



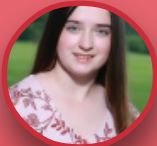
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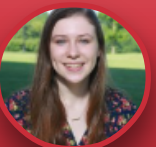
Selina
Balci '22



Alex
Dawson '21



Caitlin
Paine '21



Fiona
Richards '21



The Voice

Highlights:

- ❑ Multiple Election Viewpoints
- ❑ Global Perspective on Politics
- ❑ Fun Fall Recipes
- ❑ Candy Reviews
- ❑ Ruth Bader Ginsburg Event
- ❑ Thoughts on Social Media and Echo Chambers



Bonnie
Sneider '21



Hollis
Summers '21



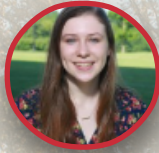
Zoe
Zlatic '24

Election & Politics

Letter from the Editors



Editor-in-Chief
Bonnie
Sneider '21



Assistant Editor
Fiona
Richards '21

The Voice would like to recognize the fact that this issue contains articles written before the election on November 3rd. However, we still believe that it is valuable to include the interesting perspectives these articles provide. Regardless of how the news of the past few weeks has made you feel, now is the time for us to come together as a community in hope for the future. Here at *The Voice*, we have felt many complicated emotions too and realize that this is an incredibly historic and important time for our country. While much information has changed since many of these politically focused articles were written, these conversations are as important as ever. Ultimately, we hope that these articles within *The Voice* can help spark productive and respectful civil discourse.

An International Perspective on the 2020 Election



By Alex Dawson '21

I interviewed my friend from Costa Rica, Ignacio, about what people in his country think about the U.S. election and what he thinks about it. I have summarized many of his responses.

Q: How much do you think Costa Ricans pay attention to the US election?

A: The USA is an extremely important nation worldwide, especially regarding business and government. “Anyone close to the government is following closely,” and “also people with interest in politics.”

Q: How much is the US election featured in your local news?

A: The freedom of press in Costa Rica allows a lot of news about the United States, and many people are paying attention to the election, so it is featured quite heavily.

Q: From your perspective, what is the general opinion among Costa Ricans on Donald Trump?

A: Most just want the end of his presidency.” In 2016, President Trump’s anti-Mexican rhetoric was very unpopular in Costa Rica, as Ignacio views all Central Americans as ‘brothers.’ Ignacio compared President Trump to a man who unsuccessfully ran for office in Costa Rica, who was a populist and vulgar. However, in Costa Rica, he acknowledges that there are people similar to those in the US who support Trump: those who feel the government has left them behind.

Q: From your perspective, what is the general opinion among Costa Ricans on Joe Biden?

A: Joe Biden is not extremely well known, but many simply want to beat Trump; they do not care who does it. Ignacio does say that a Democratic Congress blocking Trump would be beneficial.

Q: How much have you been following the US presidential election?

A: Very closely and “since the beginning.”

Q: Who do you think is going to win the US presidential election?

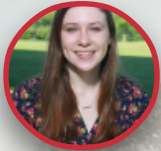
A: Biden will probably win, but Trump certainly cannot be counted out. Due to Trump being authoritarian in nature, he is worried Trump will use the power of office to stay in power because “he knows that if he lose[s] the election” he “loses everything,”

and “he will be persecuted.” This highlights a fear that Trump will try to stop the United States from being a democracy, as Ignacio later expressed his belief that democracy is a sacred institution that should not be taken for granted. He described Trump as an animal backed into a corner, so he is dangerous.

Summary: In general, many Costa Ricans are fearful of Trump becoming too authoritarian and support Biden. In particular, the anti-immigration rhetoric Trump has espoused is not popular in this area of the world. However, Trump’s power should not be taken for granted.

Thank you, Ignacio, for sharing with us!

Opposing Viewpoints: The Presidential Election



By Fiona Richards
'21

As all of you likely know, November 3rd was a big day for America, a day when the people chose who would represent our country for the next four years, not just in the White House but in a wide variety of congressional, state-level, and local offices as well. However, the biggest conversation revolves around who will be our next president. With this important day in mind, we at *The Voice* want to emphasize the importance of respectful, bipartisan civil discourse and recognize the importance of this election. So, we wanted to collect a few student perspectives about the presidency to help facilitate this conversation.

