

WRITER OF THE YEAR- NSPA

Bella Ramirez

The best thing writing for my publications taught me over this year is how important news is. News represents humanity, how strong people can stand up to injustice and how our words can reveal such injustices. I'm in love with the poetic and fluid meaning of "human." So, I'll carry the title "journalist" with pride, integrity and inquisitive energy.

Although I started writing at a young age, my journalistic writing career only truly began in middle school. It started in my school's yearbook program from seventh grade until freshman year. Each year my skills grew, but after a year on my high school's Spotlight Yearbook's staff in freshman year, I felt something was missing. So, I enrolled into the School of the New York Times (SoNYT) and UF's Summer Media Institute.

Shortly after meeting with a group of students from SoNYT, we made Pressing the Future (pressingthefuturenews.com), an international news site founded on the betterment of free press for students. As the editor-in-chief and one of the youngest staffers, I knew I needed to improve my skills rapidly. While recruiting students from the USA, Spain and Africa, I managed all the logistics for articles. I designed the site while guiding staffers through AP-Style pieces.

Still, something was missing. After staring at my many pieces of writing, I had an epiphany. Writing is not the only side of journalism. So, two weeks before school started I left Yearbook and joined Newspaper and Broadcast.

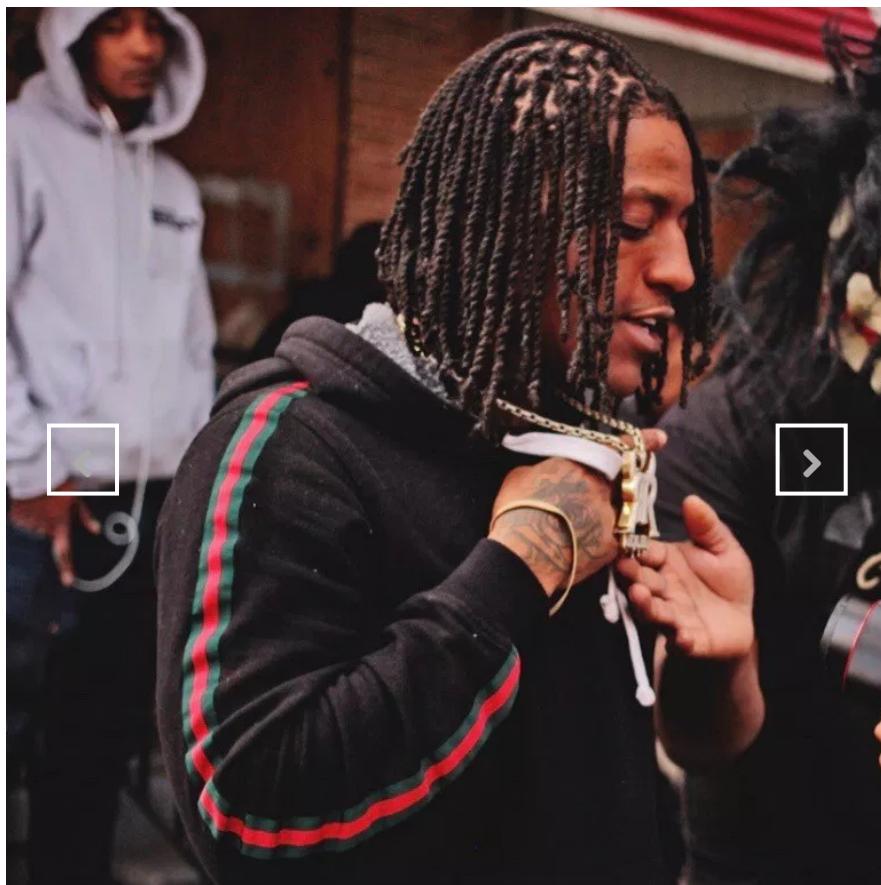
With this being my first year in both publications, there was a learning curve. Yet, looking back at my pieces throughout the year I only see improvement. Now, I am able to produce bi-weekly segments and monthly features for WAHS. Beyond newfound skills with the camera, I began to have faith in my writing.

