? Not to worry! Hopefully, this article will provide you with a starting point by providing popular water bottles among our community, and the reason the students invested in them.



BOTTLE ENTHUSIAST: Mariana Lopez de Valle '25 shows off her vast collection of cute colored water bottles, including her turquoise Simply Modern. (Photo Credit: Gaby Hernandez '25)

TYPE 1: SIMPLY MODERN

The first popular water bottle brand that can be spotted quite frequently around the Berkeley campus is Simply Modern. The brand is popular because it is lightweight, has variety and is inexpensive. Mariana Lopez de Valle '25 describes her Simply Modern water bottles as "the perfect size because it

holds a lot of water, but not so much that it doesn't fit in my pocket." Another one of her favorite parts of the bottle is the straw due to the compactness of its structure and the low profile handle that comes with it.

But is this water bottle as perfect as it seems on the surface? Other Simply Modern users have reported that despite the other positive qualities of the bottle, the paint is prone to chipping within the first few months of use, and the flip cap seems to lack security. Even with these cons in mind, they seem pretty minor compared to the pros. So overall, Simply Modern is a very well-rounded and functional water bottle. Can any brand top that?

TYPE 2: TAKEYA

Another type of water bottle often spotted on campus is the Takeya. Takeyas are mainly known for the security of their caps, which fasten tightly and guarantee minimal spillage—a trait any quality water bottle should possess. Another feature with positive feedback is the insulation, which has been reported to work very well. "I like my water bottle because it keeps my water cold, and it is easy to carry around," says Noelle Booth '24. Finally, one unique feature you might not have been aware of is the Takeya protective sleeve. Many people enjoy this feature because it prevents your water bottle from making a sound when you place it down on a desk during class so as not to interrupt.

On the other hand, there are a few major criticisms people have had for this brand. The first is that the designs are rather limited, as they only come in solid colors. One of the most popular demographics that invest in water bottles is students: college, high school, middle school—you name it. Regardless of their ages, all students are trying to figure out who they are, and often experiment with this by expressing themselves through their style... or the things they own. If experimenting with style is important to you, Takeya might not be the ideal brand. However, it has many other redeeming qualities that makes it just right for other people.

TYPE 3: STANLEY

Last but not least is the water bottle that everyone knows and loves: the Stanley. With so many cute designs and accessories that go with it, what's not to love? "I really enjoy my Stanley because it comes in a wide array of colors and is fun to decorate and customize,"

says Samantha Zophin '25. Other students had similar feedback to Stanelys, saying they mainly purchased the cup because of how cute it was and discovered it through social media or their friends at school.



ICED OUT: Samantha Zophin '25 puts her pink straw Stanley stopper on display. (Photo Credit: Gaby Hernandez '25)