Perspectives:

A president who denies science at every turn is no president of mine. I believe in an America where leaders tell the truth so informed citizens can vote for the candidate that represents them, and I think that's how democracy works best, not through suppression and propaganda and lies. I value truth and science. Biden acknowledges that climate change is real. Trump has proven that he doesn't believe in truth, or honor, or respect, or responsibility. That's why I support Biden.

~Alex M. Class of '24

In my opinion, the 2020 election will have a critical impact on the economy. It is necessary that we elect someone who is committed to reopening our economy and providing avenues for businesses and individuals to return to a sense of normalcy (obviously with some precautionary safety measures in

place). I believe that President Trump's policies will be best to reduce unemployment, increase our GDP, and help American citizens get back to work and support their families.

~Annalisa Goot Class of '21

This election cycle, even though I can't vote, I support Jo Jorgensen for President of the United States. Honestly, I'm not thrilled with either Trump or Biden, so the most logical choice is to look to a third party. Jorgensen has great ideas about deregulation, war, spending, and the economy. Even if I disagree with her on some issues, I believe she is a good balance between a polite, presidential figure (which is a quality I like in Biden), and someone who isn't afraid to rock the boat (which is something I like about Trump). People don't realize this, but if a third-party candidate gets enough votes, they

have to be included in the next election's events, such as debates, primaries, and polling. This could be the year we move American politics away from the two-party system we've had for so long. For those reasons and others, I am supporting Jo Jorgensen for President.

~Anonymous Class of '21

A republic, *res publica*, translates to the "public affair or public matter." When looking at the 2020 Presidential Election, I have taken to heart an understanding of the United States government, its foundation, and how this cycle's candidates should represent the best interests of our nation's people.

I think we can all agree that there is no unifying Washingtonian leader this time around, but I have aligned with a candidate who I believe is equipped to defend our country against threats both foreign and

domestic, and who promotes that defining American resilience that we each embody. I do have one request for you: read the Constitution with intention before casting your critical vote.

These are times of great national uncertainty, so we must remember our responsibilities to the American Republic. We must also choose the candidate who will equip us with the resources to do so.

~Anonymous

I support Joe Biden and Kamala Harris not just because of their platform (although I do largely agree with it), but because I believe that 4 more years of the current administration would be incredibly damaging to our democracy and country. While I may not agree with everything Biden stands for, I believe that he will stand up for truth and reliably lead America through this tumultuous time.

I think that when it comes down to it, Biden will prioritize country over party and be a president who will uphold the human and civil rights of all Americans. I think one of the biggest differences between the two major candidates is their response to those who disagree with them, and I sincerely hope that America will elect a president who will begin uniting our nation rather than continuing division.

~Anonymous Class of '21

I acknowledge that elections are incredibly stressful times for many members of the MICDS community, so please remember to be kind and respectful. Regardless of the result, I honestly hope that in the end American democracy will triumph over division and that we will stand together as a nation to fight on another day.

The Most Useless Debates in Presidential History



By Alex Dawson
'21

Presidential Debate #1: September 29, 2020

After watching the first presidential debate, I genuinely have no idea how to react. I have a feeling this debate will go down as an infamous one, only remembered for President Trump and Joe Biden talking over each other and being entirely unproductive. The first twenty minutes or so were fairly incomprehensible, with both candidates constantly interrupting each other and the moderator. I believe this was Trump's strategy going in, and it definitely rattled Biden. However, according to post-debate polls, this strategy did not really help Trump, and in fact may have hurt him in the

presidential races. In my opinion, the best (and only good) moments of the debate were when Biden looked into the camera and spoke out of passion. They were intimate moments with the audience free from Trump's distractions.



Image Courtesy of CNN

It is debatable as to how well moderator Chris Wallace did, as he both pressed both candidates on issues of importance and yet was unable to tame the confusion and interruptions throughout. One of the most shocking moments was when Wallace asked Trump to denounce

white supremacy and far-right militia groups, and Trump did not do so directly. Instead, he chose to avoid committing to an answer, a tactic used throughout his presidency. On the other side of the stage, Joe Biden refused to answer a question about whether he would pack the courts. According to polls after the debate, Biden certainly was the winner, though based on the reception, I would argue he wasn't the winner, but rather the lesser loser.

