



JAGWIRE

Fall 2021 - Issue 3 - Career Day



To Mask or Not To Mask

Jefferson Academy students and administration weigh in on the school's mask policy and how effective it has been over the last two quarters and helping prevent COVID-19 while supporting choice.
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Setting Up Shrek

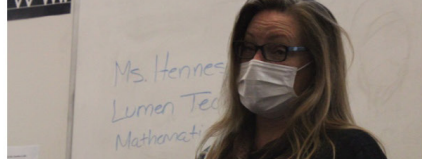
The production of Shrek the Musical is in full swing as the actors learn their lines and the production crew creates the magical land of Duloc.
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Gorgeous Gala

The first of many "mini galas" have been hung in the Jefferson Academy art wing featuring work from students in multiple classes. The gala serves as a showcase of the multi-talented students at JA and a celebration of their success.
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Fall Sports Wrap-up

The Fall Sports seasons at Jefferson Academy were unforgettable. Look back at the success, stumbles, and memories that made up the 2021 Fall Sports Season at Jefferson Academy.
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Aurora, a bright-eyed 10-year-old golden retriever made her way through the halls of Jefferson Academy, led by Mr. Kirkley and Dr. Kirkley the veterinarian, on Wednesday. Career day resumed in person this year after being held through video recordings last year due to Covid.

From smelling the Rosarians rose samples to seeing Dr. Kirkley's veterinary demonstration with Aurora, a lot of kids enjoy the learning experiences career day provides.

"I'm excited. Since last year was online, it was not the same as going from classroom to classroom and actually seeing the person and asking questions. It's also a great way to meet people who have similar interests and meet people from different grades," said sophomore Lilagrace Huffer.

"It is beneficial to every student because they can see different careers and maybe see a career that they didn't know about before," commented senior Ashton Lieser.

Many of the seniors were frustrated with the required participation for career day because many seniors already have an idea of what career they will go into.

"I feel like it's kind of maybe a little pointless for some of the seniors to go because some of them already know what they want to do in life. But it also will help people who aren't really sure" said Lieser.

Although students were able to see various presentations from many career paths, many students wished there was more variety in the STEM career speakers.

"They didn't really have any medical careers, which I've always been interested in, like psychology," observed Lieser.

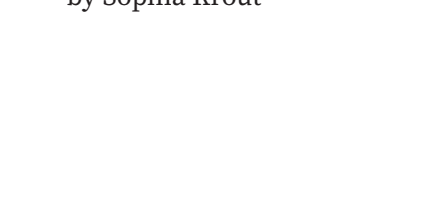
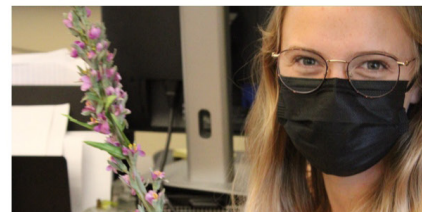
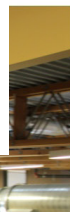
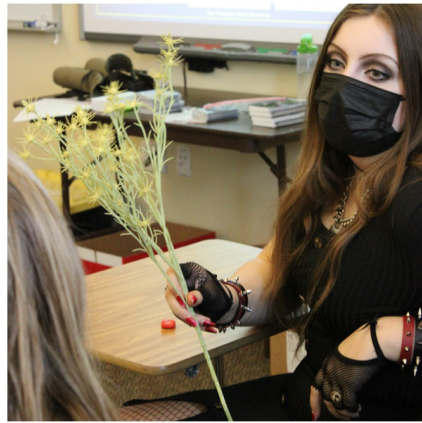
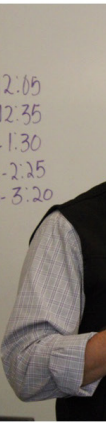
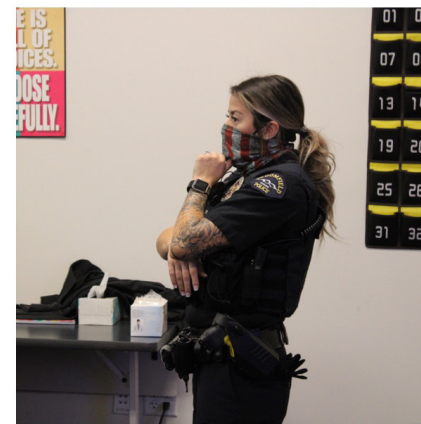
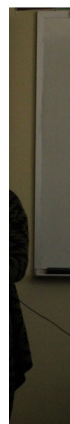
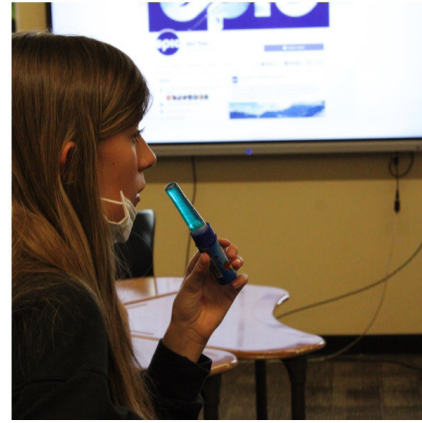
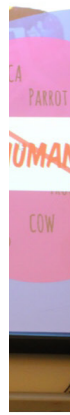
"I would have liked to have seen someone who was more in the weeds of coding and the programming aspect of it, cause a lot of them were just more of the manager or that sort of stuff," commented senior Ray Hoon.

