



THE  
**WINGSPAN**

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**SENIOR  
SPOTLIGHT**  
TURNING TASSELS &  
TURNING PAGES

# FROM SOARING EAGLES TO FIGHTING CAMELS: ADRIA WELSH'S COMMITMENT TO DIVISION 1 LACROSSE



By: Joy Dong

For many aspiring young athletes, playing at the next level is a familiar dream. For Adria Welsh, collegiate lacrosse was not simply a dream, but rather a long-term goal. Setting her eyes and mind on it as a young girl, Welsh's fiery competitive spirit and relentless hard work has brought her ambitions to fruition. Now a senior at Centennial High School, Welsh is playing in her final season of high school lacrosse with a commitment to continuing her athletic and academic career at Campbell University. Growing up in a lacrosse family, Welsh was introduced to the sport through her father, Tim Welsh, a retired professional lacrosse player, as well as her older sisters. Beginning her journey on a recreational lacrosse team at just six years old, Welsh chose her position as a goalie after only a couple years of playing. Continuing to play as goalie on her top-ranked club team, Hero's Lacrosse, Welsh furthered her lacrosse career playing at a high level. She has played for the club for eight years, mentioning that her coach, Coach Mike, has been a notable figure in her career. "He's like my lacrosse dad... He's helped me with my confidence." Welsh also notes the impact her older sisters Ava and Rasa, both Division 1 lacrosse players themselves at High Point University as well as Campbell University, have had on her career. "We all really pushed each other, especially since we all play different positions." At Centennial, Welsh is a dual athlete on the varsity basketball and lacrosse teams. She is an asset to both programs; performing well in basketball and lacrosse is a balancing act, requiring commitment, dedication, and hard work. Welsh explains, "During basketball season, I would practice lacrosse on the weekends to make sure I stayed in shape... and during the week I would focus on basketball." Her success in both sports highlights her work ethic and athleticism, as well as her driven mentality and commitment to being the best athlete she can be. On the field, Welsh has made quite an impact on the lacrosse program, one that goes beyond her technical skills. As captain, Welsh's leadership and dedication has played a tremendous role on the team. "I always try to help the younger players out. I think it's really important to help the other girls learn. That's one of my favorite parts." Through lacrosse at Centennial, Welsh has learned to just "have fun,"

and to not "take everything too seriously." Finding enjoyment in the process and the game has been the most memorable part of her high school career. Welsh notes one of her favorite memories as being the 2023 game against Marriotts Ridge, where she remembers the camaraderie of her teammates fondly as the game was full of laughter, spirit, and excitement. "The great energy from that game just carried throughout the season, and we all had a lot of fun with each other." When it came to committing to a college, two programs stood out to Welsh, notably Campbell University and Vanderbilt University. Choosing between the two was not an easy task. "The whole thing was very stressful. Basically, I spent the whole summer before my junior year just focused on recruiting." Ultimately, it was the coaching staff and teammates at Campbell that won her over. The inviting people and atmosphere as well as the beautiful campus led Welsh to committing to the school in 2023. "It just felt like home," Welsh explained. "It all worked out in the end." Going into her last season of high school lacrosse, Welsh is extremely excited for what the team can accomplish. "We have a really young team, but the girls all have a lot of experience." Her goal, she states, is to be Player of the Year. With her strong mindset and work ethic, it's clear that Welsh will only continue her success this spring season. Looking toward the future, Welsh has her eyes set on being a standout player in the Coastal Athletic Association (CAA), which is Campbell's conference. She plans on studying criminal justice at Campbell University alongside her lacrosse career. As for the mark she plans to leave on Centennial, Welsh explains, "I hope I have been a good leader." The successes of her lacrosse journey have been a result of her relentless dedication to "work[ing] everyday" and "never giving up." Embracing her competitive mindset and spirit, Welsh looks to only continue her success by "giving it [her] all, day in and day out." It's what has set her apart thus far and what will continue to make her a force to be reckoned with at Campbell University.