Vice Presidential Debate: October 7, 2020

This debate, while seeming like a stark contrast, was remarkably similar to the first debate in one way: there was nothing productive discussed. Both candidates, while being much more composed than their running mates, dodged questions and stuck to their talking points, much to the dismay

of a viewer who wants to learn about the candidates. Harris, like Biden, refused to answer as to whether they would pack the courts and attacked Trump. Likewise, Pence at several points simply did not answer the question asked and kept coming back to energy and the economy. Overall, while this debate seemed much more civil, it seemed more like a return to how politics was five years ago: never answering tough questions and talking only in broad terms to avoid giving the other side ammunition. However, because of how they answered, I felt they were actually good advocates for their running mates, focusing less on themselves and more on the candidate on top. Perhaps the most entertaining moment of all the debates was the fly that landed on Pence's head for two minutes, which the Biden campaign has already taken

advantage of. I have a feeling this debate will be soon forgotten, but it is certainly a reminder that old, sly, slimy politics still exists.

Presidential Debate #2; October 22, 2020

The final presidential debate was almost certainly the most substantive out of the three debates. It notably featured a mute button for the first two minutes of each candidate's talking time each section, setting a much more respectful and productive tone. Topics included COVID-19, race, American families, and climate change. Biden had a couple important moments, especially when promising to phase out oil energy. However, following a small outcry in support of oil workers, the campaign specified that Biden would only phase out oil subsidies, and not the whole industry. Meanwhile, Trump, while appearing much more composed,

still often did not tell the truth, instead continuing to peddle lies and conspiracy theories. He also attacked Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, for his supposed illegal involvement with a Ukraine company. I felt this was the best debate to show who the candidates truly are, as Trump's lies continued, while Biden stumbled and gaffed over his words. However, it is arguable as to whether this debate mattered. The post-debate polls showed Biden winning by the same approximate percentage he is currently winning the national polls: watchers simply thought their favorite candidate won. The lack of undecided voters this year meant that neither candidate could really gain nor lose many voters after this debate. While this was certainly the best debate for watching how each candidate reacted and answered questions, it will likely have little to no impact in this election.

Some Lighter Fall Fun!

Pumpkin Spice and Everything Nice



By Zoe Zlatic
'24



In the age of masks, distancing, and quarantine, what better way to get your first taste of fall than by trying some of Starbucks' seasonal treats? I tried six pumpkin-flavored limited-edition offerings (four drinks, two food items) to share my opinions and recommendations with you.

Enjoy!

Pumpkin Spice Coffee

Frappuccino (grande, decaf, 2% milk)

Taste:

- Subtly sweet with just a hint of pumpkin
- Not as sweet as some of the other Frappuccinos
- Spices give the drink an extra sense of uniqueness
- Texture is similar to that of a slushie, though still smooth and relaxing

What could be better:

- Could be a bit sweeter—though I may easily be alone on this recommendation as I have a huge sweet tooth

- Texture could be less thick—after a while, I had to use a spoon because I was having trouble with just a straw

Recommended for:

- People who don't like overly sweet beverages
- One of those unusually warm fall days

Overall rating: 4.2/5

Pumpkin Cream Cold Brew (tall)



Taste:

- Slightly bitter (but still has some sweetness)
- Whipped cream on top balances out the bitterness
- Smooth texture



What could be better:

- Could be sweeter, though I welcomed the change in routine (I normally go for sweeter drinks)

Recommended for:

- People who prefer not-too-sweet drinks but still want some fall vibes

Overall rating: 4.3/5

Iced Pumpkin Spice Latte (tall, decaf)

Taste:

- Great touch of spices, though still one of the sweeter drinks
- Texture is very smooth

What could be better:

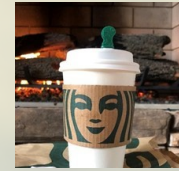
- Less ice and more spice

Recommended for:

- People who prefer cold drinks—you could get this instead of the hot latte, which I also tried (keep reading!)