Students were able to hear directly from professionals about their career paths, which helped students get a picture of what their future might look like.

"It solidified that I do not want to be an aerospace engineer. No offense, he was such a sweet guy, but no," affirmed senior Isabella Martinez. "He said calculus and I ran."

Career day gave students a baseline idea of what these careers would look like.

"I feel like I got a basic idea of what's required for education, what hours I could expect to work, that sort of thing," concluded Hoon.



Paving a Path

by Sophia Krout

TO MASK OR NOT TO MASK

by Sophia Krout and Owen Davidson

From anti-mask protests to Instagram infographics on mask wearing, masks have been a hot button issue throughout the pandemic. In August, Jefferson County decided to institute a mask mandate in all schools, but Jefferson Academy's location and distinctive position as a charter school has allowed the school to follow Broomfield county's policy on mask mandates. This mask-optional policy has been in place since the start of the school year.

The CDC recommendation, however, supports mask mandates in schools, "Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status."

Jefferson Academy is in a unique position as one of the minority of schools in Colorado without a mask mandate.

"We decided to give the students a choice because we were following the local health order at the time and not the school district," said Principal Grantham. "So far the mask ruling has been effective because the number of Covid-19 cases has stayed low throughout the year."

The mask issue is often oversimplified to mask wearers and anti-maskers, but this is not necessarily representative of most individuals' stances on masking. Many students who would support a mask mandate do not regularly wear masks for a number of reasons.

Senior Juliana Davidson said, "I don't mind wearing a mask all day as I am used to it from working 8+ hours a day wearing a mask. If it became a requirement at school I would not mind at all."

On the other end of the spectrum, sophomore Mathew Bernardy said, "I do not think it is fair for

some students because it might be harder for them to breathe and it might make the day more stressful and difficult for them."

Sophomore Lance Anderson said, "I think it is exhausting and it is hard to breathe in class, so it is also hard to focus."

Although the majority of students choose not to wear a mask in school at JA, some wear a mask to prevent some of the more comprehensive Covid mitigation efforts that we saw last year.

Sophomore Connor Berg said, "It is important for people to wear a mask so it helps people not get Covid-19 and not make the school go into online mode again."

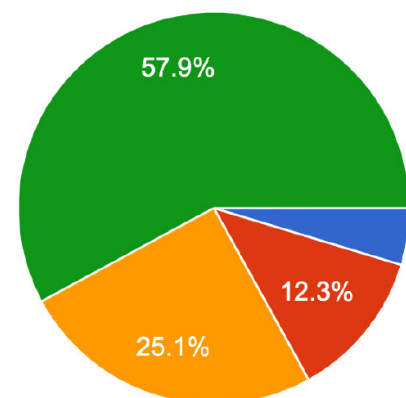
Coming back to school after online or hybrid learning last year has looked different for every student. Covid mitigation measures like temperature checks at the door, Covid testing, contact tracing, vaccination, and mask wearing have all been a part of going back to school.

Everyone has a different understanding of these processes and opinions on their efficacy.

"I think everyone needs to do their part in trying to put an end to Covid, and since masks have been proven to be effective, I believe everyone needs to wear one when in large groups of people; therefore, I do not think it's unfair to students to make them wear masks, as it does not affect their health in any negative way," said Davidson.