# HIGH SCHOOL SWIMMERS TAKE THEIR NEXT STRIDE

Despite being the fourth most popular sport in the U.S today, competitive swimming is not a high school sport in Howard County, giving swimmers a completely different route to continuing their sport at the collegiate level than other athletes. For Centennial's Abby Rothrock and Lucy Choe, that path to the next level was nothing short of a roller coaster ride, with rewarding highs, while also having its fair share of lows. Both have accomplished their long-standing goal of swimming in college, with Rothrock committing to American University and Choe deciding on Wellesley College. For both Lucy Choe and Abby Rothrock, continuing to swim in college was not the definite plan all along, with each having a level of doubt that they would be able to reach that level at some point. It wasn't until her junior year that Choe really started to zero in on college swimming, realizing that she wouldn't want college any other way. "I honestly had no idea that I wanted to swim in college until the middle of Junior year. I actually was on the verge of quitting, which was when I realized that I couldn't really picture college without swimming because it was just so prominent in my life." That realization motivated her to accomplish her goals, as she now knew for sure that swimming was going to be a part of her college experience. Similarly, Rothrock toggled whether or not she was fully sure that she wanted to swim in college, as the recruiting process was overwhelming early on. "I wasn't positive that I wanted to swim. I almost honestly didn't swim. At first I really thought I was going to, but then it just became a lot." Unlike other sports where a multitude of factors can influence how you are viewed by a college, the swimming recruiting process is much more straightforward, as colleges rely heavily on swim times to evaluate prospects. Since there is no high school swimming, recruiting is forced to be based strictly on club swimming performance. Choe and Rothrock each detailed the recruiting process as time-consuming and stressful at times, especially with the extensive practice schedules. Rothrock typically attends seven practices a week while Choe attends six. "It has been such a big time commitment, it prevented me from engaging in many extracurricular activities in school," Choe recalls. The high school swimming careers for both Choe and Rothrock came with memorable moments and considerable achievements which boosted their chances of competing at the collegiate level. For Rothrock, winning the 200 butterfly LCM at 2023 States and placing 4th in the mile swim at Speedo Sectionals were huge accomplishments. Her success in the mile will be translated to her college events, as well as competing in the 500 freestyle and the 400 individual medley. Conversely, for Choe, in her last race at Speedo Sectionals, swimming a time of 58.84 SCY in the 100 backstroke in the 4x100 medley relay was a substantial feat. Choe will be swimming a multitude of events in college including the 100 back, 100 fly, and 200 back. When it came to narrowing down schools, American University was one that had been in Rothrock's mind for a while. "My sister and I went through the same recruiting process, and she was looking at American, so I remember when she took her recruiting trip there, I went and I loved the school

then, but I was still a freshman. But I kind of knew I would want to reach out at some point, when it was my time to start the recruiting process." For Rothrock, American had the academic programs she wanted, as well as a beautiful campus that appealed to her. After the extensive and stressful recruiting process, Rothrock was satisfied with attending American University to continue swimming while also studying communications and public relations. While Choe was focused on swimming in college, academics was still a large part of her decision process, which ultimately is what drew her to Wellesley College. The academic rigor that the



school provided is what got Choe's attention, and knowing that she could swim there was the cherry on top for her to make the decision that Wellesley was for her. "What really stood out to me was the school community. Everyone seemed to genuinely care about each other and there was no toxicity or competition among peers. I felt like it was the perfect environment for me to grow." As someone who had been swimming since she was 9, Choe is able to continue pursuing her passion in college while also studying psychology. For both Lucy Choe and Abby Rothrock, hard work and discipline has brought them extraordinary accomplishments. They both will be able to continue swimming while also attending a college that satisfies their academic and extracurricular needs. Given the foundation each has, the sky's the limit for these student-athlete swimmers in their next journey.