Over time, I began writing more daring articles. Despite woes of possible private school censorship, I tried to stretch the limits and cover problems the student body felt strongly about. I covered our "Toxic Academia;" high stress levels some teens in Heritage suffer through. Due to well-researched facts in the article and the steady faith my staff and teachers held in me, we got it published.

This felt like a championing of the free press in my school. Now I took on more daring pieces, such as the piece on #SOSNicaragua that I'm currently working on. I reached out to Nicaraguan students and activists all over the world. I started covering MSD and interviewed citizens while maintaining composure in the midst of their grief. I interviewed women outside of Parkland who had their children killed at gunpoint. I continue to juggle handling harsh topics for my publications with my rigorous course-load of all honors and AP classes. Yet even as my heart aches and my eyes droop from lack of sleep, I cannot help but go back for more. I am addicted to it; my love for the world and for journalism burns far too bright to take a single day of rest. So, instead I'll keep covering the stories that need to be heard. Whether it's an unnoticed cinematographer, women missing their children deeply, stress of a school, beautiful farmers markets or teens working toward a better future, I will cover it. For the people, and, for me.

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NEWSPAPER

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SENIOR CASSIUS JENNINGS SHOOTS A MUSIC VIDEO. (PHOTO SUBMITTED)

Rocking the cinematography scene

Published on December 1, 2018 — in Features — by Bella Ramirez

Senior cinematographer Cassius Jennings did not always run a [YouTube](#) featuring music videos with big name artists and a following of 29,621 subscribers. He began his career making recap videos for concerts and then started to make music videos. He had this plan ever

“I always wanted to be in the music scene, and I didn’t know how. Then I realized having a camera could do it,” Jennings said.

He started out his sophomore year with one camera, no connections, no experience and one big dream. “I already knew I had everything planned for me. Just start off small and work my way up,” Jennings said.

Armed with new videography equipment, multiple tripods, a gimbal, better editing software and a reversed schedule, Jennings now works with artists such as Tee Grizzley, XXXTentacion, Kodak Black, J.I.D., Members Only, 6ix9ine, Yung Bans and Maxo Kream.

Jennings’ reversed schedule puts his music video work days on the weekends. “By my senior year I wanted to make sure I’m doing good for myself and I am. I shoot music videos every week. I am a director, editor and I’m my own production team. I do everything,” Jennings said.

Despite being self-taught, Jennings had some mentors along the way such as Donovan Campbell, an advisor for WAHS. These mentors allowed him to evolve past using starter programs like iMovie to more professional editing software such as Final Cut Pro. “The bigger jobs I take on, well, I try to be as professional as I can. I work with a lot of older people also; I have to be professional no matter what; especially since I’m young, people doubt me,” Jennings said. After working with larger artists such as Tee Grizzley and XXXTentacion, Jennings’s service, Counterpoint 2.0, is known all over America.

“Once people started contacting me asking if I was in Georgia or in New York, I knew I made it,” Jennings said. He found the greatest influx of fame after American rapper XXXTentacion died. “I believe that was a turning point in my life because the day he passed... That was the day I became known, which sucks to say, but working with him really projected my name, and I want to thank him for that. I hope I did,” Jennings said.

While Jennings continues to grow in his work with music videos, his goal is to do wedding photography. “I’ve worked with a lot of artists and eventually I want to do weddings; that’s where the money’s at. Weddings are more professional, and they are not as difficult as music videos,” Jennings said.

☰ **Menu**


high school senior. Most recently, he shot a music video in Philadelphia. “It was a great experience, just traveling from different neighborhoods made me see the world in a different light. But now, all the work I’ve done in the past, well, people are starting to realize who I am and find my name. I’m **Counterpoint 2.0** Productions.”


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BELLA RAMIREZ LATEST POSTS


Bella Ramirez, 15, is a passionate journalist and Marvel fan. She enjoys writing for the newsmagazine, doing segments in WAHS and running her third publication, Pressing the

Jackson Heights Residents Find Solace in Their Historic District

By Bella Ramirez and Isabel Cai



Camille Baker

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Jul 19, 2018 · 5 min read

JACKSON HEIGHTS—When Daniel Magana, 51, moved to the Bronx in 2000 from Mexico City, he feared for his life.

