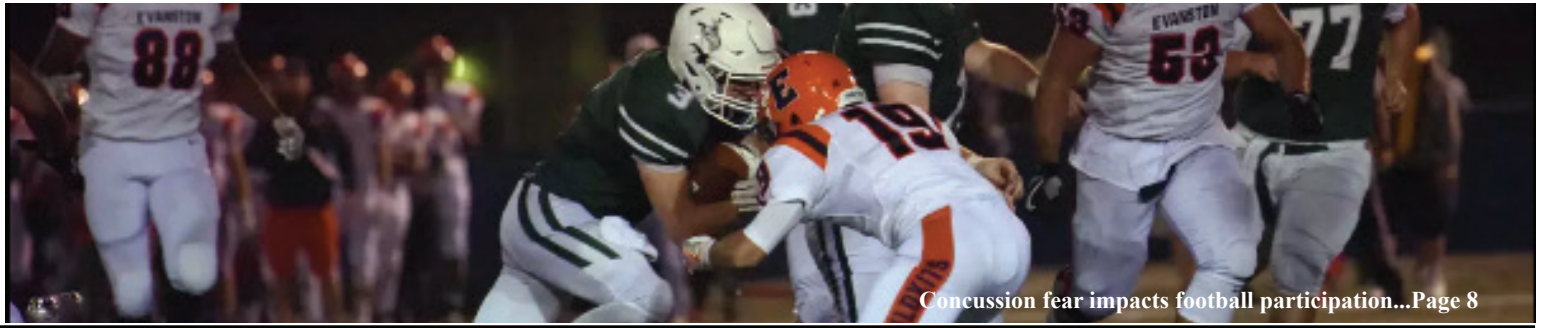


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New SA sponsorship jeopardizes student autonomy

The dynamic of student alliance has changed with new sponsors

by Hannah Young

After 11 years, Student Alliance is undergoing a major administrative change as Student Activities Coordinator Stacy Kolack, MCL Teacher Stephanie Gamauf, and English Teacher David Noskin took the place of the two former sponsors, Social Studies Teachers Steven Drajpuch and Carolyn Gerhardt.

“Student Alliance was sort of dwindling. We were losing members. We were going from a twenty to thirty person group down to, at the end of last year, fewer than ten.”

Why the former sponsors were replaced is still in question. In the past few years, Student Alliance has struggled with two former student presidents being impeached as well as declining student participation. “Student Alliance was sort of dwindling. We were losing members. We were going from a twenty to thirty person group down to, at the end of last year, fewer than ten,” said current Student Alliance President Jacob Shaw. However, he asserted that this was not in any way due to

the former sponsors.

According to Jacob Imber, the Student Alliance PR Head, the former sponsors ran the group differently. “I think they had a pretty hands off approach because that was the tradition with Student Alliance,” said Imber. “Gamauf, Noskin, and Kolack are very hands on in organizing the club and making sure that everyone’s doing what they are supposed to.”

Drajpuch and Gerhardt had been commuting between the Northfield and Winnetka campuses in past years. Starting this year, however, both teach solely at the Northfield campus.

In relation to being replaced, Drajpuch said that “the school had a different vision for what they wanted student government to be. I had a different mindset on what Student Alliance should be and what role student leadership should play in the building. It was time for me to do something different. I think they felt that it was time for Student Alliance to be different.”

The administration has not yet responded to attempts to contact them.

Similar to Imber’s account, Shaw further explained the former sponsors’ role in the club. Shaw said, “Drajpuch and Gerhardt had a very different leadership style. It was not bad but it was different. They took as extreme a background role as you can. We had a small group, difficulty with the administration, history of impeachments and problems that were of course not the sponsors’ fault, but a change in sponsor leadership style has been refreshing for us.”

Kolack didn’t address this disagreement on how the club should be run as to why Drajpuch was no

longer a sponsor. She said, “They weren’t replaced. Sponsors come and go. They filter in and filter out. People make decisions for different reasons.”

However, anonymous sources call into question whether or not the administration values student voices. A recent change to how the students communicate with other administrators and teachers has made some from Student Alliance wonder whether there is too much censorship of student opinion.