Overall rating: 4.7/5

Pumpkin Spice Latte (tall, decaf)



Taste:

- Similar to some of the other lattes, but has the slightest touch of pumpkin spice
- Very smooth texture
- Hot temperature—if you are sensitive to hot beverages, you may want to wait for it to cool down a bit before taking a sip

What could be better:

- Could use more pumpkin flavors or spices to set it apart from some of the other lattes

Recommended for:

- Rainy/snowy days or if you are feeling chilly

Overall rating: 4.7/5

Pumpkin Bread (warmed)



Taste:

- Not too sweet but can still taste the pumpkin spices
- Great texture (soft and fluffy)

What could be better:

- Should have an option to remove the nuts around the edges
- Bigger size (it was a pretty small portion)

Recommended for:

- People who don't like anything overpoweringly pumpkin-flavored
- Breakfast/light snack

Overall rating: 4.6/5

Pumpkin Cream Cheese Muffin (warmed)



Taste:

- Soft and fluffy on the inside, harder on the outside
- Cream cheese is very rich and adds a nice touch to set this muffin apart from other muffins
- The nuts complement the muffin because they counteract the sweetness

What could be better:

- Cream cheese could be less sweet

Recommended for:

- Breakfast/dessert

Overall rating: 4.7/5

A couple of final notes:

If pumpkin spice isn't your thing, keep in mind that Starbucks has plenty of other seasonal offers you could try!

Also, the next time you go to Starbucks to try your next seasonal treat, be sure to wash your hands before eating, wear a mask (even if using the drive through!), and stay socially distanced. Safety first!

All photos courtesy of Zoe Zlatic, the author herself!

The BEST Pumpkin Bread (with chocolate chips!)



By Bonnie Sneider
'21

A spice mixture of cinnamon, ginger, cloves, and nutmeg—the smell and taste of fall. This pumpkin bread recipe, courtesy of *smitten kitchen*, contains all four of these spices and is a light, moist, and comforting treat. After making this pumpkin bread once, I raced to the grocery store to buy the ingredients in bulk... it's THAT good! You will not regret making this pumpkin bread to enjoy for breakfast, as a dessert, and to give to family and friends as a special fall surprise!



Ingredients (yields two loaf cakes):

- 1 15 oz can (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups) pumpkin puree
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable oil (or another neutral oil) or melted butter
- 3 large eggs
- 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups granulated white sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking powder
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp baking powder
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp baking soda
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp fine sea or table salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp ground cinnamon
- Heaped $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground nutmeg

- Heaped $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground ginger
- Two pinches of ground cloves
- 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups chocolate chips (optional... but I would highly recommend!)

To finish on the top of the bread (optional):

- 1 tbsp granulated white sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

Instructions:

- Heat the oven to 350 degrees F. Butter or nonstick spray the two loaf pans.
- In a large bowl, whisk together the pumpkin puree, oil, eggs, and sugar until smooth (I used an electric mixer to do this, but this also works with a manual whisk).

- In a small bowl, whisk together the baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and cloves. Then combine this dry mixture with the wet mixture by whisking or using the electric mixer.
- Add the flour to the mixture, and stir with a spoon until just mixed enough.
- Optional: Stir in the chocolate chips.
- Scrape the mixture (batter) into the prepared pans.
- Optional: Mix together the white sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over the top of the batter.
- Bake the bread for 60-75 minutes or until a tester poked into the center of the cake comes out without runny batter.
- Enjoy!



Images Courtesy of
[smitten kitchen](https://www.smittenkitchen.com/)

Would you like to share a fall-themed recipe with the MICDS Upper School community? If so, email bsneider@micds.org for more details. We would love to hear from you... and many of us would enjoy some cooking and baking ideas to share in future issues!



My Top 20 Candies in Full Review



By Caitlin Paine
'21

Halloween is, without a doubt, my favorite holiday. Even though many people aren't going to go trick or treating this year, Halloween is still a great opportunity to indulge in lots of candy! With such a large variety of treats out there, it's hard to pick which ones to start with, so I've taken the liberty of sharing some of my personal favorites this Halloween season. Hope you all had a Happy Halloween and continue to enjoy your well-deserved candy!