“There are gangs, shootings... They call you names. I had never seen that before, it was a shock,” Mr. Magana says of the Bronx. He would not go outside after midnight, and tried to stay outside of the Bronx for as long as possible by having a full schedule of all-day activities and spending his after-hours in Central Park.

He also lived in Manhattan briefly, but the rent was prohibitively high.

In 2003, much to his delight, Mr. Magana, with the help of his friends, found a garden apartment in Jackson Heights.



Garden residence on 84th street/Isabel Cai

Now a New York City resident for 18 years, Mr. Magana is happy in Queens, he says; he prides himself on his values and family. With a glimmer in his eyes, he speaks about how proud he is of his daughters, naming each of their many accomplishments.



Mr. Magana values his family greatly and is very proud of his daughters. "Education is the cornerstone of everything", he says, delighted to find better education for the two girls in New York/Isabel Cai

Mr. Magana lives in what has been designated a historic district of Jackson Heights, an area of about 19 square blocks which spans from 76th Street to 88th Street between Roosevelt Avenue and Northern Boulevard. Jackson Heights is already much safer than it used to be, and the historical designation in Mr. Magana's neighborhood, which has prevented rents from skyrocketing, has made the 19-square-block area a special haven for hundreds of migrant families.

Mr. Magana's neighborhood was designated a historic district by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission in 1993 to

preserve its unique architectural style, with rent control and a safe environment, it seemed meant to be for his family.

A study by the Historic District's Council shows that the rent is lower in historic districts when compared to non-historic districts and housing subsidies are often offered to the tenants.

Jill Ananyi, 66, another resident on the block, came to New York from California "around the 1970s," trying to make a living as a translator. After briefly living in Manhattan, where rents at that time averaged \$3,200 per month, she moved to Jackson Heights in 1990 upon learning about their more favorable rents.



Jill Ananyi rests in front of her rental's steps/Bella Ramirez

Mrs. Ananyi has lived in Jackson Heights for 28 years and notices the “drastic differences” the neighborhood evolved through.

“Population waves change, it’s always changing,” Mrs. Ananyi says. “We get the best of everything. There’s a big core of people here. I never knew my mailman before coming to New York, [the] neighborhoods are more tight-knit.”

This explains why Mr. Magana also feels that it is easier to blend in the community. Jackson Heights is housed in Queens, the second largest and most diverse borough in New York. There are 160 languages and dialects spoken in the neighborhood and a single co-op can house people from all around the world.

Kelly Carroll, 31, the director of Advocacy and Community Outreach from the Historic Districts Council, believes that establishing a historic district, can stabilize a neighborhood. The stability allows closer bonds to form between neighbors.

“Down the block, everyone knows me. The supers, the kids, I’ve known them since I was little,” Paula Gutierrez, 18, says.



Paula Gutierrez stands in front of her doorway in her family's rental. The door is decorated with snowflakes because her grandmother "loves to decorate things"/Bella Ramirez

Ms. Gutierrez has lived in Jackson Heights her entire life. While remarking there will be neighbors that "you don't like," she still believes the neighborhood is peaceful.

"Everybody looks out for each other," Ms. Gutierrez says.

The caring community is what brings people back. Hermes Valencia, 21, visits the neighborhood and his friends despite no longer living in Jackson Heights.



Hermes Valencia chuckles at a makeshift photoshoot/Bella Ramirez

“It’s my area,” Mr. Valencia says. “I feel more comfortable here.”

Mr. Valencia feels comforted by the safety, familiarity, and diversity of the historic district.

“Here in New York City, no one can say ‘I’m a New Yorker.’ For real? No one is from New York because it is the most diverse. You will never hear the same accent on anybody,” Mr. Valencia says.

Another reason for Mr. Magana’s appreciation for the historic district? It’s in Jackson Heights, an area of Queens that has seen a steep decline in crime in the last decades.

