



# The High School View

The High School View is staffed and prepared entirely by students from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, and published on their behalf by The Martha's Vineyard Times, with the generous assistance of the sponsors whose names appear below.

## Mental health challenges impact ELL population

BY MARIA CLARA LACERDA AND BROOKE CROCKER

As the number of bi-cultural students enrolled at Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) rises, growing awareness of challenges faced by Brazilian immigrants is prompting school administrators to consider the mental health needs of this population.

According to Principal Sara Dingley, as of 2019, a quarter of the student body consists of bicultural students who speak a home language other than English. School adjustment counselor Amy Lilavois emphasized the difficulty of providing mental health support to Brazilian students. "You cannot make a comparison between having somebody who speaks your language

and understands your culture versus somebody who doesn't, and has to have that [interpreter] in there," she said.

Immigrant students often experience culture shock, which can be accompanied by mental health repercussions such as depression and anxiety.

In addition to dealing with the challenges of leaving their lives behind, some immigrant students also struggle with parents who are not particularly sensitive to their mental health.

Senior Amanda Moraes said, "My parents and I were having a huge argument which led to [me having] a panic attack. I remember my father telling my mom that I was just being dramatic and crying that hard to get out of talking to them. Little comments like that, along with the



PARKER BRADLEE

Freshman Jhonathan De Oliveira and senior Brendon Pires work with Mrs. Norton in an English as a Second Language class.

idea that poor mental health is just a person's inability to 'accept responsibility' or an excuse for things, worsen a person's mental health."

Larissa Oliveira, a senior who moved to the island when she was 5 years old, said that along with the challenges that accompany trying to acclimate to a new culture, immigrant students

sometimes assume a degree of financial, cultural, and emotional responsibility for their parents.

"For me, moving here meant that I became independent faster," said Larissa. "Because of the language barrier immigrant parents have, you have to do things that [they] have to do."

Many of these teenagers

also navigate applying to college and secondary education options without parental aid.

Amanda said, "I've been figuring out this college thing all alone. [My parents] don't have any advice to give me about which school is the best, on what I should study, nothing like that. So it's very stressful, because all they do is question me on the things I haven't done."

The cultural and language barriers between Brazilian and American students can also create a disconnect between immigrant students and other students. Sophomore Joao Victor Oliveira, who moved to the U.S. from Brazil when he was in eighth grade, said, "We don't talk to the Americans and they don't talk to us. It's nobody's fault; a lot of the time there is just a language barrier, and we can't really relate to one another,

but maybe the school can do something to help with that."

The question of adding more programming and mental health support for Brazilian students largely comes down to funding. "We need the school committee and our towns to look at our budget [to see if it's] in the best interests of our students' social and emotional mental health," said Amy Lilavois.

MVRHS is looking to hire a counselor who speaks Portuguese to provide mental health support for Brazilian students. Principal Dingley said, "We need to make sure, at the very least, that mental and social health services are offered in their native language. From what I've learned, there is a great level of trauma that accompanies leaving your native country, and as a school we should help with that." **HSV**

## Travel resumes for February break

BY RUBY REIMANN AND THEO FAIRCHILD-COPPOLETTI

This Friday will mark one year since students and teachers at Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) first entered quarantine. Since then, the MVRHS community has dealt with the numerous challenges of online and hybrid learning, as well as the health of students stuck within the confines of their homes for months at a time. Slowly but surely, however, students and teachers alike are getting accustomed to life in a new world.

For many students and teachers, February break was the first time they left the Island since the beginning of the pandemic. "It was the first time I've been anywhere since last February," said sophomore Ruairi Mullin, who went skiing at Jiminy Peak in Han-

cock. "It was nice to just get out and see something different, other than the same four walls."

Sophomore Juliet Morse and her family also spent February vacation at Jiminy Peak. Juliet said that even though her original vacation plans were modified to safeguard the health of her family and the Island community, it was still a fun, and most important, safe experience. "Most years we would be hopping on a plane and heading to warm, blue waters. Yet with the risky and dangerous state of the world, that didn't sit right with my family," said Juliet.

Senior Mia Jeffers, who went to Florida, sees a return to traveling on the horizon. "I can definitely see people starting to travel more," said Mia. "After you go once, I think you're more likely to do it again."

Spanish teacher Erin Slossberg and her family went skiing in Maine. "The trip itself felt safe, and it felt really great; we went as a family, we stayed as a family, and we came back as a family," said Ms. Slossberg. "It's outside, and it's safe. You can't ride a lift with anybody outside of your family, and you're wearing masks and gloves."

Ms. Slossberg emphasized how important it was to get tested at the right time. "You really need 72 hours to pick up a viral load if you came in contact with any COVID," she said.

Last Saturday, Superintendent Matt D'Andrea announced over email that all Mirimus tests for the week had come back negative, a promising sign following uncertainty around the impact break might have on COVID cases.

"I think [MVRHS] is doing

all they can do. They can't really tell us not to travel, but they've been really good about giving us information and making sure we have access to the testing sites," said Mia.

Molly Houghton, program manager of Martha's Vineyard Public Schools COVID-19 surveillance testing, thinks that a change in perspective around COVID is important as people start to travel more: "I think that to an extent, you can travel and you can be safe if you're following the precautions put out there by the state and by the board of health," said Ms. Houghton. "I think that the general mindset should shift to think more about other people, and how [COVID] might impact someone else."

"A lot of it comes down to individual responsibility. You have to understand the consequences even if they're not personal," said Molly. **HSV**

## Boys' basketball for the win



PARKER BRADLEE

Senior Aiden Rogers drives to the hoop.

BY CHLOE COMBRA

The Martha's Vineyard Regional High School Boys varsity basketball team won the Cape & Islands Tournament on Friday, Feb. 26, by a score of 56 to 48 against Falmouth.

Head Coach Michael Joyce said the game was a bright ending to a challenging season. "The game was a great culmination of a difficult season that really showed the resilience and

determination of the group of guys we had this year," said Mr. Joyce.

For seven seniors, the game marked the last basketball game in their high school careers. "The whole starting lineup is our seniors," said Mr. Joyce. "These kids lost part of their junior year and almost all of their senior year, but this was a great way to have something to look back on, be proud of, and be excited about." **HSV**

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