The school's decision to remain mask-optional allows students to choose whether or not to wear a mask.

"I would like to recommend wearing a mask, and what we are finding is the students who do wear a mask are not sent home if they were in contact with others with Covid-19. I think it is the wiser choice to wear a mask, but I will not judge you if you do not wear a mask," said Principal Grantham.



Rate whether or not you feel if masks have a negative effect on your education. Mark 1 if you feel it is completely detrimental up to 4 for no effect at all.

- 1 - Completely detrimental
- 2 - Somewhat harmful
- 3 - Slightly harmful
- 4 - No real effect

Jefferson Academy students were given the opportunity to participate in an anonymous poll about the mask policy at JA. The graph presented is the result of one of the 10 questions that nearly 170 students answered in that poll.

COLLEGE CONUNDRUM



by Rhea Alexander

From pulling all-nighters to 5000 word essays, college is a time of academic struggle for many students. What's even worse? Taking college courses as a high school student. For several years now, Jefferson Academy has worked with Front Range Community College to provide high schoolers with the opportunity to take college courses at no cost. As students have experienced, however, taking college courses in high school does come with a cost.

As the Fall 2021 semester progresses, many students have considered withdrawing from their college courses while others have already withdrawn. From academic overload to financial pressure, there are a plethora of reasons as to why the students of Jefferson Academy have been choosing to relinquish their classes.

"I believe that failing grades and finances is one of the primary reasons why students withdraw from their college courses," explained Postsecondary Advisor Ms. LeValley.

Though withdrawing can seem like the perfect solution to an overwhelming schedule, this alternative comes at a cost too. When withdrawing from a course, students are still required to pay for their time in the class unless they drop the course during the permitted 1-2 week drop period.

While the financial payment prohibits many students from dropping a class, some students are ready to overlook the financial implications and withdraw from a course. Senior Hannah Rivera recently dropped one of her college courses due to academic pressure and a failing grade.

"In my eyes withdrawing from the course was worth the financial payment because I think I would have had to pay for the course either way," comments Hannah Rivera.

As several students withdraw from their college courses due to academic shortcomings, others relinquish their courses because of declining mental health. Junior Eden Woodward is part of this population, as she dropped her college course not too long ago.

"I think anyone who has the opportunity to should prioritize their mental health far over any college class," shares Eden Woodward. "I definitely believe I made the right decision by dropping my course because my mental health was horrible and I did not have the drive to do anything."

After dropping their college courses, both Hannah and Eden have noticed improvements in their mental health. By withdrawing from their college courses, both students have been able to take some time to slow down and breathe. By easing up their workload, both Hannah and Eden have seen improvements academically, socially, and mentally.

"I want to emphasize that withdrawing from your courses is a last resort," cautions Eden. "If you feel mentally overwhelmed, begin by talking to your teachers and counselors, or try changing your study methods."

Stress is a major side effect of challenging academics, and it is important to find a balance that works for you. If you ever feel academically or emotionally overwhelmed, Jefferson Academy has many resources for you. Try talking to a school counselor, like Ms. Parsons or Mrs. Adams. Planning and prioritizing is another way to reduce stress. By finding a support network and stress relief methods that work for you, school and life in general can be just a little bit more bearable.

"Find an outlet to express yourself," advises Mr. Kirkley. "By figuring out a method to de-stress, you can work through school and college courses one step at a time."

ADVISING ADVISEMENT

by Rhea Alexander

As you look down at your homework, all you see is a scramble of words and numbers. What is an asymptote? How do I write a hyperbole? The more you try to understand, the more confusing it gets. Try as you might, you just can't seem to figure out what to do. After fruitless attempts, you put your pencil down and leave your assignment for another day.

This event is a daily occurrence in the advisement class. Advisement is an opportunity for struggling students to catch up on their assignments and raise their grades in a supportive and encouraging environment. The class is run by librarian Mrs. Buechner and offered to students in A, C, and D block.

While the idea of advisement seems great in theory, there are a few problems that the class runs into. An example of this would be the lack of help readily available to students. With about a 12:1 staff to student ratio, Mrs. B is not always available to students in need.

However, it seems like there is a new solution to this problem: NHS students. In order to be active participants of the school community, students of the National Honor Society have been stepping in to provide one-on-one assistance for the Advisement students.

