Visiting colleges fail to engage juniors

Students desire more from college visits

by Sam Blanc and Connor Josellis

Colleges from all over the country come to New Trier, using a one-hour slot to offer information and answer students' questions.

Senior Claire Zimmerman, however, did not find these meetings helpful. She objected to what she saw as obvious bias in them. During the three or so meetings she went to as a junior, she said she didn't learn anything new about the schools.

Junior Meera Joshi agreed. "My advisor told us that the meetings were supposed to give the feeling of the school," Joshi said. "But I don't see how a typical question and answer session with some guy is supposed to do that."

Joshi has gone to several college presentation meetings, and said many had the same information.

According to post-high school counselor Dan Rogan, though there is a wide variety in the Admissions Representatives who come to speak, some are better than others. "You can't necessarily judge a school by whether you like the admissions rep or not," Rogan said.

"If you want a more personal experience," Rogan said, "I would go to some of the smaller school meetings." Because fewer people show up, the speakers can get to know more about the students and their interests.

Some students did find these college presentations useful. Junior Maya Kowitt, who was considering applying to University of Texas said, "I learned that it was a big state college and 90% of the kids are from Texas." This prompted Kowitt' to no longer pursue University of Texas.

Each college representative is only present during a specific time slot each day. This pressures students to miss classes to attend the meetings.

The Post High School Counseling office is littered with memoribilia from colleges across the nation | **Blickstein**

Even when a free period does match up with a school a student is interested in, the meetings are twenty minutes longer than classes. Junior Joe Akason expressed his troubles with the schedule.

"Since it happens during the classes, I can't meet with the colleges I'm interested in."

Rogan says the administration is aware of these issues and that they are looking into the possibility of shortening the visits to 45 minutes. Despite this, some are reluctant to change them. "The thought is that if there's an overlap of two periods, more students can come and see the schools," Rogan explained.

This timing issue also impedes on a student's ability to discover schools they might not know about. "Since [meetings] happen during classes, I wouldn't go to see a school I didn't know," Kowitt said. Many of the universities visiting are practically unknown--that's why they come here. By making it inconvenient for students to come to those presentations, the institutions lose a lot of potential applicants.

Rogan suggested that going to see lesser known schools is constructive for the college process. "A student who comes in with preconceived notions about a particular school, that's going to color their whole experience," he said. He believed that sitting down with a representative from a school you don't know can be very eye opening.

Despite the complaints, students continue to attend the college meetings to demonstrate interest in a school they want. Zimmerman, who claimed she didn't learn much, did not express regret about going to any of these meetings. "I basically just went to show interest in the school," she said.

Junior Satchi Mehta said, "I would probably stick to the colleges that I'm focusing on." Because many students go in with this mindset, it makes sense for them to sign up for these mailing lists to increase their chances of acceptance.

With college in mind, these meetings are something that students can use to ask important questions to the institutions directly and prepare themselves for the application process. There might be problems with the program, but it does not go completely unappreciated.

"This is a pretty unique program," Rogan said, "and who knows, taking advantage of it could shape your future."

Create your dream team

NFL fans forge all-star teams for weekly friendly competition

by Emily Abt

Each fall, football fans across the nation form self-organized Fantasy Football leagues in an attempt to win various prizes.

These leagues are formed by groups of family and friends waging their picks and collecting each other's money to create a "pot" made up of everyone's bids.

Each participant selects individual players throughout the NFL in order to make their own "fantasy team." At the end of the season, money is awarded to the team made up of the most successful players.

"Every year I look forward to crushing all my friends in our league. This year the loser has to borrow a Loyola uniform from one of our friends and wear it to school for a week," freshman Aaron Schatz said.

While the winner takes home the pot, the loser has to face a punishment that his or her friends come up with. It could be as painful as taking all of the participants out for a fancy meal and covering the bill, or as embarrassing as shaving one's head. "Whoever loses has to get a spray tan," junior Max Bryla said.

Lots of groups participating have yet to adopt the trend of giving a penalty to the person who was last place it. In response to the idea of a consequence for the loser, sophomore Kevin Hurley said, "There's going to be one, we're just not sure what it is yet."