“Nobody looks at you through the windows,” says Mr. Magana. “I’ve never heard a shooting, never heard a yelling in all of my 15 years living here.”



A co-op apartment on 84th street. Here in Jackson Heights, a single co-op can house people from all over the world/Isabel Cai

According to the [NYPD](#), Jackson Heights had one murder in 2017, 1,818 crimes, and a 77.23 percent decrease in crime over the past 25 years. This is a far cry from 1990, when there was a total of 9,466 crimes and 28 murders in the neighborhood.

With “aesthetics in mind,” the suburb-gone-city community is held close by its residents. Ms. Carroll remarks the value of a neighborhood

recognized by the Historic District Council.

“By being a historic district, it has a matter of pride. People in historic districts feel they have an extra level of protection,” Ms. Carroll says.

As a historic district, Jackson Heights became the safe and tight-knit community immigrant families can take pride in. Now, a group of 12 Jackson Heights residents and the Jackson Heights Beautification group wish to expand the bounds of the historic district. In a promotional video posted by the Jackson Heights Beautification Group’s Facebook page on June 4 expanding their intent of expansion, a narrator says “All it takes is a walk through Jackson Heights to notice there is something special.”

DANGER: TOX

Students feel the pressure and stress of getting into a good college on a daily basis. Here are some ways the school can do to help.

Bella Ramirez | Features Editor
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College, the “supposed” reason for our existence, or at least the reason why we all chose a college preparatory school, creates a system that thrives perfectly in our world. More people want and need it, so colleges can raise the prices and the stakes.

Other than tuition, we pay a personal price for being a piece of the college system. Brand-name colleges breed one type of student: a well-rounded overachiever. However, humans are inherently not well-rounded. Instead, we are fragmented and imperfect, we have slants toward certain subjects, and we make mistakes; this makes us multi-layered and diverse. While colleges preach the “holistic application review process,” they actually look at whether you conform to their cookie-cutter identity. This leads to a natural selection of sorts; in order to receive this “holistic review,” you must have certain prerequisite qualities such as belonging to the top 5 percent of the class and speaking multiple languages.

“Colleges do want well-rounded students, but they also want students who are passionate about chemistry or literature or physics. When students try to make themselves into what they think a college wants - they are doing themselves a disservice. You could do everything right - earn straight A’s, have 15 AP classes, and still not get into a selective college,” college advisor Sharon Bikoudou said. “My advice is to take the classes you want, study what you love and then apply to a balanced list of colleges and I promise there will be a college for you.”

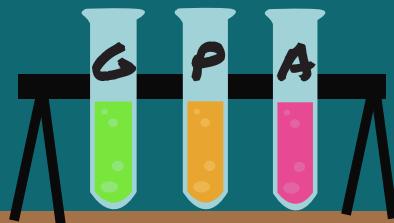
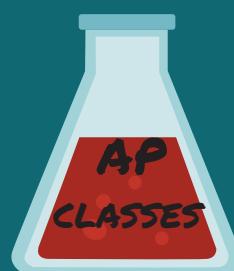
Students often trade a workable schedule for a high-AP course-load due to the influence of peers. “Even though I’m only taking three APs (my junior classmates are taking more), I constantly feel pressure to do more, take on more, participate more, but the reality is that time is an inescapable constraint, and it is super overwhelming to try and manage everything,” junior Paula Mitre said.

This societal pressure for more APs is detrimental to fellow peers. Students should take classes because they want to learn from them, not because they want to say they have another AP under their belt. When consulting with guidance counselors in the upcoming months, consider what classes are best fit for you, not just best to see on paper. About 87 percent of students at Heritage (polled from 229 students) feel the need to be well-rounded, but only 63 percent feel unique. Since most Heritage students know what colleges look for, nearly everyone already fits the ideal identity or tries to fit it now. This leads to most people thinking the same: “I need a 100 percent” or “I need the hardest class.”