Disclaimer: While I couldn't pick favorites or least favorites, I put these in a general order (with the first couple being my favorites). Hopefully you can develop rankings of your own!

1. **Rolo's:** I know you don't typically get Rolo's in a trick or treat bucket, but these are my absolute favorites! Soft but not too squishy, smooth chocolate, and a well-balanced caramel flavor make these bite-sized treats especially enjoyable.
2. **Classic M&Ms:** These are a pretty popular treat when Halloween comes and for good reason. Smooth chocolate with a little bit of crunch from the shell, coupled with the fun colors and small size, means that these treats are easy to share, and they allow you to take your time enjoying them. A classic that never gets old!
3. **Milky Ways:** These come in full size bars and bite size pieces this time of year, but the appeal remains the same. A wonderful caramel and chocolate treat with the delicious nougat, all in an easy to eat shape with a great



Image Courtesy of *Huffpost*

texture. This combination makes for a wonderful Halloween treat! The Midnight Milky Ways are also a pretty great candy for all the dark chocolate lovers out there.

4. **Reese's Pieces:** Although most Upper School students voted on Mr. Rainey's poll that Reese's Cups were the favorite candy with the great chocolate and peanut butter combo, I think these smaller treats deserve their time

to shine. The nice crunch from the shell and the classic chocolate and peanut butter flavor make Reese's Pieces pretty appealing, and they're easy to share and enjoy for a while.

5. **Caramellos:** Not everyone has heard of this particular Cadbury candy, but they're still pretty delicious. Little chocolate and caramel squares break off like a Hershey Bar and are easy to share. These chocolate bars have fantastic texture and flavor and really deserve a lot more credit for being as tasty as they are!

6. **Hershey Bar:** Hershey's candy is iconic, so Hershey bars, mini, regular, and king size, are classic trick-or-treating handouts. Silky milk chocolate that's

easy to break apart with a great texture, it's no wonder this candy has been so popular over the years!

7. **Caramel M&M's:** A more recent addition to the M&M family, Caramel M&Ms are a wonderful treat for M&M and caramel fans alike. Great texture and perfectly balanced flavors make this a delicious and shareable snack to really enjoy!

8. **Candy Corn:** Controversial opinion, I know, but I actually really enjoy candy corn! Candy corn is incredibly sweet and easy to keep eating without sticking or melting onto your fingers. Or maybe it's just because candy corn is so hard to find outside of Halloween that it's so appealing in the moment.

9. **KitKat:** Another iconic treat! An excellent chocolate and wafer combo with a great texture, and let's be honest, who doesn't find the snapping of the pieces just so incredibly satisfying. A great pick for anyone looking for a nice crunch with their chocolate!

10. **Crunch:** Speaking of crunching, I'd never actually had a crunch bar until a few weeks ago, but I really like them! A great chocolate taste that's thick without being hard to break, this was a fantastic new experience that I would definitely recommend.

11. **Twizzlers:** It's pretty clear at this point that chocolate tends to be my favorite, but

for those who can't eat chocolate or just don't like it, I'd highly recommend Twizzlers. Wonderfully sweet flavor with a good chewy texture, this is a classic sure to show up in a trick-or-treat bucket treat that I would definitely enjoy!

12. **Tootsie Roll:** Miniature, long, and thick, this chocolate snack has been a Halloween favorite for as long as I can remember! Great texture, great flavor, and the sticky, chewy, and stretchy nature make them deliciously fun.
13. **Tootsie Pop:** These are also a pretty good classic for those searching for a fruity flavor to balance out all the chocolate. My personal favorite are the cherry-flavored Tootsie

Pops, and the wait to reach the center is completely worth it for the tasty chocolate tootsie roll inside.

14. **Snickers:** Another new candy for me and, once again, I was pleasantly surprised! A great flavor not too far from a milky way, but with the addition of peanuts! Snickers are good for anybody wanting a combination of flavors with a nice crunch as well!
15. **Skittles:** Another classic fruity candy everyone is sure to love! Skittles sport a fantastic combination of a variety of fruit flavors, though I would personally recommend the red ones. A great texture and easy to share, this is a sweet treat that just can't go wrong.
16. **Dots:** Dots are one of my favorite chewy candies, and

with that great gumdrop-like texture, they are pretty expected in your Halloween bucket. Pinks and reds are my favorite, with orange and yellow coming in second, but the green ones are just a little too sour for me. Still, a great candy for anyone wanting something sweet and fruity!

