Hancock Senior Wins in National Writing Contest

In Dual Credit English, Mr. Splinter presented his students with a contest sponsored by Narrative Writing, an organization in San Francisco. This year, the prompt was “The Mistake.” Uriel Acuña wrote a fictional story inspired by homecoming, where he faces his own personal demons in order to talk to this new girl. Uriel’s writing placed him third nationwide and earned him a prize of $100. This experience has lead him to believe he may want to do something in the future with writing or even journalism.

Hancock Establishes Spanish and French Honor Societies

Recently Hancock introduced two new honor societies: the Spanish Honor Society and the French Honor Society. As this is the first year that Hancock has this honor society, everyone is intensely excited.

For many years Hancock only had the National Honor Society. By adding these two new organizations, there are more opportunities for those who put tremendous effort into learning a different language.

Ms. Phillips, a French teacher at Hancock, explained that “we brought this society to Hancock because we wanted to honor and celebrate the accomplishments of our French students, especially this year, because it’s the first year we’ve ever had a French 4 class at Hancock.”

The French Honor Society acknowledges those students who are taking a language and have shown constant hard work and dedication. This year over 40 students were inducted on May 3. The French Honor Society opens new doors for students and provides new opportunities for college preparation and giving back.

“When I picked the language I wanted to study freshman year, I took French because I already knew Spanish,” senior Vianney Vaca explained. “Yet as each year went on, I kept on choosing French because I just kept on wanting to learn more. While I’ve faced some obstacles when trying to communicate, it has also been pretty amazing to see the similarities and differences between English, Spanish and French.”

Ms. Phillips, expressed that “For the future, we hope to begin service learning projects, fundraising, and community events to introduce the community to Francophone culture and to raise awareness about the importance of the French language in the world, within and beyond the US.”

French is currently spoken in 29 countries. It’s also the 10th most spoken language in the world.
Jarel Alcantar, a junior at Hancock joined Hancock’s first ever Podcast Club last fall. Since freshman year, Jarel struggled to find a club at Hancock he would be really interested in, even with the large amounts of clubs that are available. Jarel felt bored of consistently doing the same thing everyday, and he did not want to waste his high school experience. He knew that there just had to be a club that would catch his attention.

“The past two years of my high school experience have been good, but I felt there could have been more to it. I saw that all my friends were joining clubs that interested them, but not me. Then a friend of mine said he was creating a club called the Podcast Club. At first I wasn’t sure of joining it but the more I started to learn about it, the more interested I got into it.”

Everyone who was planning to join the podcast club was told to meet up at the Mind and Hand which was a block away from the school. We discussed what was the main goal of the Podcast Club and how we were planning to achieve it.

“I never was really interested in podcasts until I joined this club. However, being in this club has really changed my view towards certain subjects and my view towards life,” Jarel explains.

The club’s sponsor is Mr. Salazar. He says, “I’ve been wanting to have a club like this for about ten years. When Maximus Lopez suggested the idea to me, I told him that if he could find me a group of responsible, dedicated students, I’d do it.”

The club has produced segments about teen mental health, gun violence, and Hancock’s slam poetry club where they address sexual dating violence through a poem.

The club will continue to meet next year and produce more episodes. They’re open to new members.

Listen to Chi-Teens, the Hancock podcast, on SoundCloud by searching “Hancock College Prep.”

Hancock’s Graduation Ceremony is Thursday, June 13 at DePaul’s Reskin Theatre in the South Loop.

If you haven’t yet, pay your graduation fee and cap and gown fee in the main office.
Eduardo Duran: Headphones

It’s the bane of every teachers existence: constantly telling students to put it away which is met with much reluctance. They come in all shapes and sizes, colors, wired or no wire. Whether they go over your head or straight into your ear, there is no denying the prevalence of the headphone in modern life. But when exactly did the headphone get its start?

The Sony Walkman was introduced in 1979 and it brought with it a revolution in the way we listen to music. Before the walkman, music was listened in a stationary in your house and offered little mobility. With the Walkman, music was now mobile and could be taken with you while you were exercising or going to get groceries. It was a major success for Sony and would see many iterations of the original product in the future.