“Although the classes at Heritage are demanding, I think it’s the culture at Heritage that puts the most pressure on the average student. We compete immensely with one another in order to get good grades,” senior Victoria Macklai said. It is not detrimental to chase a high grade, but it is detrimental to determine self-worth based on those grades. With our rigorous course load, students should welcome study groups and group work as a way to alleviate the pressures of many assignments. Besides students shining individually, college advisor Sharon Bikoudou explained that colleges also admit to comparing applicants to students within their schools more than they compare them to students outside of their school. This creates a cutthroat environment; more people feel willing to slight others if it means raising their grade by even one percentage point.

“This is the point where we should be most supportive of each other, not competing against each other.”

- senior Aaron Thaler



TOXIC ACADEMIA

basis. Despite falling victim to college preparatory lifestyle, there are things our

Senior Aaron Thaler feels guilty of getting caught up in the system as well but notes how unjust it is. "A lot of this is said jokingly among the senior class, but there is truth to it. Some people will say 'don't apply to this school because you'll get in over me.' We shouldn't be thinking like that," Thaler said. "We're seniors, and we've grown up together for years, some of us for our whole lives. This is the point where we should be most supportive of each other, not competing against each other."

The competitive environment creates a stress bubble around the student body. When asked to rank the level of stress students feel in school out of 10 (one the lowest, 10 the highest), 88 percent of students rank their stress levels above five, and 17.3 percent rank stress levels a 10. Additionally, 77.7 percent of students name school as their main source of stress. As a way to combat this, administration is planning to offer mindfulness workshops. These

will mirror the previously given assemblies on ways to handle stress (i.e. box breathing).

"I suggest that teachers communicate to each other more efficiently in order to not assign several assessments, projects or large homework assignments on the same day," freshman Christopher Fonseca said. While full cooperation between teachers may not be possible due to conflicting curriculum requirements, teachers should at least consider students' other academic obligations in order to enhance student performance.

While most of this seems personalized to Heritage, the cutthroat environment and lone wolf thought process are inherent to the college process. As students attending a college preparatory school, we fall victim to college's ploys. Our environment has evolved into a high-stress, every-person-for-themselves mentality. Heritage however, does contribute to the problem.

Senior Nicholas DiStefano said that Heritage's marketing tactics foster a robotic sense of appreciation. "With rigor, you'll have stress, but the school does not try to limit it. They just add on with 'oh look, this person won,' and you start to think 'wow, if they're winning and I'm not, I'm not going to go anywhere in life.' Then you always have that mindset that 'this person is better than me, so why am I even going to try?'" DiStefano said. He believes the school should cheer for everyone equally. Some ways to include and appreciate more students is to feature monthly student profiles similar to @humansofahs posts on Heritage's instagram (@americanheritageplant) and have a senior pamphlet that includes all college acceptances, not just the top 40 acceptances.

Beyond changing marketing efforts to include a wider range of students, our students should change what we joke about and value mental health over grades. When asked about what humor the students at our school bond over, most students mentioned dark humor. Student jokes varied from "wanting to jump off the bell tower," "ridiculing stress, "very negative stuff like failing tests" and "wanting to die." Around 41 percent of 229 students polled at Heritage have felt a decrease in their happiness since coming to the school. High statistics like those do not belong in a high school.

Amy Morin from Forbes magazine reiterated that repeating thoughts leads to believing them. "Your thoughts are a catalyst for self-perpetuating cycles. What you think directly influences how you feel and how you behave," Morin said. If we stop joking about real problems like suicide and high stress, then we can become a more accepting and joyful class.

American Heritage students are victim to toxic academia, but we don't have to live that way. We need to think holistically— past the Intelligence Quotient and on to our Emotional Quotient.



(Graphics/Amber Bhutta)





HOME OF THE AMERICAN HERITAGE STUDENT
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Flip or Flop: Live like a celebrity

Published on January 7, 2019 — in Entertainment/Fashion, Food & Lifestyle
— by Bella Ramirez

I know, I know, I'm already a bit of a celebrity. After all, people are at my beck and call asking for my autograph. Just kidding. At school, I wave to a few familiar faces but for the most part I am stuck in the mediocre lane: average Heritage student. However, for this week, I will act like the teenage equivalent of Anne Hathaway. Now, let's take on the good, the bad and the photoshopped.