By: Ryan Doody Layout: Allison Bryman



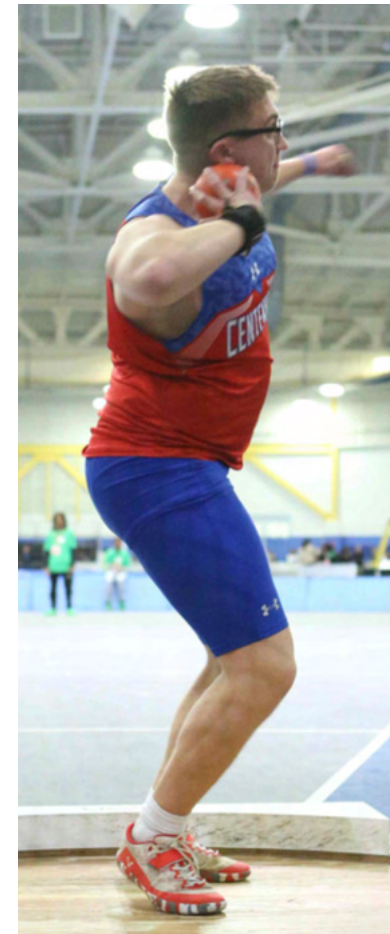
Ally Crumley will be further pursuing her cross country career at Wheaton College and plans to major in mathematics. She is coming off of a stellar senior campaign in which she won states in the 3 mile race and set a school record in the 4x800 race at nationals. Crumley began to fall deeper in love with the sport during her junior year and running became more of a reality. Wheaton offered a very positive team atmosphere and principles that aligned with those of Centennial, but the high level of academics sealed the deal. During her journey in running, Crumley has experienced highs and lows, making her extremely confident in her ability to succeed at the next level. Crumley looks back on her supportive coaches at Centennial as well as her parents as large parts of her running at the collegiate level.

Catie Fritz is committed to Bucknell University to run track and cross country and pursue a major in economics. While Fritz was hesitant to begin a career in running as a soccer player, she and the Centennial community is ever grateful that she did as Fritz is the 2024 Indoor Mile Champion, and holds the school record for the 4x800 relay. Fritz states that committing three seasons of time to run for Centennial helped her become more dedicated to the sport overall and realize her love for running. While Fritz states that the recruiting process was difficult Bucknell University in Pennsylvania ultimately won her over. Not only did Fritz's parents attend school there but she also admired the athletic program's prioritization of student over athlete. Majoring in economics, Fritz is excited to see how she can grow as both a runner and student in her time at Bucknell.

Riley Herdson is committed to the University of Maryland to run track and cross country and study bioengineering. Herdson started running her freshman year, after being an avid soccer player most of her life. Once she began running, she never looked back. Herdson totaled an outstanding 12 school records, 8 individual records, and 4 team records during her time at Centennial. Herdson's plethora of accolades and accomplishments drew interest from multiple schools, but she ultimately landed on University of Maryland. Herdson says that the Centennial track community is responsible for growing her love for the sport and she is thankful for her teammates for pushing her to be the runner she is.

# STILL IN THE GEAR

# READY



Brody Buck committed to Saint Francis University to extend his career in track and field, where he recently won the county championship for the shot put during the winter indoor season. Buck will also be majoring in history with an education concentration. As an athlete growing up, Buck found his calling in the spring of his sophomore year when he joined track, competing as a sprinter and in the shot put. He loved the idea that track gave the athletes complete control of their results. As his passion for the sport grew, he took a visit to Saint Francis and was left impressed with the track team. A challenging part of the recruiting process for Buck was reshaping of how he saw his future, but Saint Francis proved to be the right choice in the end. Buck thanks his coach, his throwing partner August Dedrick, all the other athletes at Centennial that pushed him to be better.



