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Class Officer Elections Make History

Mariah Gaines, Isaiah Trumbull (Seniors)

On October 10, the junior class gathered in the auditorium to hear candidates for class officer speak. Ten students spoke about their campaigns to try and convince juniors to vote for them. The crowd was energetic and enthusiastic to hear their future leaders speak about initiatives and projects they would like to see in school. Popular topics were improving school spirit, hosting events, and bringing quality leadership to the junior class.

Everyone gave passionate speeches and shared about their platforms.

At lunch two days later, votes were cast, and class officer elections were finalized. Many of the votes were close, some warranting a recount.

The results were as follows: Marcos Gonzalez won the Presidential race, Javon Laprade won the Vice-Presidential race, Arya Datta won the Secretarial race.

Some races were unopposed. Clark Ehman, Lucy Caroff, and Hirai Shuda ran for the respective positions of Parliamentarian, Historian, and Treasurer.

New President Gonzalez expressed excitement about his new team of



Marcos Gonzalez during his campaign speech

class officers, saying, "With this squad, we're going to achieve great things."

Gonzalez is a three-sport athlete,

playing for the cross country, baseball, and wrestling teams. As the captain of the wrestling team, he led the team to the City

Championship last year. Gonzalez has also been a member of Obama's student council since freshman year and has been an active participant in many school improvement activities (see article about the gym renovation project).

He partly attributes his involvement with school activities and sports to his win in the election.

Aside from his extracurricular activities, Gonzalez is a history-maker. He is Obama's first Latino class president. "I'm proud to have achieved that," Gonzalez said. He hopes his campaign will inspire others like him to run in the future.

On his plans as a class officer, Gonzalez said, "I want to get those trophy cases done and full," and, "I want to start more clubs." He also wants to work with the senior class officers on projects. Gonzalez says that as President he hopes to "inspire all future [Obama] alumni to persevere through any challenges they may face."

He concludes his interview with two words in a message to all Obama Eagles: "We soar."

Somos Obama

Marcos Gonzalez (Junior)

Continuing a pattern of founding clubs after the pandemic, students at Obama recently started a Latino student club. Latinos Unidos, which means United Latinos in Spanish, aims to amplify Latino voice at Obama. The club will be "run by the members," said Club Advisor Señor Roa. "They determine the direction for the future of the club."

Latinos Unidos is meant to create a safe space where, "Even though we are the minority we can still have a voice in this school," said Roa.

There were similar efforts to start a Latino student union last year but it was eventually shut down because of the lack of Latinos in the school.

However, this year Roa is very optimistic about the future of the club. "We have had an increase of Latinos here at Obama since last year," he said.

Last year there were less than 11 Hispanic students at Obama, according to Pittsburgh Public Schools. This year there are 18.

One of the missions of IB is to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. Latinos Unidos wants to echo this mission.

"We are Internationally minded. By having a variety of different Latin cultures and creating this safe space they can all learn but also be themselves. Anyone is welcome, and we also make bomb food," said Roa.

During a bake sale two weeks ago, students experienced the club in full effect with its vibrant, colorful pictures, music, dances, and flags of different Latin American cultures.

The bake sale included desserts and foods from different Latin American countries, but the main selling were the empanadas. Members of the club, with the help of Señor Roa, stayed after school to make over 200 empanadas for the bake sale. "It was hard work but it was fun," said Sophomore Maria Nopaltecatl.

The club made over \$600, which Roa says "is just the beginning."



Credit: Henry Nicholls/AFP via Getty Images

Smells Like Halloween Spirit

Orli Trumbull (Sophomore)

One of the most famous Halloween quotes is arguably Cady Heron's description of the holiday in Mean Girls. "Halloween is the one night a year when girls can dress like a total slut and no other girls can say anything about it."

The film represents the holiday from a teens perspective, breaking away from the typical family friendly stereotype.