AS A CELEBRITY, I NEEDED TO SPONSOR HIGH-END BRANDS AND TAKE PICTURES WITH EXPENSIVE THINGS. MANY OF MY FRIENDS REQUESTED A SPONSORSHIP OF GUCCI SO I TOOK MY FIRST EVER TRIP TO A GUCCI STORE. TOO AFRAID OF BREAKING SOMETHING AND PAYING A HIGH BILL, I STAYED OUTSIDE FOR THE PICTURE.(PHOTO/BELLA RAMIREZ)

After a two hour call with my “manager,” sophomore Irene Newman, I underwent a drastic schedule change. Who knew being famous was so exhausting? Newman set me up with a rigorous workout schedule, strict diet and photoshoots. We took inspiration from “I lived like (celebrity name) for a week” videos on YouTube for building my fabulously draining schedule. I had to sweat harder than Rocky in the morning then look model-ready by the afternoon. On most days I’m lucky to brush my hair, but now my reputation seemed to revolve around how good I looked in photos.

The diet involved a lot of vegetable smoothies and almost no junk food to pair with the rise of the craze over organic food. I must admit, I did not follow the diet religiously. By that, I mean I barely followed it. I simply cannot exchange my pizza for fame.

Modeled after Newman's favorite celebrities, the workout was built on the sheer purpose of cosmetics. Nothing was for strength or even keeping in shape – the whole workout revolved around muscle toning. Unlike my time working out for the past flip or flop, this gym session felt too calculated to be enjoyable. After my complaints, Newman assigned me a new workout challenge where I could watch "Friends" and follow workout items on a list depending on what the characters did. While this was more enjoyable, most celebrities are not allowed to take that easy way out, especially if they are actor/actress training for an action role.



CELEBRITIES NEED TO SHARE THEIR PERSONAL LIFE SO I RELEASED PICTURES OF ME AT HOME. IMITATING SALT BAE, I PLAYED ON CELEBRITY'S "I'M JUST LIKE YOU" PHOTOS. (PHOTO/BELLA RAMIREZ)

For my first photoshoot, my manager/makeup artist Irene gave me the ultimate makeover. A big ballgown and two hours of eyeshadow, blush and who knows what else later, I was ready. My wonderful manager donned the camera (on auto) and directed me with how to pose and when to pose. I looked at a nonexistent object in the corner for far too long and leaned on way too many walls. Despite goofy twists and turns, the results were stunning.

Seconds before posting on Instagram though, I froze. Photoshop. Don't celebrities photoshop their photos? Does that mean I need to photoshop them too? I decided to let the people decide, so I had my followers vote on what a celebrity should do. With 58 percent voting

against photoshop, I felt a wave of relief. Still, the votes were close: 25 yes and 34 no. While a lot of celebrities photoshop their photos, some protest against the act and call out magazines for publishing photoshopped versions.

I felt pain in seeing how close the votes were and, after talking to Newman, I realized how wide-span the problem of photoshopping was. Newman admitted to photoshopping her own pictures with apps such as Facetune. Zeev Farbman, CEO of Lightricks, the business that makes Facetune, even noted his surprise at the app's success. "We didn't think any single app would be significant enough to finance the entire growth of the company. It felt like we had won the lottery," Farbman said to the [Guardian](#). With the rise of creating a perfect Instagram feed, users feel obligated to change their looks on apps. This creates misconceptions between reality and what is displayed on social media, possibly leading to body dysmorphia as viewers believe their body type is not good enough for the screen.



christine teigen

@chrissyteigen

I don't know what real skin looks like anymore. Makeup ppl on instagram, please stop with the smoothing (unless it's me) just kidding (I'm torn) ok maybe just chill out a bit. People of social media just know: IT'S FACETUNE, you're beautiful, don't compare yourself to people ok

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However, the reality is all body types are more than good enough for the screen. Being a celebrity or just being human does not mean you have to photoshop your images. You are beautiful whichever way you choose. Being a celebrity showed me the challenge of being under constant scrutiny under the public eye. It reminded me to keep being Be-YOU-tiful.