17. **Twix:** This one was also a new candy for me, but it wasn't bad! Nice texture, great caramel flavor, and a mixture of crunchy and chewy, this is a pretty good choice for those who like Milky Ways but miss the crunchy texture.
18. **Fudge Brownie M&Ms:** Definitely the most recent addition to the M&M family, these might not be found in a Halloween bucket, but they're still pretty good! A great fudgy flavor—almost

like a real brownie. Very rich and an absolutely delicious variant on the classic M&M.

19. Peanut Butter M&Ms:

There are a lot of M&M varieties available during Halloween, so it's important not to forget two of the most common subsets in a candy bucket. Peanut butter M&Ms still have the nice crunch from the shell and the beloved chocolate taste with the additional peanut flavor. Definitely a good choice for M&M and peanut candy fans!

20. Peanut M&M's: Last but not least, Peanut M&Ms. These were pretty similar to the Peanut Butter M&Ms but were just a little bit crunchier. If you liked Crunch, Twix,

KitKats, or Snickers, this M&M variant is for you!

Fun fact: Did you know that in the Daily Polls, MICDS voted that Reese's Peanut Butter cups are their favorite candy?

**Fun Fall Activities to do alone
(because of COVID-19):**



By Hollis
Summers '21

1. Watch a spooky movie, (but make sure it is not too scary because you are on your own).
2. Put away summer clothes and bring out your sweaters!!! Best feeling!
3. Go walk around your house or neighborhood and pick

up leaves like you did as a kid! You can also smash them in a notebook too because some people do that apparently :)

4. Make bird feeders by getting a pine cone, smooth some peanut butter or syrup on it, and then roll it in nuts and seeds!
5. Decorate your room with fall or scary stuff like skeletons, leaves, and other things!
6. Buy a new candy that you have never eaten before.
7. Bake yourself a pie (or buy one if you are lazy like me).



Legacies and Media

Remembering Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg



By Cate Cody
'22

After the passing of former Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, MICDS students Aishani Chakraborty ('22), Hallie Dunfer ('22), Sophie Fendler ('22), and Kate Yuan ('22) came together to organize a march in her honor, leading an initiative to bring the community together in a time of mourning for the remarkable leader who dedicated so much of her life to serving the American people. The march took place on October 3rd, and was preceded by a speech given in RBG's honor.

Participants were then escorted by police down Warson to Clayton Road, east on Clayton to Conway, and back to the school via Conway and Warson. Attendees, including the students and parents, all wore masks to adhere to COVID-19 guidelines.

Now for the interview:

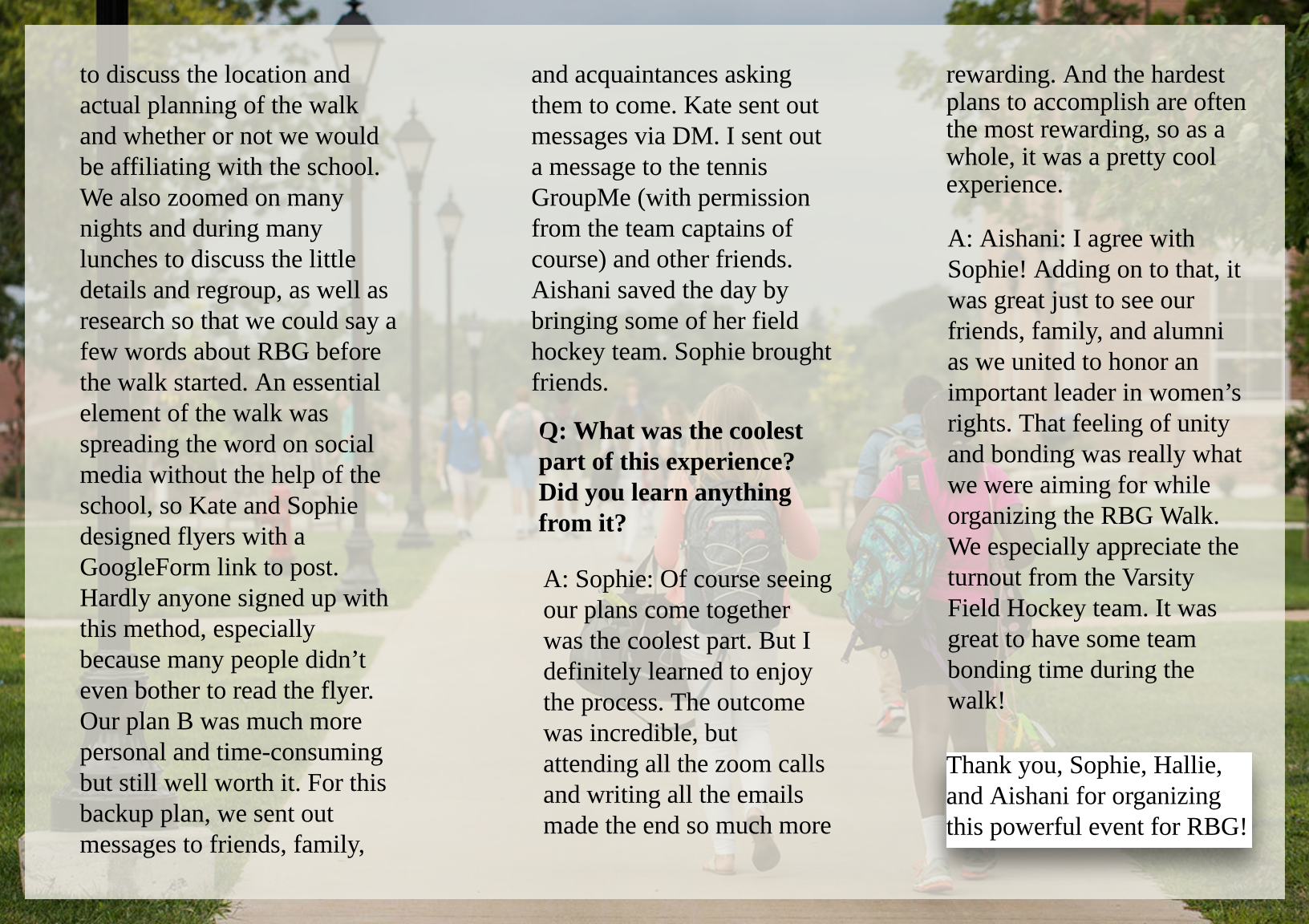
Q: What inspired you to organize the walk in RBG's memory?

A: Sophie: The night RBG passed away, my friends and I immediately started texting each other. We were all in low-spirits, not only because of the political changes her passing would bring, but also because of the profundity of what she had done for women's rights. We decided we needed to do something to remember

her, and a walk seemed like a great way to get a group together.

Q: What was the process of planning the walk like?

A: Hallie: It was very tedious in every aspect of the planning process. The most important part was to first decide what kind of message we wanted this walk to send out, so we decided it was best to completely disconnect politics from it. This was because we wanted people to attend the walk in honor of women's rights and RBG's legacy without the pressure of politics. We then had to send out countless emails daily to the mayors, police, etc. to discuss possible routes and health concerns. We also met with Dr. Roth, Mr. Small, and Mr. Rainey



to discuss the location and actual planning of the walk and whether or not we would be affiliating with the school. We also zoomed on many nights and during many lunches to discuss the little details and regroup, as well as research so that we could say a few words about RBG before the walk started. An essential element of the walk was spreading the word on social media without the help of the school, so Kate and Sophie designed flyers with a GoogleForm link to post. Hardly anyone signed up with this method, especially because many people didn't even bother to read the flyer. Our plan B was much more personal and time-consuming but still well worth it. For this backup plan, we sent out messages to friends, family,

and acquaintances asking them to come. Kate sent out messages via DM. I sent out a message to the tennis GroupMe (with permission from the team captains of course) and other friends. Aishani saved the day by bringing some of her field hockey team. Sophie brought friends.

Q: What was the coolest part of this experience? Did you learn anything from it?