Daytron Graham will be extending his football career at King's College and studying occupational therapy. Graham, a four year varsity football player, was also very successful running track where he holds the school record in relays and won all county in 100 yards. Similar to Hill, Graham played a multitude of positions at Centennial, but was ultimately recruited as a wide receiver. The recruiting process was challenging as he needed to find connections outside of school, considering Centennial football's record. Once he was able to connect with the coach at Kings, he knew he found his home. Despite the lows, Graham found his true passion for football at Centennial, specifically thanks to his mom and Coach Corey.



Brandon Hill is committed to Kings College to continue his football career and study physical therapy. Following a sophomore and junior year football season with Centennial which was plagued by injuries, Hill was able to wrap up his high school career with a healthy senior season. He played a combination of safety and running back with the Eagles, but was ultimately recruited to Kings as a running back. For Hill, the hardest part of the recruiting process was getting coaches to reach out, but luckily immediately connected with the coaches at Kings. Hill is looking forward to playing in a more competitive environment at Kings that has a winning culture. Off the field, Hill will pursue physical therapy as he wants to help other athletes that are battling with injuries, just as he did with a wrist injury that put him in a cast his junior year.



Calvin Kraisser, following an illustrious wrestling career at Centennial, will be attending Frostburg University to continue wrestling and study accounting. A wrestler since age six, Kraisser has won four state championships, and has never skipped a practice. For Calvin, Frostburg stood out to him because it was close to home, provided a dedicated coaching staff, and a dynamic team. Centennial wrestling played a large role in his growth and Kraisser would like to thank his teammates for working hard with him every day, particularly Will Schmidt and Matt Sedor, for making the daily grind of wrestling can be, as fun as possible.

By: Ryan Doody Layout: Allison Bryman  
Only student athletes committed by March 19th featured

# SENIORS TAKE A BOW: SKYWARD THEATER'S SENIOR TECH CREW

In the realm of theater, many hands put together a show. While the actors and ensemble draw the attention of the audience during performances, there are many, hard at work, behind the scenes; lighting, sound, and costume teams, not to mention the stage managers who work throughout each production, ensure everyone knows where they are needed and everything is running smoothly for a successful show. Centennial's Skyward Theater has been lucky enough to have a talented and dedicated tech crew; but sadly, 2025 marks the end of an era for many senior tech members who have played a significant role in Centennial's theater program as we know it.

Senior Adam Landrum has been a part of Centennial's tech crew for 3 years building sets for both plays and the musical. "I have been building things [for] as long as I can remember," Landrum says. "I knew that Traver needed some help in set, and I did my best to step up." He successfully played his part, having designed and built the stage extension for the 2024 fall play "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea" and regularly bringing equipment and experience to the tech crew. In fact, one of his most memorable moments through tech was teaching others how things work, how plans are made, how and when tools should be used, etc. Along with teaching others, and despite it being his senior year, Landrum still stayed focused stating, "I show up, I put in the work, and it all comes together in the end." It's undeniable the passion and hardwork he contributes to Centennial's theater program.

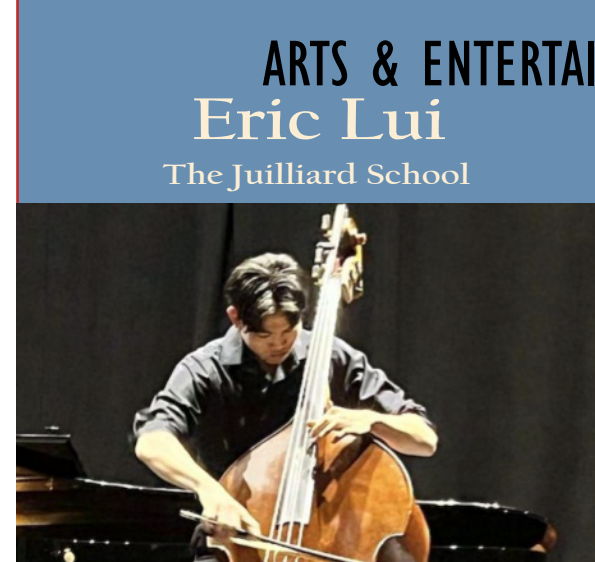
Kaleb Laboissonniere is another senior who has been involved with tech for all four years. "I started out as a set crew member for two years, then became a stage manager as well," he says. However, his love for tech began even earlier. Laboissonniere explains, "I did tech my middle school year, but I have always loved woodworking and construction and being able to help the production in the background." For him, the journey has been about more than just building. He emphasizes that it was "not only the skills I've picked up" that were important but also "the lifelong friends I've made, and the memories I've made with them." Looking back on his senior year, he shares that he has felt a mix of joy and sadness but he really tried to focus on "making sure people would step up in my place and making sure they will not only know how to do things but be able to teach them as well."