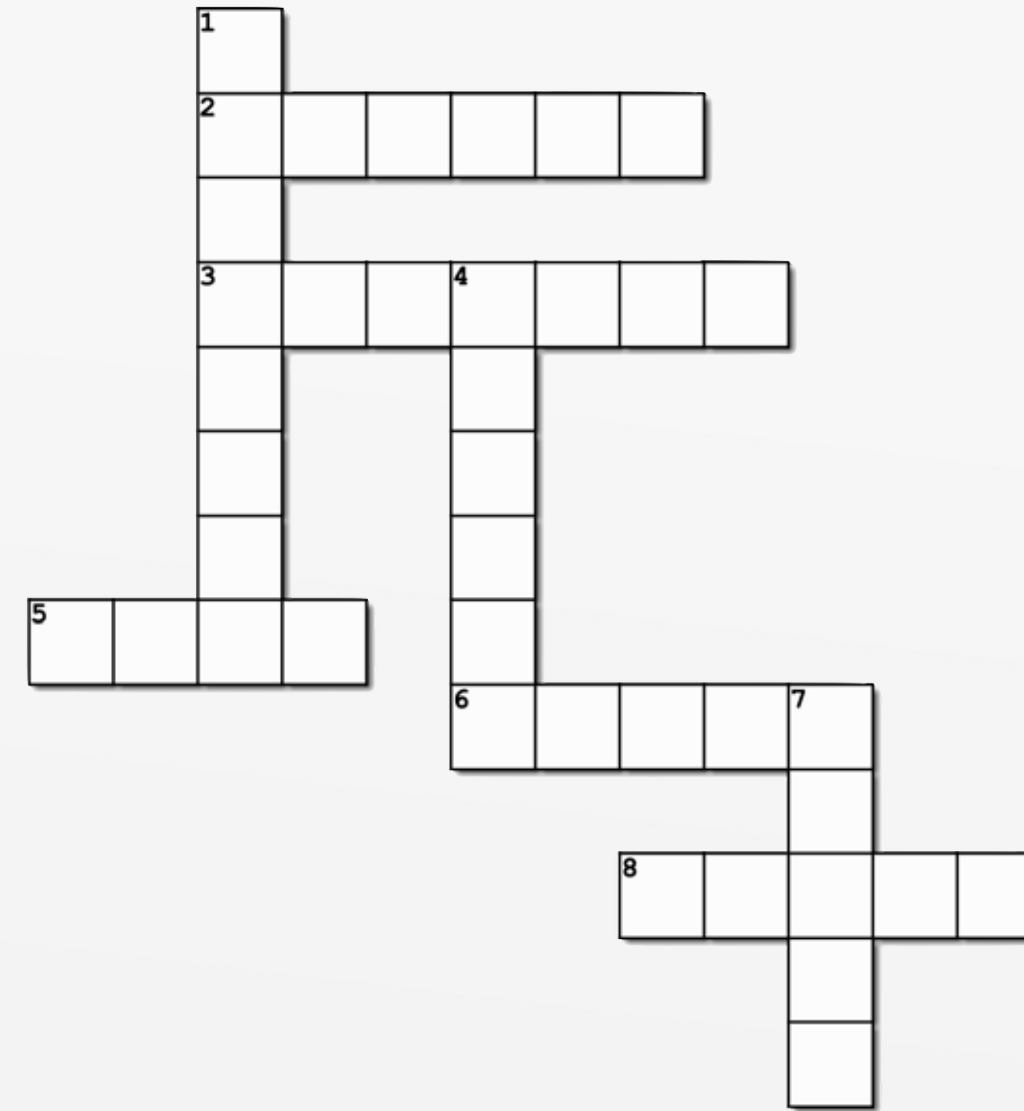
However, recent reports have provided a new potentially dangerous fact about Stanelys that many people don't realize when they purchase theirs. According to an article by Daryl Austin on "Today," the creator of Stanley is now being sued for his products containing a dangerous amount of lead within the cute, unassuming cups. Luckily, after these claims were made, the creator revealed that it only contained lead in a pellet toward the bottom, and it was nowhere near the surface. Regardless, this could serve as a lesson to consider approaching trends skeptically before diving right in.

The lid is another element of the Stanley that makes people question its functionality. "I wish mine was more accessible and leak-proof," says Zophin '25. Due to its bulky form and many openings, it makes sense that the cup is prone to spillage. On the other hand, people have managed to overcome this and turn it into something positive by investing in cute straw stoppers that match their cups. So you decide: is the Stanely worth the hype it has received on campus and social media?

Of course, there are too many water bottle brands to include in a single article, but other reported fan favorites include the Thermo-flask, Swell, Hydroflask and Owala. Regardless of which one you possess or want to buy, water bottles are a worthy investment to work toward a healthy environment and a hydrated Berkeley community.

The Fanfare Times..

... ~~MINI~~ FACULTY CROSSWORD



Across

- 2. This academic dean has an undergraduate degree in German Studies and used to live in France.
- 3. Abducted out of her classroom to go and get engaged in the Florida Keys, this Assistant Director of Upper Division is...
- 5. This English teacher, who was educated in the United States, Scotland, India, and Hong Kong, used to practice law before joining Berkeley.
- 6. This profesora has mastered English, Spanish, French, Italian, and ISS (International Sign System).
- 8. Now a teacher in the Science Department, this PhD holder used to be a chiropractor!

Down

- 1. Originally born in Sri Lanka, this Honors Chemistry teacher, who joined us in 2023, has lived in Jamaica, Zambia, and The Mal.
- 4. This teacher and director of the Lasher Business Institute is the only Berkeley faculty member to have served in a political office.
- 7. This member of the History Department began her service in the Marine Corps just after high school.

Answer Key:

- 1. Williams 2. Isaacs 3. Lindsey 4. DiNota 5. Basu 6. Ackers 7. (Sharon) Smith 8. Kline

By Kostas Saravanos, Staff Photographer

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