A: Sophie: Of course seeing our plans come together was the coolest part. But I definitely learned to enjoy the process. The outcome was incredible, but attending all the zoom calls and writing all the emails made the end so much more

rewarding. And the hardest plans to accomplish are often the most rewarding, so as a whole, it was a pretty cool experience.

A: Aishani: I agree with Sophie! Adding on to that, it was great just to see our friends, family, and alumni as we united to honor an important leader in women's rights. That feeling of unity and bonding was really what we were aiming for while organizing the RBG Walk. We especially appreciate the turnout from the Varsity Field Hockey team. It was great to have some team bonding time during the walk!

Thank you, Sophie, Hallie, and Aishani for organizing this powerful event for RBG!



All images courtesy of Aishani Chakraborty, Hallie Dunfer, and Sophie Fendler

Yelling at the Mirror: The Danger (and Inefficiency) of Echo Chambers



By Selina Balci
'22

This may not be news to you, but Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, or whatever you use, know all about you. They have the record of everything you've ever reposted, everything you've liked, every account you follow, and every ad you have ever clicked on. Your identity, preferences, and opinions are transcribed and condensed into a series of numbers, used later to recommend products and information based on its assumptions. Social media companies want to keep you as engaged as possible, so they're

not going to show you content that contradicts your opinions; they're going to show things you agree with, things that induce a strong emotional response. This encourages you to stay on the site longer, and makes them more money.

Partisan content attracts so much attention, both positive and negative, by users. If you take a look at politicians' Twitter accounts, you will find that the most polarizing ones have the most followers (those who are either on the radical right or the progressive left like Ted Cruz and Bernie Sanders). This is because these people lay at two political "extremes," and use language that induces strong emotions. The more extreme the politics are, the

more of a divisive "us vs. them" mentality that the post projects. As social creatures, tribalism is a basic part of human nature—which is clear in how we can lose our minds in sports games sometimes, and have many passionate and devoted fandoms. We are naturally attracted to the idea of belonging to a bigger community, whether it's shaped by identity, interests, etc. However, in conversations about politics and social issues, this unquestioning group unity can become dangerous.

There's always something to learn from being surrounded by people who don't necessarily reflect the same views as you do. Most of us make efforts to diversify our friend group or to watch movies and read books

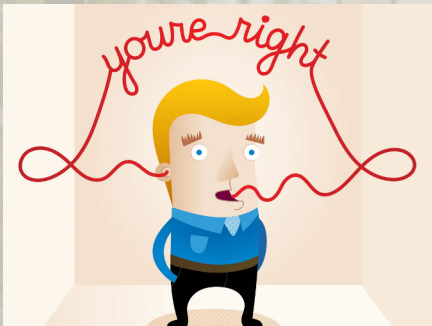


Image Courtesy of
The Conversation

with diverse creators. But this diversity of thought is virtually impossible to achieve on social media. Social media's algorithm is designed to show us things that it knows we will agree with, so we get stuck in a "bubble" or "chamber" where we don't receive any outside information or perspectives, and all of our own opinions get trapped within. This doesn't actually expose you to anything new, and only reinforces knowledge and opinions that you already have. The more we are

reinforced, the more close-minded we can become, and the less likely our country is to experience social change.

Being in the midst of a pandemic that's disproportionately affecting certain communities, and in a time when virtually everything is politicized due to the presidential election, most of us have been posting content on social media in hopes of "raising awareness" or "making an impact." These are both good things to wish for, but unfortunately, social media isn't the best place to voice your opinion if you want to achieve these goals. Change doesn't happen in an echo chamber. In order for real change to happen, there needs to be exchange in thought, which isn't made possible through the one-sided, tribalist nature of social media discourse. Instead, it is vital to have hard, one-on-one

conversations with real people—with the intention of gaining and offering an additional perspective, not destroying the person with different beliefs. At the end of the day, we are all human beings, and we can agree to disagree—empathy is not an endorsement.

Thank you for reading this issue of *The Voice*! We hope that you enjoyed the articles and found something that either made you smile, laugh, question, or think. Please stay tuned for our December issue which will feature some exciting new clubs! If your club would like to be featured in future issues, please contact bsneider@micds.org for more information. Have a wonderful and safe Thanksgiving break. Go Rams!