Senior Quill Ho, specifically known for their contributions in lighting, played a key role in lighting for the Skyward productions, handling design and programming in recent years. Ho reflects on how tech has grown through their four years on the team explaining how, "it's become more confident in itself." Adding that a precedent has been set for doing big productions and now "people know what they can do and what they're capable of." Similar to Laboissonniere, Ho believes in the importance of friendships and supportive communities sought from tech crew. Ho values "the community and the way that it brings people together who otherwise never would have met." Along with tech being a catalyst for different relationships, Ho underlines "the creativity [tech] affords me, given that it's different from anything else that I do." As for their final year, they say, "from costumes to sets to lights, everything was pushed to the limits of what we could achieve." Partnering their pride for a successful senior year was also the challenge of "training someone to take over for [Quill] when [they] graduate," which brings new obstacles but also excitement for the future.

Despite these absences within the theater program, their work will continue to motivate and encourage returning and rising tech members. Even more improvements in sound, lighting, costumes, and set will be to come, and the productions of Skyward theater will only improve. It doesn't end here; the end of this chapter only means a more successful one is to come.

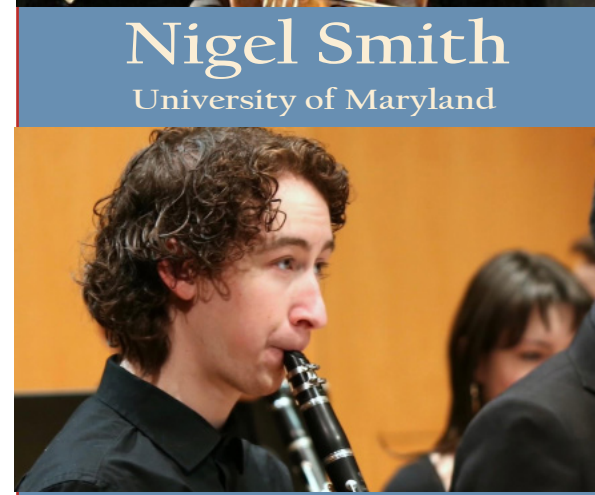
By: Blythe Zheng

# STAGE, STUDIO, AND BEYOND



Eric Lui  
The Juilliard School

Eric Liu plans to major in Double Bass Performance at The Juilliard School in New York after high school. Having played for nearly a decade, Eric's love for music began with the piano and guitar before choosing an instrument for school, where the bass "just jumped out" to him. From playing in the Howard County Youth Orchestra (HCYO), the Baltimore Symphony Youth Orchestra, to attending programs such as BassWorks, the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, and the Orford Musique Academie in Canada, Eric decided to study music because of all the friendships and connections he has made, and how he has "grown to enjoy working with so many people to create an amazing sound."



Nigel Smith  
University of Maryland

Nigel Smith will be attending the University of Maryland, College Park, where he plans to pursue Music Composition and Applied Mathematics. Here at Centennial, Nigel loves working with other passionate musicians. Having been composing for 2 years, Nigel quickly fell in love with the art-form, explaining how it has become an "extension of musicianship" to him. "A lot of people think composition and performance are separate," Smith explains, "...but any musician will tell you that you can communicate as much, if not more, with your interpretation of a song than you can with your choice of song." Smith first began composing as a way to honor his friends' graduations, but it quickly grew into a deeper passion. After being accepted into a music festival for composition, he was inspired by the people he met and began developing his own artistic voice. His most recent project is a full wind band piece for Centennial's own wind ensemble.