"Now we always have volunteers here," comments freshman Ariannys Frometalzturriaga. "We can get help without waiting for just one or two people anymore."

Advisement students are not the only ones that seem to be enjoying the new set-up. NHS members who have volunteered generally enjoy their participation and look forward to working with

Advisement students again in the future.

NHS volunteer Elise Lien has a very positive outlook on her time in Advisement. During her time in the class, Elise helped underclassmen with their math homework. Like Elise, many students from the National Honor Society have been able to make a positive contribution to the students in advisement by helping them learn basic concepts in unique ways.

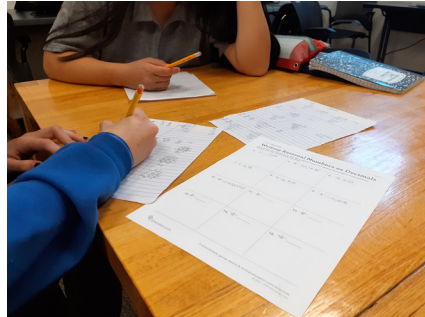
"I feel like helping out in Advisement is a very simple but impactful way to give back to the school community," reflects Lien.

Aside from increased learning and productivity, yet another benefit of this newly implemented system is learning assistance without the cost. Here at Jefferson Academy, an alternative method through which students can receive academic assistance is the tutoring program. In tutoring, students work and earn money by helping out their peers in specific subjects and assignments.

"The extra help in Advisement has been really nice," notes student Laith Ciaramitaro. "Usually we

have to pay for extra help but it's been great to have a helping hand without having to pay."

Advisement is a great opportunity for struggling students to catch up and understand their current material and curriculum. NHS participation has been great for everyone involved, including the members of NHS and the students in Advisement class. In addition to increased learning and comprehension, advisement volunteering has been a great way for students to connect with their peers. Activities such as helping out in advisement help build bridges between the several communities and groups of Jefferson Academy.



CLUB CATCH-UP

by Madeline Leyba

Tri-M has started hosting "Jam Sessions" at lunch every Monday in the auditorium. It's a chill, laid-back place for students to go and perform, play music with other students, or even just listen! Anyone is welcome to join.

The Fine Arts Department is selling stickers in the lunchroom for 50 cents apiece. Profits will go to the performing arts clubs such as drama, drama tech, and Tri-M.

Debate's novice season has officially ended! While there are no competitions happening at the moment, all students are welcome to attend the Monday meets at 3:30.

GSA is extremely excited about all its new members meeting Wednesdays after school.

Climbing Club is practicing Mondays and Wednesdays, and has its first competition on November 20th at The Spot.



TURKEY TRADITION

by Tori Westbrook

Thanksgiving is a time for family and friends to gather together and share the things they're grateful for while also enjoying great food and old traditions. Many students at Jefferson Academy have special traditions they engage in every year, making it a really unique experience for each person and their family.

"Besides eating turkey and watching football, we usually do a family sage cleansing and go around and ask what we are thankful for. We also like to talk about past loved ones and our fond memories. After that we honor our ancestors and the four directions, then we are allowed to sit down and eat. After we eat, the kids make arts and crafts and we all spend the day as a family," explained Maya Ross, a sophomore at Jefferson Academy, about her Thanksgiving traditions.

When asked what she was thankful for this season Ross responded, "This one is easy. Family, friends, and my dogs. I definitely have the best friends a girl could ask for. They are all so funny and supportive;



I absolutely adore all of them. To add on to that, my family are such vibrant and amazing people; they are really one of the things I feel lucky to have. They all make me feel so happy when I'm around them. Lastly, of course, my dogs are so cute and funny and they never fail to light up my day."

Ali Moore, a junior at Jefferson Academy, also recalls fond and funny Thanksgiving memories.

"The two that come to my mind are my brother and me singing 'Happy Thanksgiving' by Miranda Sings and annoying my mom. Another one is I went to my Uncle Mike's house for Thanksgiving and my aunt burnt the yams. It was a very heartbreaking story indeed."

Thanksgiving is undoubtedly one of the most family-oriented holidays for many people, and it's a good time for people to come together and celebrate the joys in their lives.

Whether it's making arts and crafts or annoying parents with funny songs, Thanksgiving is a special time that allows people to reflect on the things in their lives that they can be grateful for.