LIVING LIKE A CELEBRITY MEANT I NEEDED TO CONSTANTLY HAVE MY PHONE OUT TO TAKE PICTURES AND POST. HOWEVER, CAPTURING THE MEMORIES BEGAN TO FEEL MORE LIKE AN UNSETTLING CHORE TO LET EVERYONE INTO MY LIFE RATHER THAN A FUN WAY TO SHOW PEOPLE WHAT THEY MISSED IN MY LIFE. (PHOTO/BELLA RAMIREZ)

After dealing with the trouble of photoshopping, my friends ambushed me and asked for autographs and pictures outside my house. While this was funny and enjoyable, if strangers approached me the same way, then I would have felt fearful. Celebrities need to balance trusting people and taking safety initiatives for their wellbeing. With running companies, appearing in media and doing individual projects, this additional dedication to safety is nerve-racking for celebrities. The closest I have to juggling all those responsibilities was running **Pressing the Future**, my international news site and dealing with my friends asking for my autograph. Celebrity week served a challenge. I needed to care about my looks, keep up with my responsibilities and worry about what others thought. Celebrities get to live in glamour but at too high a cost for me. For now, I will stay an everyday student. I would rather keep some privacy and laziness in exchange for lack of fame.

VERDICT: Flop.

See below for the photos from my photo shoot.

NEWS STORIES FOR SCHOOL'S BROADCAST PROGRAM (Read by anchors live):

Anti Vaxxer

High school senior Ethan Lindenberger spoke to Congress about his journey from anti-vaxxer to pro-vaccinator yesterday. Upon approaching high school, the now-senior began to research the issue. He found information countering his anti-vaxxer mother's views to which she allegedly responded QUOTE "That's what they want you to think" END QUOTE. Lindenberger got vaccinated for influenza, hepatitis, tetanus and HPV in December last year and now speaks out in favor of vaccines. At the senate hearing he said QUOTE "To combat preventable disease outbreaks, information is in my mind the forefront of this issue" END QUOTE. Washington state's secretary of health, John Wiesman; president and CEO of the Immune Deficiency Foundation, John G. Boyle; and Pediatrician-in-Chief at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital in Memphis also spoke alongside Lindenberger to the Senate on the importance of accurate research and misinformation regarding vaccinations.

Migration

Yesterday activists staged a demonstration outside the Homestead migrant detention center. The controversial center announced its plan for expansion from 1,350 to 2,350 beds in December according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The center is the largest and only center run by a for-profit company. Representative Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, who's district includes homestead remarked to NBC Miami QUOTE "Migrant children are still being locked up in Homestead, and I haven't received a clear answer why they remain there longer than at a government shelter" END QUOTE. Protestors pressed for its closure by claiming it helped a company gain by detaining children. Maria Bilbao of the United We Dream organization said to NBC Miami QUOTE "As children await their freedom, the company is making a lot of money. It is supposed to be a temporary shelter, but this is being run as a business" END QUOTE.

Climate Change Strike

In a skip-day with a purpose, 16-year-old climate change activist Greta Thunberg organized "school strikes" last Friday, March 15 to raise awareness about the urgency of climate change. Hundreds of thousands of students in over 100 countries participated in the strike and demanded action from local and federal representatives. Signs varied from phrases like "We Don't Want to Die," "March Now Or Swim Later," and "Today's Air Smells Like the Planet's Last Days." The Swedish teen who was recently nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize and her rally of students call for 100 percent renewable energy by 2030 and varying levels of decarbonization for different countries by 2040. Thunberg said to Teen News, "There are a crisis in front of us that we have to live with, that we will have to live with for all our lives, our children, our grandchildren and all future generations. We won't accept that, we won't let that happen and that's why we go on strike. We are on strike because we do want a future, we will carry on." END QUOTE.