Maggie Cipriano  
Michigan State University

Maggie Cipriano will be attending Michigan State University and plans on majoring in Music Education. At Centennial, Cipriano dabbles in all things art with singing, dancing, and theatre. She loves the tight-knit band community, recalling a fond memory of band practices in her basement during the snow days, highlighting the passion and care throughout the community. "That kind of dedication and community is rare, and it's made this whole experience absolutely life-changing for me," she explains. Having been playing percussion since 4th grade, Maggie knew from a young age that she wanted music to be a part of her life forever. It wasn't until high school that she realized "I didn't want to make music alone, I wanted to make it with other people who were just as dedicated. I wanted to create the same kind of family that Mr. Matchim built here at CHS," pushing her to ultimately pursue music education. Cipriano expresses her love for the community at Centennial and is eager to continue her journey this fall in college.



Katelyn Otten  
East Carolina University, committed for dance

Katelyn Otten has committed to East Carolina University for dance. Here at Centennial, Otten recalls "the friendships that I have made and the positive environment", especially crediting teachers like Ms. Clark for their support. Having danced for 17 years, she has been a part of the dance community for most of her life. She decided to continue her passion for dance after high school because it "shows my hard work over the years and how much I love doing it".

By: Tavroop Kaur Layout: Allison Bryman

# A STAR SHINES ON: REMEMBERING CHARLOTTE SPITALNIC

As the school year draws to a close, Centennial seniors across the building take in the moments in the cramped hallways and the bustling cafeteria. Although we are excited to move on to the next chapter, we find ourselves reminiscing over the memories - good and bad - we made during our time here. Within those memories we also remind ourselves of those we have lost. For our senior class, we are reminded of the life of Charlotte Spitalnic who left us in Feb. of 2022.

Charlotte is remembered by her family as kind, compassionate and determined. Her parents recall an elementary school field trip where the students played an assembly line activity, and Charlotte's teacher sat her with a student who needed extra patience and support. "We like to think that it wasn't a random seat assignment but a daily quiet acknowledgment of Charlotte's character," her parents, Paul and Diane Spitalnic state.

This character of patience and kindness is synonymous with Charlotte's name as Senior Emily Wu states that "she was very outgoing." Emily and Charlotte quickly bonded in kindergarten as they were both "the chaotic playing type." While the two friends spoke less in middle school, Emily confidently remembers that she was always smiling and was willing to put herself out there.

One way Charlotte consistently challenged herself and contributed to the Centennial community was through the arts. Charlotte's parents recall her love for writing small scripts and scenes when she was younger and how this love evolved to her involvement in programs like K.I.D.S. drama summer camps each year with Mrs. Brouillet. She performed in classes through Drama Learning Center (DLC) and in the Columbia Center for the Theatrical Arts (CCTA). The students at K.I.D.S often considered Centennial "the big stage" and she hoped to be a student director at Centennial.

Centennial choir teacher Rebecca Vanover and theater teacher, Jacob Traver, confidently stated that they envisioned Charlotte in the leadership positions of many of their current seniors. Traver remembers her as very hardworking as she was very involved with the backstage crew, building sets for Winter's Tale and Pippin as well as working the fog machine for Pippin. Like her parents, Traver remembers her as easygoing as she was always willing and able to work with anyone.

"Her presence at Centennial brought people together," he said.

Vanover recalls similar attributes of Charlotte as a choir student, and even recalls her virtual audition where she sang a beautiful rendition of "Once Upon a December" from Disney's Anastasia. Vanover states that, "It says a lot about her that even though our time with her was really short... people still think about her."