COCOA AND COMMUNITY

by Mackenzie Estep

With the holidays quickly approaching, warming up with a hot cup of cocoa and a warm cookie by a fire is an opportunity that many JA students may take for granted. Unfortunately, there are many who won't have a chance to enjoy such a simple pleasure. But, JA's own Key Club is doing what it can to spread holiday cheer to families in need.

The first two weeks after Thanksgiving break, Key Club will be collecting donations for a holiday themed food drive.

Each class will be assigned a different ingredient from the kits to ensure that there is not an abundance of one item and none of another. The donations will go to Broomfield FISH, a local food bank and family resource center.

"We are going to be asking for baking and hot chocolate items, and we are going to be putting them into two separate kits: there will be a baking kit and a hot cocoa kit. We will donate those all to Broomfield FISH and they will give them to families in need," explained Sofia Hiller, the Key Club president.

This food drive is different from other food drives Key Club has done in the past because instead of

asking for canned food and necessities they are asking for something more fun for the families.

"I think it is important because there is so much more to life than just the basic necessities and it can be a really valuable moment to share with your family to make brownies or cookies, or making hot chocolate and spending time together talking. It will also help bring that little bit of holiday cheer to these families at a time that can be particularly rough for some people," remarked Hiller.

While this is the first holiday themed food drive that Key Club is doing with Broomfield FISH, this is not the first collaboration they have done. Key Club likes to work with this organization because of how local it is, so they know all the contributions they make will be going to local families in need.

"Broomfield FISH is a good, respectable organization. We have worked with them in the past, so I trust that our contributions will go to a good cause," commented Mark Leoni, a Key Club officer.

Key Club is hoping to make these types of drives a holiday tradition for JA and the club. This all depends on the turnout of this year's drive, but if all goes well they hope to continue this for years to come.

SETTING UP SHREK

by **Tori Westbrook**

Musicals are a form of entertainment that have been around for a long time, and after being quarantined for a year, actors are ready to get back out there for the show of a lifetime. Jefferson Academy is holding their own "Shrek the Musical" on December 9th, 10th, and 11th, and the lead role is ecstatic. The sophomore discusses his fears and hopes for the show.

Isaac Padgett is the main character in the musical, otherwise known as Shrek. He describes his character and some of the issues he has with the character. "I love Shrek with my whole heart because of how he speaks and what he is like in general," he says. "My character and I are like each other because of how we both have things we don't show to the whole world and are always overlooked."

He describes how he connects to the character and the difficulties with the part. "I'm very nervous when it comes to me having everything memorized and my character on lock by three weeks from now. It's only hard to get in character in the way of being angry the whole time," he says.

The actors aren't the only ones working hard in production. The students in theater tech are hitting deadlines in order to really make the show come to

life.

Sophomore Elliott Waters explained, "We basically meet at the beginning of class and talk about what needs to be done, then we go from there and usually work on teams that are tailored to specific tasks. We have a painting crew, a building crew, and a prop crew. We have deadlines at the end of every week for what should be done. It is horribly stressful considering that there are people doing nothing and then freaking out because we are behind schedule. Just do your work and we will be fine. I am very excited for the show, I am really looking forward to seeing what we made on stage!"

Another student in theater tech, Chris Dmitriyev, describes how tech works and how he is enjoying the "behind the scenes" of the Shrek musical. "It's usually decently productive. With different groups working on different projects we can get a good chunk of work done each day. I like how creative it is, we get to work on many things. I am excited for the show! I think it'll be really fun to see everything put together. I am scared about how close it is though."

Students acting and in theater tech have high hopes for the performance. With anticipation leading up to the show in a little less than a month, students are eager to see how everything plays out.



SPLOTCHES THE SURVIVOR

by **Memphis Larson**

There is a new animal on campus! A salamander, dubbed Splotches, has moved in. The Tiger Salamander resides in an enclosure in room 252, being cared for by the high school science teacher, Mr. Kirkley.

When it was found outside in early November it was determined that the animal might not have survived very long outside in the cold morning temperatures so it was quickly brought inside.

Splotches was caught and temporarily stored in Ms. DeVoe's room until there was a proper enclosure in Kirkley's room. He was the subject of a lot of attention on the first day, often being surrounded by students.

Student, Beau Narum, a reptile and amphibian enthusiast is very excited about the new addition. He would much prefer the salamander to be out in the wild, but agrees that it was dangerous for the animal in the temperature. He hopes that Splotches will survive to be released in the spring for a chance at a normal salamander life.