My headphones don’t really belong to me. They were a gift to my sister from my teacher as a graduation gift. Whenever my sister wasn’t home, I would sneak up to her room and try them on for myself. They were noise cancelling headphones with bass boosting capabilities, perfect for audioheads and music lovers like me. When my sister abandoned the Android family “upgraded” to an iPhone, she abandoned her Sony headphones considering there was no headphone jack to begin with. I quickly snatched them up from her and was finally able to enjoy music like a real audiohead instead of using crummy earphones. That’s until I broke one side of the headphone, now I’m stuck listening to sound only from one ear.

Well at least they look nice.

Jarel Alcantar: The Baseball Cap

When you think of summer, you normally think of the hot sun, hot dogs, baseball games, theme parks, going to the beach or to the park; now what do these have all in common? Baseball caps. Everywhere you go during the summer there will always be at least a few people wearing a baseball cap. You may have never noticed but baseball caps have been a big part of American culture and fashion.

Ever since the invention of it in 1849, the baseball cap has come a long way into becoming part of the style and fashion of Americans. First created by straw and mainly used by baseball players, baseball caps were very different from the ones we have now and very boring.

Then, according to Epic Sports, in 1954 after going through many different variations and designs, the company New Era designed and popularized a cap called the “59Fifty”. This hat became the official cap of Major League Baseball and to this day, it still remains as a popular line of baseball hats that really anyone can buy. This lead to teams experimenting with trademark designs on their hats, some hitting home runs, some striking out. With this, it lead to many more variations, designs, fits, etc. making the baseball cap more diverse and not always sports related.

In my time, I’ve worn many baseball caps, sports or non-sports related hats. Baseball caps have been a big part of my style at a young age and still are now. As a sports fan, I love representing my favorite team on a hat or just a hat that expresses myself in a way.

Baseball caps bring me back to the days where I would go out with my entire family to the park during the summer, play
Baseball Caps
From page 3

baseball, soccer, eat food outside and overall, just spend the entire day outside with my family. We would all wear baseball caps to block out the sun from our eyes. Baseball caps bring me back to the hot and sunny days filled with adventure and excitement. And the cool and calm nights where I would bike around the city with my friends. We all wore baseball caps.

A baseball cap can serve more of a purpose to a person than just blocking out the sun from their eyes. It can serve as a symbol of themselves and what they believe in.

More and more people now are wearing baseball caps and now it is becoming a common part of American fashion and culture. As it was created by America’s past time: baseball. According to David Doran of Entrepreneur.com, the company Lids, which primarily manufactures and sells hats, has 200 locations in 40 states and sells more than 8 million hats every year.

Which goes to show how baseball caps have evolved and are now a part of the American culture.

Aline Aguilar:
The Mini-Skirt

The fashion world has always been growing and ever-changing. It shifts along with the times, and, sometimes, it even starts a new era. Maybe even a revolution. That’s what the miniskirt did. A new movement lead by women was starting, bringing along a whole new set of issues that must be faced. A movement in which I had never had an interest in partaking until recently. In fact, I have always refused to wear skirts and dresses. So what about the miniskirt changed my mind?

The queen of the miniskirt, Mary Quant, had intended for her fashion statement to turn heads, and it certainly did. Unfortunately, some of those heads were those of people with conservative views. And they had a lot to say. Because of their opinions against the miniskirt, many people looked down upon it, dragging its legacy through the dirt. My family, specifically my culture, is a part of the group of haters.

It’s too short. You look like a boy. Put on some makeup. Sit up straight.

Comments… no. Snides like these have forced me to relinquish a part of my femininity and replace it with masculinity. Fear of judgement has forced me to change.

It wasn’t until recently that I have learned to accept my femininity. In order to get over my anxiety towards my gender, I bought a miniskirt. Yeah, I know. Scandalous. Funny thing is… I haven’t worn it yet. That’s right. I bought a miniskirt that I still have yet to wear. Even though I want to overcome my uneasiness, I feel as if there’s too much at stake. I’m risking it all: my dignity, pride, gender identity. Ironically, the miniskirt was meant to free women; instead, it trapped me.