In honor of Charlotte's life, the Spitalnic family established the Charlotte Spitalnic Memorial Scholarship to commemorate her memory and to recognize students who shared her passion for the arts and theatre at Centennial. The Spitalnics state that "The scholarships aim to award students that have demonstrated Charlotte's traits, including kindness, compassion, conscientiousness, and leadership." The scholarship is open to Centennial students and aims to uplift the accomplishments of students that may have gone ignored otherwise.

Even though Charlotte will not be walking the stage on May 28, her spirit lives on in all of our graduating seniors. She will be remembered as a kind friend, a stellar singer, a hardworking student, and a loving daughter and sister. Charlotte's legacy will forever shine on.

By: Tavroop Kaur & Abby Rothrock Layout: Allison Bryman



# SENIOR bucketlist

travel  
by Rayaan Ahmad

visit Owyhee  
Canyonlands  
by Ryan Chang

skydive  
by James Li

go snorkeling in the  
Great Barrier Reef  
by Colin Smith

go skiing  
by Anna Ritterbusch

meet Abby Lee Miller  
by Annabelle Mallios

try every flavor of Taharka  
Bros Ice Cream  
by Oyujin Damdinsuren



# LIFE AFTER CENTENNIAL

As May 1, college decision day approaches, seniors begin to feel the pressure of where they will spend the next four years, the financial cost, and how to make it in a vigorous college environment. While some eagles are staying close, some are soaring far, and the transition into college can be scary no matter what. Although many seniors may feel anxious about entering adulthood and a new chapter, it is important to remember that they are just one of 308 preparing to leave the nest, and just one of generations of Eagles who have gone on to do amazing things.

Many seniors might worry about adjusting to a new social environment with so many unknowns, and that is completely normal. Centennial alumni, Clarice De Melo, freshman attending California Polytechnic State University and studying environmental engineering, says she “felt out of place most of the time and questioned every day if [she] really belonged,” at school and she even considered transferring, but realized that so many freshmen feel the same way and she soon found her place at her school. She felt what so many college freshmen feel as they navigate a new social scene and high academic standards. De Melo stressed the fact that if you take time for yourself and hobbies early on, it helps you take care of yourself and your mental health while avoiding burnout.

In contrast to De Melo’s experience with moving far from home, 2022 Centennial graduate Ellie Munoz found everything she was looking for close to home. She is in her 3rd year at the University of Maryland, majoring in Animal sciences on the pre-veterinary medicine track. She is also involved in Greek life on campus and is a member of the sorority Alpha Phi. “Because of my career requiring an additional 4 years of school post-undergrad, I wanted to make sure I kept my student debt to a minimum by choosing the best in-state option for me,” said Munoz, sharing her reasons for choosing UMD. She advises seniors to “say yes to everything in the first couple of weeks because the four years truly does fly by so fast,” and to really become involved in the student community around you. Putting yourself out there is the key to making

strong friendships and finding your place. Munoz highly recommends greek life as a way to get involved, make friends, and gain community service hours. Even if students are not in Greek life Munoz emphasizes the importance of finding a stable roommate early in the year. Although the new schedule and workload may feel daunting, our alumni recommend creating a schedule and sticking to it to stay on top of your work and create structure for yourself.

Alike to Munoz, Centennial 2023 Alumni Judah Williams, a current sophomore at University of Maryland, Baltimore County majoring in Public Health on the public policy track, expresses the two biggest factors when selecting a college was proximity and finances. Williams had similar feelings as Munoz about staying in state, as both found comfort in staying relatively close to their families. They both demonstrate that living far from home may not be for everyone, and it is acceptable to not be too eager to leave yet.

Williams claims that it ultimately came down to the cost when making his final decision to commit to UMBC. He received the Katie Fry Hester Senatorial Scholarship, which would apply 500 dollars to each semester, helping him out substantially.