"I feel like it can be a good way for people to learn more about these animals. Salamanders are not a super common sight, so it can be really cool for people to see them up close, as well as being able to talk and learn about them," stated Narum. "I think it is good for him to have a safe place to spend the winter."

Students may be wondering what circumstances led to Splotches living in the school. The salamander may not be directly related to the curriculum, in contrast to the spiders that the entomology class had kept, but to Mr. Kirkley, the current caretaker, there seems to be a relevance to the students for keeping Splotches around.

"It brings a little excitement to the room," said Mr. Kirkley. "Sometimes it's even nice to have something that isn't human around."

Splotches the Salamander may not be staying in the school forever, but such a simple addition to the room will make a lasting impression on the students who learned alongside his enclosure.



GORGEOUS GALA

by Mackenzie Estep

A visual feast greets the eyes of any Jaguar that happens to wander into the Arts Wing of the school where they will encounter art of all kinds created by the students of JA.

With two quarters nearly over, it is time for the art students to be praised for all the hard work they have done. An art gala will be held for the students featured in the art show, their families, and anyone else looking to attend. While the gala is not until November 17th, the art that is featured is already hung up in the school for anyone to see.

“The artist’s families were sent personal invites to come and see their students’ works.”

The art show is hanging right now in the gallery, but the official show is this week,” commented art teacher Mrs. Garcia.

Students from multiple art courses are featured in the show. The pieces were made with a vast range of materials such as colored pencils, charcoal, pen and ink, from many different assignments and students.

“Right now we have graphic art students, drawing students, and the foundations class featured along with the AP artists,” said Mrs. Garcia.

Many students are eager to have their hard work appreciated and shown off in this show.

This is one of the first opportunities for the school to hold an art show like this since the pandemic started, which only adds to the anticipation and excitement around the event.

“I’m really excited to have my art in the show, I think it’s really cool that I have something I made being displayed. I’m happy and proud to share my artwork with others, I can’t wait to bring my familia to see it,” remarked sophomore Olivia Saenz.

This particular art show is going to be a combination of not only the art hanging from the art classes, but also performances by the band and drama students. This allows for different artistic mediums to be shared with the attendees in hopes that it will get more people involved in the JA arts departments.

“I think we always like the idea of the gala being a collaboration and celebration of all of the arts, not just the visual arts, so I love that we are teaming up with the band, improv night, drama and music,” explained Mrs. Garcia.

The sharing of art is important not only to give the students recognition for the work they put into their creations, but also to get the school more involved in art. Having a gala like this also gives the art students another opportunity to showcase and share their art with others outside of their own art classes.

“I think having art in the art show is really important because it helps show it to the rest of the school and the people that come to see the work. It helps show everyone the ideas and creativity that students put into their work,” observed Saenz.

The show on the 17th will not be the only chance for students to have their art shown at the school or to see the different art displayed. There will be other art shows throughout the rest of the year that will showcase other types of art such as pottery from the current pottery class.

“I am hoping to do three of these galas, one mid way through second semester and one at the end of the year too. I hope that this will become the new thing, to do mini galas, instead of one big gala, to feature the students who have done the hard work and to display the work that should be seen. I am hoping to get more people exposed to and involved in art, through looking at it, talking about it, and going to see it,” explained Mrs. Garcia.



GOING GATOR



by Madeline Leyba

When does a Jaguar become a Gator? When you are a phenomenal soccer player named Kate Runyon who verbally committed to the University of Florida to play on their soccer team.

Runyon, a junior at Jefferson Academy, recently committed to playing soccer for the Florida Gators come Fall 2023. While only a verbal commitment, Runyon is ecstatic to play for the Florida Gators. The school has a high academic status and an incredible Division I women’s soccer team.

Runyon has spent most of her life playing soccer and started the recruiting process in eighth grade.

“I had been writing them since the start of my recruiting process and based on my film they came to see me play! They saw me play in July 2021 at Nationals and then started recruiting me afterward,” explained Runyon.

Runyon notes that UF has “always had good soccer, academics, and played in a big power five conference.” The University of Florida will also provide a great education which has always been important to her.

Since Runyon’s only a minor, she says “being verbally committed means that I am committed to playing soccer at UF before I can legally sign

my NLI next November,” she traveled to Florida recently to officially verbally commit. “Florida is committed to me playing for them and I am committed to playing for them.”