Although they are referred to as "consequences", the tasks given to losers tend to be light hearted and in good fun. "Even though I personally want it to be humiliating and traumatizing, it will most likely just be an annoying responsibility. They'll probably just have to drive us around for a while," Hurley said.

This concept is not new and students have been following Fantasy Football for years. "I've been playing for three years," Hurley said. "But each year the stakes have gotten higher. We're all a lot more into it now."

Even those who aren't diehard NFL fans find excitement in the game. "I normally don't really like the NFL and I prefer to watch college football. But I have money on the games, and it makes watching the games more exciting," said Bryla.

Students aren't the only ones participating in Fantasy Football Leagues. "I am in a league, where bid in is at $100 and there are fourteen people playing," a teacher said.

Fantasy Football leagues are also prevalent in major companies. "With over 300 Potbelly shops, I bet three fourths of them have miniature leagues going on," Bryant Keil, Founding Chairman of Potbelly

Players can track their league stats using Yahoo! Fantasy Sports | **Yahoo!**

Sandwich Works said in support of Fantasy. "Of course I would prefer if they were played outside of work, but to tell that to the employees would be hypocritical."

Due to the debate over Fantasy Football being a form of gambling, there's also a debate over whether adolescents should be playing Fantasy Football.

"My son Dylan has already asked if he could be a 'professional gambler' when he grows up," said parent Stephany Lee. "I said no, but he didn't listen and the next day I received a phone call from his teacher telling me how he was arguing that he shouldn't have to go to school because he wasn't going to need an education to watch sports games when he grows up."

Fantasy Football is a tradition greatly anticipated by over 30 million people every fall. Along with many other fans across the nation, students at New Trier continue to contribute to participate in Fantasy Football leagues for better or worse.

Gossip Girl

by Gabi Schulz

Despite hundreds of new teen dramas airing, the television sensation "Gossip Girl" continues to dominate media culture after almost four years since cancellation.

"Gossip Girl," a popular teen drama series was first written by Cecily Von Ziegesar in September, 2007. After six seasons airing on The CW, the show concluded in December 2012. It has since held its spot in the "popular" category on Netflix.

This drama series follows the lives of the rich and powerful families of the Upper East Side in Manhattan, New York. The main characters, Serena Van Der Woodsen (Blake Lively) and Blair Waldorf (Leighton Meester), are written as two powerful figures with the city in the palm of their hands.

Every detail of their lives, along with that of Nate Archibald (Chace Crawford), Chuck Bass (Ed Westwick), Dan Humphrey (Penn Badgley) and Jenny Humphrey (Taylor Momsen), is posted on the city's viral gossip site called "Gossip Girl," giving the show its name. Throughout the series an anonymous blog reveals the secrets and scandals of the Upper East Side, while "Gossip Girl's" identity remains a mystery.

While there are many shows it, "Gossip Girl" remains the most popular option. It's similar to "90210" (2008-2013), as it centers around many wealthy and powerful teens who live in one of the wealthiest places in the country.

Wherever you turn, "Gossip Girl" maintains its phenom status.The show is wildly captivating and its fans are not letting go anytime soon.

Amelie

by Max Minogue

In what the New York Times calls "a sugar rush of a movie," "Amélie" is a whimsical, upbeat film, and a great Netflix choice.

Yes, Amélie is a foreign film, but that does not make it the equivalent to reading a book. "Amélie" is not a dialogue rich movie, and the reading actually helps keep you awake

There's the plot itself, but the plot is not what makes "Amélie" special. It's a cliché love-at-first-sight story. The plot is not what got the movie five Academy Award nominations.

What *did* win "Amélie" those nominations is its captivating charm.

It's quirky and weird, because of the dozens of unique, strange characters, such as Amélie's garden gnome obsessed father, or the angsty fruit salesman. Paris oozes personality, with narrow roads soaked in deep greens and moody sepias, trapping the city in the roaring twenties while the film is set in the late 90's.

Topping off the personality of the film is a stunning soundtrack created by Yann Tiersen, whose lively music ties the entire film together.

It's no coincidence that "Amélie" is the highest grossing French film in the United States, and a great addition to any Netflix queue.