New Zealand Terrorist Attack

New Zealand experienced its largest massacre March 15. A 28-year-old anti-Muslim gunman targeted two mosques in central Christchurch. There, he live-streamed the attack on social media for 17 minutes. It resulted in 50 dead and 50 wounded. The gunman possessed a gun license and five guns (both semi-automatic and shotguns) on the scene. In response, New Zealand's Prime Minister Arden promises the country new legislation on gun regulation. In a News Conference in Wellington, Arden said QUOTE "While work is being done as to the chain of events that lead to both the holding of this gun license and the possession of these weapons, I can tell you one thing right now. Our gun laws will change." END QUOTE.

Climate Activist Update

Last year climate activists and alumni such as Faith Ward, Sophia Donskoi and Eden Kinlock led the Zero Hour Climate March for Fort Lauderdale. This year however, "This is Zero Hour," an international climate activism group announced they are hosting their climate summit in Miami, Florida July 12th through 14th. The company decided to use Florida as their Headquarters for change this year due to the red tide and close proximity with ever-disastrous hurricanes. To find out more about the event feel free to check out this is zero hour dot com.

Box Office Update

For the third week in a row, Marvel's "Avengers: Endgame" led the box office with \$63.1 million domestically this weekend alone. The runner-up in the box office was "Pokemon Detective Pikachu." However, the New York Times reports that on average per theater, "Pokemon Detective Pikachu" actually did \$278 better than "Endgame." Truly, it's a battle of the fandoms in places like AMC and Regal.

Educational Court

After four years of claims, The Students for Fair Admission began their trial in suing Harvard University for racial discrimination against Asian-Americans on Monday. The group claims that an unreleased analysis from 2013 shows that if Harvard went off of merit alone rather than using affirmative action, 43 percent of admitted students would be Asian-American, rather than their current 23 percent. Both parties expect the case to be resolved by the Supreme Court. As part of the case, Harvard released six years worth of undergraduate admissions files to the court. While Harvard refused to release the files to the public on the stance of not revealing secrets behind their competitive admissions process, The Students for Fair Admission continues to push for its release in their case. The group said QUOTE This case does not involve anything like national security, the formula for Coca-Cola or embarrassing details of private life. There is no way the public could have understood the dispute if the facts had been hidden. UNQUOTE.

Sesame Street

Walking outside of the courtroom, let's take a stroll down memory lane, or more specifically, Sesame Street. Caroll Spinney, the puppeteer who portrayed Big Bird and Oscar the Grouch since their first episode is stepping down from the roles. Spinney says QUOTE Big Bird helped me find my purpose. Even as I step down from my roles, I feel I will always be Big Bird. And

even Oscar, once in a while UNQUOTE. Spinney's Big Bird was named a "Living Legend" by the Library of Congress in 2000, so this legend will live on in the show through Matt Vogel's puppeteering. Oscar, a more pessimistic childhood figure, will now be played by Eric Jacobson.

Wacky Story

In Pennsylvania, a 65-year old man claims his emotional support alligator "Wally" helps him with his depression. Wally the alligator is a registered emotional support animal who was rescued from Orlando at 14-months old. Five-foot tall Wally enjoys snuggling and hugging his elderly owner and lives with another rescue alligator named "Scrappy."

Bomb Threat

A student called in a fake bomb threat to an EasyJet flight from Lyon (LEE-OHN) to Rennes (REN). The twenty-three-year-old man claimed he initiated the call to avoid seeing his parents, who planned to fly in on the January 18th EasyJet flight to visit him. His next court date is May 21st, where, if convicted, he can face up to five years in jail and a hefty \$850,000 fine.

2020 Presidential Election

Senator Kamala Harris, kicked off her 2020 Presidential campaign in her hometown, Oakland, California, yesterday. Harris became the second black woman to serve on the senate in 2017 and now hopes to be 2020's Democratic Presidential nominee. Harris addressed the crowd of over 10,000 people with a review of her law career and her plans for the future by calling the modern day an inflection point in history. QUOTE "If I have the honor of being your president I will tell you this: I am not perfect. Lord knows, I am not perfect. But I will always speak with decency and moral clarity and treat all people with dignity and respect." END QUOTE