There are many debates about the history of Halloween. A common belief is that the event originated from Celtic origins. Celts, who lived at around 1,000BC, had a traditional Samhain festival to welcome the year's harvest and scare off dark spirits with costumes.

In the 8th century, Pope Gregory III declared November 1 as the day to honor saints. The day before became known as Hallows Eve and incorporated Samhain influence. It eventually evolved into the activities we know today.

Halloween in the early 1900's was centralized around games and community bonding. Later, Trick or Treating was widely adopted, and the celebration was primar-

ily aimed towards young people.

Today, Halloween is one of America's most celebrated holidays, with families spending around 6 billion dollars total on the event annually.

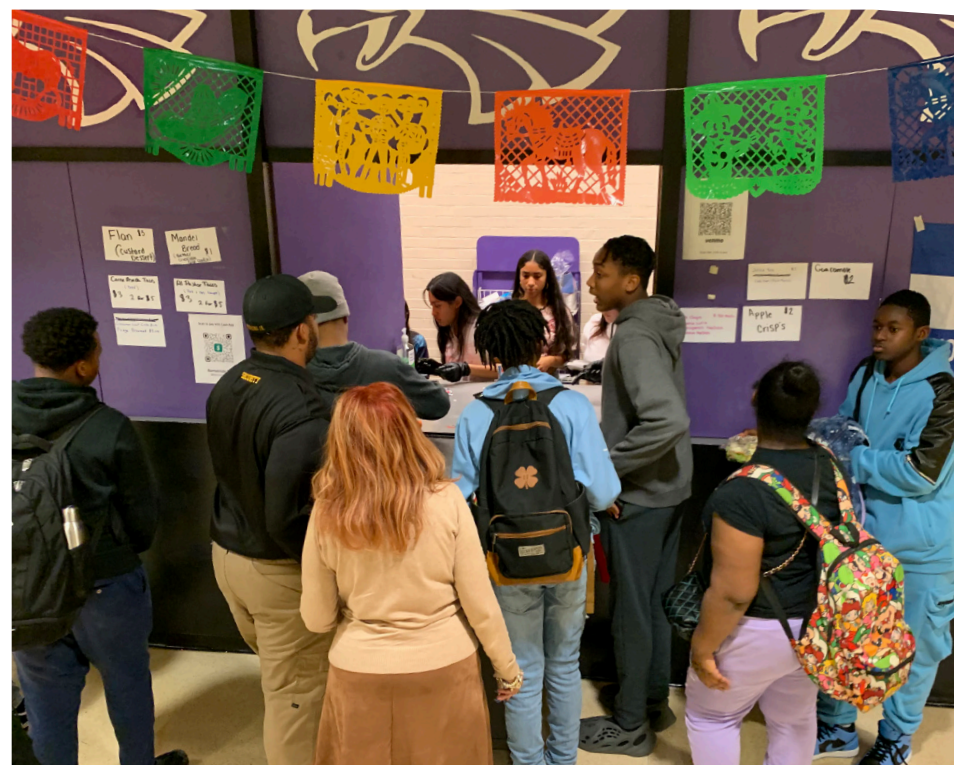
Costume spending in 2023 is expected to reach \$2 billion for adults and \$1.4 billion for children, according to the National Retail Federation.

Producers of Halloween movies, scare houses, and blow up decorations have made a tremendous profit from the festival. 73% of Americans plan to celebrate Halloween this year, up from 64% in 2015 and a pandemic slump of 58%.

Halloween has embedded itself in American culture. Drawing influences from social media, celebrities, games, and books, costumes came in an array of shapes and sizes. Barbie is the third most popular costume for adults this year, drawing from the popularity of the movie this summer.

Halloween is a time for people to connect through garments, candy, and love for celebration.

As seen in Mean Girls, the holiday is relevant for everyone, and is a universally loved event.



Students waiting outside of the Latinos Unidos bake sale

City League Football Championship

On Saturday October 28, U-Prep took on Westinghouse in the City League Football Championship.