I grew up my entire life expressing both parts of my gender: feminine and masculine. Yet, a single piece of cloth makes me question everything. The miniskirt was supposed to liberate me, and, in a way, it has. I’m more confident in my body, in my sexuality, in myself. But it isn’t enough for me to accept how I choose to express my gender identity.

Continued on next page
In order to fully accept my assigned gender, I chose to just let go of my insecurities. So what if I’m female? It is no one else’s business to know my gender but my own. I am not going pay attention to the stereotypes that I have been given since birth. So what if I barely wear dresses and miniskirts? I don’t have to if I don’t want to. I’ll portray my gender in whatever way I feel most comfortable with. For me, the miniskirt just doesn’t make the cut.

Yeah… the miniskirt may have given women in Europe more freedom of expression in the Swinging Sixties. It may have also been a norm for prehistoric, tribal women. All I know is that I’m an exception living in the twenty-first century.

**Best Position Paper:** Emily Gamboa representing Israel on the topic of combating epidemics with the World Health Organization.

**Honorable Delegates:** Crystal Campos and Melissa Manzur representing South Africa on the topic of the humane treatment of detainees with the International Council of the Red Cross.

**Best Delegates:** Alexis Caballero and Kassandra Canelo representing Ethiopia on the topic of the humane treatment of detainees with the International Council of the Red Cross.
Dear Mayor Lightfoot,

I am a Chicago Southwest side girl all the way from Chicago Lawn. I congratulate you on your new position as the mayor of the Windy City. You’re a new role model for our young female Chicagoans to look up to. As mayor you should address the sexual assault women face in their daily lives to help us feel more secure in our homes.

There are a few things I wish for you to know about me, a fellow Chicago resident. Everyday I take the 55th Street bus heading towards Midway so I can go to my high school, John Hancock. After school, I head towards the Orange Line on Pulaski so I can get off in the Loop to go to my art classes. The winter makes it kind of harsh, but you should see the transportation during the summer. During this time more people are out, which means there’s a higher chance of getting harassed.

Walking around the streets of Chicago is not easy, especially as a young girl. At the age of 12, I remember getting cat called as I was walking home from school. From then on, I have experienced different levels from a car passing by to a man trying to hold me. There’s a constant need to be aware of my surroundings and it circles in the back of my head because of fear.

We hear of many cases on the Southside of Chicago of women being kidnapped, robbed, and harassed. This should not be something I should fear when heading home.

Perhaps next time I’ll be one of the girls that gets assaulted. “Out of the 10 neighborhoods with the most sexual assaults, nine neighborhoods were present for both 2013 and 2014: Austin, South Shore, Chicago Lawn, Englewood, Humboldt Park, North Lawndale, Near North Side, Roseland and Auburn Gresham,” according to CBS Chicago. It slowly starts as harassment but seeing the facts makes me think that one day I will be assaulted too.

Not only should you bring awareness to this problem but offer support to victims. Communities should have a support centers to help out those that cannot afford it instead of shunning them out causing more separation in our city. “Currently, only three organizations provide support services to victims of sexual assault in Chicago. Without a state budget, their funding is already running dangerously low,” said Sean Black, the communications director at the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault, a not-for-profit group that brings together community-based sexual assault crisis centers across the state on NBCNews. If tragic situations like those happen, more funding should be placed to properly provide the services needed by the victims.

Although you are faced with many more problems, I hope you find that addressing this issue will help the Southside of Chicago to prosper. All I wish for is to walk outside of my house without being sexually objectified. Again, congratulations on the new position.

Sincerely,
Katie Lopez

Tell us whatchoo got to say—next school year.
Believe it or not—Hancock cares whatchoo think and do.
In September, we'll be looking for your writing, photos, or art.
So DO something this summer to celebrate in the fall.
Don't just stare at your phone like you do in class.
Dear Mayor Lightfoot,

Chicago southwest side, parks goers are concerned about the dirtiness around the playground, highlighting that it is dangerous for little kids and not a safe environment.