When asked about what she was most excited about, she answered, “I am most excited about playing soccer for the coaches at Florida and being part of such a historically dominant program in women’s soccer!”



RUNNING RAMPANT

by Asha Stephens

The Cross Country teams ended their seasons with a bang at the Cross Country State Championships in late October. The team had an extremely successful post-season, running with flying colors through the first two championship meets, with the end goal of performing well at State.

The Boys Team won League in early October, and the Girls set a school record for the team's highest League finish, second place! Both Boys and Girls were runners-up in the Regional Championships Meet in mid-October.

Finally, at the State Championships, the boys placed 6th in the 3A division and girls placed 13th. Avery Linton, a member of the varsity team commented, "Everybody ran the best race that they could run that day...and put the effort in. We all ran for each other and for the team."

While the athletes definitely performed well, the teams strive to continue improving. Levi Hinson, a sophomore and varsity runner, looks forward to achieving even more as a team. "I think we have a solid team," he comments, "and should be able to try and improve over the next couple years."

While the season is over, some members of the team continue to train; this is because for the first time in JA history the teams are participating in the Small Schools Cross Country National Championship

competition in Lubbock, Texas.

JA is going under the club name: Dark Cats Distance Project, as they travel south. The team will spend the first weekend of Thanksgiving break in Lubbock, having team dinners, going to a bowling alley and arcade, rooming with fellow teammates at the hotel, and, of course, running on Saturday, November 20th.

Altogether, this proves to be a great opportunity for team bonding. "I think it is going to be really fun to spend some extra time with the team," remarked Linton, "and overall it is going to be a really positive experience."

"We are excited to go and represent JA on a national stage and see if we can make some cool things happen!" exclaimed Hinson.

Photos courtesy of Tyson Harding



SEASON OF SWINGS

by: Gianna Gagliano

And that's a wrap! A well fought girls volleyball season ended on a high note with a win at the regional tournament and a season full of memories that the girls will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

Coming out of the season, the girls volleyball team truly tells the story of the power of the underdog. After they had an astounding season with 13 wins including both league and non-league games, and only 11 losses, the girls went into regionals as the 33rd seed. Although they lost their first game, they had a resounding victory against The Academy, a team seeded higher than them in the second. This really shows the team's grit as a whole and the determination they have to succeed.

"Our team is really young, most of us are sophomores, so I didn't really expect us to do very well," states Emilee Harding, a sophomore varsity volleyball player. "When we made it to regionals and ended up winning a game there, that was really cool."

As the season concluded, the memories began to flow in while thinking back on a hardworking, well-fought past few months. The girls volleyball team has had many positive moments and experiences, really bringing them together as a team and a community.

"It was a lot of fun, especially after last year, because last season was Covid, so it got cut really short," remarks sophomore varsity girls volleyball player, Emilee Harding. "I got to get to know all of my teammates really well and the coaches were awesome."

There was also a significantly noticeable improvement in the development of each player over the course of the season. Developing their skills and connecting with one another seems to be a main theme and a strong part of the program.

"We grew as a team," says sophomore girls



volleyball player, Freja Hampton. "We all had really close bonds, especially towards the end of the season; it was really fun. I think we have a really good coach-player relationship, and we were all really brought together at the end of the season."

The girls are looking forward to the upcoming season next school year and to always pushing themselves to constantly be better through training for even more success in the exciting seasons to come.

"I think it's a really good program," remarks Freja Hampton. "They push you pretty hard, but it is still really fun and enjoyable." Emilee Harding adds, "I tried out in seventh grade and I had a lot of fun, so I've continued to play with this program and I plan on continuing playing and watching everyone improve."

SENSATIONAL SEASON

by Gianna Gagliano

A bittersweet ending for the boys concludes the season. The varsity boy's soccer team made history this fall as they paved a victorious path for themselves and the many teams to follow.

The grit and determination that the team showed will influence the future of the boy's soccer program while the brotherhood that grew from the members of the team will continue to drive the sports programs at JA.

To tell the story of success this season, you have to look at how the team began training very early on in the year to perfect their skills in order compete to be the best on the field.

They constantly challenged themselves to get in shape, while going back to the basics to polish up their foundations.