Credit: Torrien Perkins (@perktook.dat). DM for inquiries

After taking an early lead, Westinghouse eventually came back to win. The U-Prep team will try their luck in the PIAA playoffs against either Meadville or Corry High School.

Voter Registration Efforts

Aaron Ntoko (Sophomore)

Over the past month, My School Votes, a club at Obama, has conducted a voter registration drive. It is part of a state and national movement to increase youth civic engagement.

My School Votes also ran a similar voter registration drive last school year. Because of their efforts, Obama won the Governor's Civic Engagement Award.

35% of teens in Pennsylvania who are registered to vote showed up to vote last year during elections. This number is meager compared to the 59% voter turnout from 39-44 year-olds and 71% from 60+ year-olds. This is something most politicians are trying to fix.

According to Brookings, a think tank, Democrats are registering voters because "key demographic groups that traditionally favor Democrats are young people, women, racial minorities, and white female college graduates."

Republicans are trying to register young voters just because an abundance of youth are registering as Democrats.

Voter turnout from younger voters has been low for a while. A 2023 study by Tufts University on why young people don't vote concluded that some youth don't vote due to perceived ineffectiveness or feeling uninformed. Others don't vote because there's a perception that the issues at stake aren't relevant.

There have been many efforts to not only register younger voters but also to inform them about candidates for not just the primary election, but in local and general elections such as Mayor, District Attorney, and City Council.

The next election is on November 7, 2023. The most prominent races are for City Council and County Executive. The polls are open from 7 am-8 pm. See pavoterservices.pa.gov to find the voting place closest to you.



Sophomores Viola Aderholt and Orli Trumbull running a voter registration table during parent-teacher conferences



The Obama gymnasium

Gym Renovation Project Update

Sean Gaines (Sophomore)

Last year, The Eagle Times said in an article that come the new school year, the gym would look completely different. Students who have walked into the gym this year will have noticed that the only change is new black vinyl going across half of the back wall.

Junior Clark Ehman, who is leading the project along with Juniors Arya Datta, Marcos Gonzalez, and Hirai Shuda, had planned on starting and finishing the vinyl resurfacing this summer. Unfortunately, around 1/5 of the way through, Ehman was injured. He fractured his hip playing baseball. "I was unable to continue work on the project," he said.

The renovation group also ran out of black vinyl intended to go over the old mats. Both of these events created a gridlock in the progress of the project, leaving us with what students see in the gym today.

The black vinyl is the first step in the renovation team's project. The team fundraised from local businesses and friends of the school to secure money for the vinyl.

Once the vinyl is installed, the second step will be to repaint the large paint stripe close to the ceiling. It will be redone

with a line of purple on top, and a line of black on the bottom. Several new large murals will also be painted.

The third step will be to purchase and install purple team championship banners on the walls of the gym. Each year a championship was won will be stitched onto the banners.

The fourth step will be to find a new purple scoreboard and bleacher covers. The installation of these items will mark the completion of the project.

The gym is a large part of Obama's culture. After Obama moved into the old Peabody building, maroon accessories were never replaced with black and purple. Embarrassment from that motivated the renovators to embark on this project. "The red pads were extremely outdated and in rough condition," Ehman said.

In these first few weeks of the school year, the group has seen great promise for the future of the project. Ehman is now completely healed and healthy from his summer injury. They also have ordered new vinyl and expect it to arrive soon. Their goal is to finish the replacement in the next couple of months, ideally before Thanksgiving break.



The initial vision for the gym

Reminders

Blood Drive → Thursday, November 2nd

IB test registration fees → Wednesday, November 15th
\$120 dollars per test, cash or check (payable to Obama Academy)

Homecoming → November 18th at the Mattress Factory

Thanksgiving Classic Football Game → Wednesday, November 22

Toy Drive → until Friday, December 9