Many kids nowadays don’t go to the park because their mothers say it’s not clean and that there are many bacteria. Little kids see graffiti on the slides, stairs or swings thinking it is part of the playground but their mothers see differently, they see inappropriate things such as gang signs. Whenever I go to the park with my nephews I first walk around the playground so I can see where it is dirty, and then I tell my nephews not to go there. They always ask a question: WHY? Seeing their sad face hurts me but it is for their own good. I always tell them because it is dirty and they can get sick.

One day my nephew found a dead bird on the slide next to a Cheetos bag. My nephew was only 5 years old and did not know much and he would be picking up garbage from the ground and would sometimes try to eat it but I’m always there next to him to take it away. It not just the kids getting affected from dirty environment but it also pets.

According to Friends Of The Parks To Clean Up Chicago Parks For Earth Week, But Some Are Too Dirty For Volunteers, “Innocent kids end up playing alongside trash, discarded bags coexist with birds, even the ice cream has to avoid filth as he pushes his cart.”

Some parks aren’t on the cleanup list because they’re missing a site leader. Others didn’t make the cut because they’re too dirty. Empty baggies litter the grass just steps from where children play at Harding Park, near Division and Pulaski.

The drug paraphernalia is too much of a health hazard for volunteers to clean up, and too unsanitary for Victor Alicea’s 3-year-old nephew to play on the swings. “I won’t bring him here. They come drinking. I’m surprised there ain’t no beer cans here,” Alicea said.

Alicea said he often sees drug users sitting in the park, getting high, and passing out.” It is sad that drug dealers use the park to sell drugs to kids and to teenagers, especially around little kids. Mostly in every park in Chicago, there is always at least one can on the floor or grass. I see kids picking them up because they are dirty but parents take it away from.

According to Chicago 4th graders clean up on Earth day “When people litter, some of the animals might mistake it for food and they eat it and they die,” Braden said.

For these 4th graders, cleaning up on Earth Day is an activity they’ve done for several years already. "I'm starting to notice trash more, especially plastic and cigarettes and stuff," said student Mollie Pooler. The students take seriously their chance to pitch in and to raise awareness about being more eco-friendly.

It’s also a chance to think about their relationship with the planet. I feel like some people don’t care about the earth as much as I do. Students should pick up their trash so it motivates other people to join them and make Earth clean.

I would really appreciate if there is programs where kids would join to help clean up the parks and also where adults can take care of them. There should also police around the park so they won’t let drug dealers, or people drink or smoke or in front of kids. This would improve the community to be safe and healthy. Community members could bring pizza or snacks for kids that are volunteering to help out and encourage them to keep the place clean.

Sincerely,

Bryan Trigueros

MAKE PARKS CLEAN, SAFE PLACES FOR KIDS
This Pretty Much Summarizes the School Year

“Ms. Ayesh, Are you busy right now?”
—Ms. Ayesh

“ *Cries in Spanish, English, and Spanglish”
—Ms. Gonzalez

"The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility."
—Ms. Nugent quoting bell hooks

"Let me put that in a safe place."
—Mr. Phillips

"Talk to each other!"
—Mr. O’Bra

“Why do you think I know everything?!"
—Mr. Salazar to his freshman homeroom students

"Wait... we have a library?"
—Mr. Toner (the librarian)

“By the end of this century, if emissions keep rising, the average temperature on Earth could go up another four to eight degrees. What I’m saying is the planet is on fricking fire. There are a lot of things we could do to put it out. Are any of them free? No, of course not. Nothing’s free. Grow up. You’re not children anymore. I didn’t mind explaining photosynthesis to you when you were 12. But you’re adults now, and this is an actual crisis, got it? Safety glasses off.”
—Ms. Neidt quoting Bill Nye the Science Guy

Hancock’s Symphonic Band performing in the spring

The Signature is published every month October through June in print and online versions on our Website. Submit your art, photography, or writing. See Mr. Salazar in 201.

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A Selective-Enrollment Chicago public school serving mostly Southwest side families that empowers students through academic and social engagement to create change in their personal lives and in their communities

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