"We began practicing about a month before our first game," explained sophomore Adam Livingston. "It was every weekday that we did conditioning. And it was pretty much the basics every day."

As they worked through the season, blowing all the competition out of the water, the boys team grew in both camaraderie and excitement for the remainder of the games, with high hopes for the state tournament. They finished with a 10-0 record in the metro league, being dubbed champions of that league, with an overall record of 18-0-1.

"It felt good to be undefeated," remarked Livingston. Sophomore Jacob Brackney added, "It felt really good due to the support that we got from the student body. They were getting us hyped and we could count on them to always show up."

Once their undefeated season was brought to a close, the team's efforts qualified them for the CHSAA 3A boy's state championship tournament. However, some preparation was needed. As the tournament games drew nearer and nearer, the practices became harder and harder with the end goal of a state title and a trophy to add to the collection in the trophy case.



"The team prepared by doing our normal pregame warmup," explained Brackney. "We took the days really lightly, it almost felt sluggish. I prepared by working/telling myself that I was ready. I listened to music while going to the game and in the locker room right before the games."

For the players, the state championship was a very nerve wracking, exciting, sorrowful, emotional experience. After defeating Salida 3-0, Fort Lupton 4-2, Vail Mountain 4-0 and Liberty Common 3-0, the team advanced to the state championship game against Roaring Fork.

Although it was a loss for the team, the game was hard fought and the memories will forever be with the players because of the success they brought to themselves and the school.

"I'd never felt anything like that state game," said Livingston. "The nerves beforehand and the sadness after was nothing I'd felt before."

For the fans, the loss was noxious. There was hooting and hollering, and emotions of triumph and support all throughout the stadium and during the game. The fans were so invested in the history that was unfolding before them that when the final whistle sounded and the game was over, the loss definite, the fans' support of the boys continued to pour in through tears and words of encouragement.

"Being at the game was a super emotional experience that has a constantly changing atmosphere between goals on both teams," commented

sophomore Tyler Fix, who attended the state championship game. "It was really fun, and after we lost, almost everyone felt the weight of the team's loss on our shoulders as most people cried alongside each other."

Although their loss was devastating, the path that the boys paved will forever be remembered through their accomplishments, perseverance and hard work. The continuity of the themes they have created throughout this season will be everlasting in the future of the boy's soccer program and remembered through the trophy that was added to the case.



WINTER WINNERS

by **Gianna Gagliano**

The chill in the air brings new beginnings in sports. This weather calls for an exciting time in the Jefferson Academy community. The winter season starts with your very own Jefferson Academy Jaguar student athletes preparing for the girls' and boys' basketball season.

Winter sports are beginning with a bang as they are preparing for their upcoming seasons, all in hopes of winning a state championship. More specifically, the basketball team, coached by Mark Sharpley, is currently in the tryout process and working hard on their own time to better themselves and get as ready as possible for the approaching season with tryouts just concluding.

"I'm training outside of basketball and working on handling," says Rylin Chichirico, a freshman trying out for the basketball team, "I am working on my backyard patio." Sophomore Sarah Welsch adds, "I have been going into school early to shoot and dribble, as well as practice my skills."

Sometimes, being the new person on the team is frightening, though. With the start of these sports, nerves seem to also be very prevalent. However, the excitement seems to take over and be a main driving force for these aspiring basketball players.

"I'm really excited!" remarks Rylin Chichirico. "I'm also really nervous as well because as a freshman, I'm smaller than the majority of the sophomores

and upperclassmen."

There is also a significant amount of excitement surrounding the season because of the feeling of being part of something bigger than yourself, and making new friends, as well as trying new things. These athletes know what they want, and why they play high school winter sports. They are all very hardworking student competitors that really enjoy the community of ambitious individuals that push themselves to be better, both physically and mentally.

Sarah Welsch expands upon that statement by saying, "I get to make new friends and meet new people and I feel like being a part of a team sport helps you be something bigger than yourself because you get to communicate with other players and form relationships, as well as try new things with people that I don't spend a majority of my time with." Chichirico adds, "I want to play high school basketball because it would be a really fun community and it's going to be cool to be recognized as a freshman in the halls. I also think it's going to help me a lot physically and mentally for the future."

The community that this basketball program creates is truly special, and

something that everyone should witness at the games once the season begins in about a month. Winter sports are very highly regarded around the school and give you a way to support the school while it is still cold and snowy.