Whether seniors realize it or not, the experiences they make in college will shape them into the best version of themselves. These experiences are something they will keep in their hearts for many years to come. In Williams’ case, he had the opportunity of taking a school trip, through one of his classes, to Geneva and Switzerland. This trip gave him many important skills he can use in his own life, but most importantly the memory of the trip was “unparalleled”.

While the transition from high school to college might seem stressful, it doesn’t have to be. With the advice from previous Centennial alumni and best wishes from *The Wingspan* staff we wish all seniors the best of luck as they enter the next chapter of their lives.



By: Zena Levy & Natalie Munzo Layout: Allison Bryman

# TICKET TO COLLEGE

## THE 2025 CLASS ATLAS



Data collected in student survey on May 15, 2025



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Layout: Saroop Kaur

# OUR GRADUATING CLASS



Hibah Mehreen



Abby Rothrock



Catie Fritz



Allison Bryman



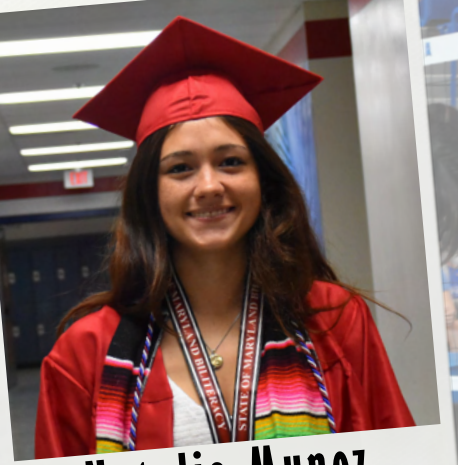
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## EDITORIAL

# FAREWELL WINGSPAN

Journalism is dead.

We have heard this sentiment countless times since we joined the program. Whether it was found in the rise of artificial intelligence, news outlets folding due to budgeting efforts, or the cancelling of our very own journalism program; all signs pointed to destruction. Our program refused to accept this death notice, though, and in our last note as Editors in Chief of *The Wingspan*, we encourage you all to do the same.

In our Winter issue, we discussed the power of journalism. Although the odds were against us, entirely unsupported by a traditional class structure, we were confident in our student body's commitment and dedication to student voice. This confidence proved to be worth it as over 80 students have contributed to *The Wingspan* since the beginning of this school year, tirelessly writing articles, taking photos, and creating content on social media. This continued commitment not only resulted in a year of profound stories told, but also the reestablishment of our journalism class for the 2025-2026 school year, allowing students the opportunity to learn journalism through a proper curriculum and have allotted time during the school day to work on *The Wingspan* as a team in our school's newsroom.

Throughout our combined seven years in the program, we have had the opportunity to interact with so many types of students and staff: from rising track athletes, aspiring podcast hosts, first-time teachers, and lifelong music students. Our roles in the newspaper gave us the opportunity to be a part of so many stories that are now integrated into the fabric of our high school experience.

Although running our newspaper with no class time was a challenge with many bumps in the road. It was all worth it when we opened the box to see the hundreds of copies of our first print issue of the year. Seeing the words of our dedicated staff in print and around the school was a testament to the importance and relevance of storytelling in a world that continues to tell us that our individual stories and voices are unimportant.

In our parting words to you, we ask that the story of *The Wingspan* be your encouragement. Because this is not just a story about saving journalism, but saving the practice of storytelling in the pursuit of truth. By listening to stories, sharing your own, asking questions, and putting pen to paper, you too are saving journalism; you too are refusing to accept this death notice.

To the next editorial staff of *The Wingspan*, we wish you the best of luck and encourage you to take pride in the responsibility your words hold. We have the utmost faith in you. As always thank you to our advisor Mr. Rus VanWestervelt. Without his commitment to storytelling we would not be the students or writers we are today. Thank you for pushing us, thank you for supporting us, and thank you for your unfailing belief in our ability to make anything happen. The life of the program will always lie with you.

Sincerely,

Tavroop Kaur & Abby Rothrock



ARTWORK DONE BY ANJALI VALLABHANENI