In previous years, Student Alliance members have used an email account linked to the school network in order to contact administrators and faculty as well as for students to contact them. According to Shaw, they were violating an important school policy. Currently, the sponsors check the email account and forward the emails to the students. The students then respond to the emails indirectly by first sending them to the sponsors, who redirect them to other administrators.

“There is definitely that extra step when we are emailing teachers or talking to adults,” said Imber.

While some members are concerned that this extra step demonstrates a lack of consideration for student input, Shaw quickly dismisses this. “The changes have not been made in order to diminish the importance of the Student Alliance. They have been conversely made so that the Student Alliance is more powerful and that is happening. We’ve already received over a dozen suggestions online since the beginning of the year. We are working harder than ever to make our voices heard.”

Kolack, along with the other



Student Alliance meets every day during 3rd period in room 009 | Zervas

sponsors and Shaw, felt that it was a natural fit for her to run the group. “Ms. Kolack, given her role within the larger institution, has great perspective and expertise in that area,” Gamauf said.

Shaw sees the new leadership as a benefit in expanding Student Alliance’s role in the school.

“Student Alliance is very unique in that we depend on collaborating with the administration,” Shaw said. “So, any separation from the administrations hurts us. We want to get closer and we are getting closer, which is all good.”

In order to accommodate Kolack’s schedule, Student Alliance was moved from ninth to third period. It is, however, still considered a class club. Shaw explained that this hasn’t been a major issue for the exception of one student, who isn’t able to meet during that period due to a prior conflict.

“I am aware that our previous sponsors expressed concern that these changes—turning over leadership,

moving the meeting period, etc.—would censor us or diminish our voice. Absolutely not true,” said Shaw. “We are just as official a club and we are more effective now. They are not making us a third period club so we are less collaborative with other groups and we have less of a voice.”

Imber commented on the overall changes that have occurred this year and how it has affected the group’s functioning. “It’s just different. There’s less autonomy with the students. Like our sponsors have more of a say of what we are doing and when we do it.”

“This year we are not just getting started on a new year, we are trying to turn over a new leaf. We are starting fresh to fulfill its full potential as student government. If our old sponsors were concerned that this may hurt us, we are stronger than ever,” Shaw said.

Juuls now rule the school as students frenzy over e-cig

The evolution of smoking leaves NT students hooked on the newest e-cig

by Maya Kowitt

Unless you’ve been living under a rock for the past year, you know that the “Juul” is the latest craze for all vape-lovers alike.

For those of you who don’t know, a Juul is a small e-cigarette that comes with nicotine juice cartridges that can be swapped in and out.

A senior who would like to remain anonymous described the Juul as, “A little tobacco vaporizer that gives good buzzes for a good price: fifty dollars. But you have to be 18 years old to purchase one.”

Despite the legal age minimum for purchasing tobacco, students said that seniors are not the only students at New Trier who use Juuls. “I know they are frequently used by all New Trier classes, but I would say a majority of them are boys,” a New Trier junior said.

While many students are raving about this newest edition to the e-cig family, some students, such as senior Katie Krauskopf, are concerned for



The Juul is known for its compact structure and slick appearance | Zervas

the health of their peers. “One Juul pod is equal to one pack of cigarettes, therefore, Juuls kill,” Krauskopf said.

Though some students are puzzled why Juul’s remain so popular among students, others think they help keep students away from the “real stuff.” A senior said, “They are a great substitute for cigarettes, and are a good way to quit smoking.” She added, “I hear from guys that it’s a good alternative to dipping, which can cause mouth cancer.”

According to “Juul’s” official website, juulvapor.com, they don’t want it to look like a cigarette. “Which led us to the more ergonomic and distinctive rectangular shape of Juul. We addressed the many

usability and performance issues of small e-cigarettes such poor vapor production, frustrating cartridge and charger connections. It was really a complete reimagining of the e-cigarette,” the website announced.

A senior noted the difference this new design makes, “Any time is a good time to Juul because it’s convenient, and they’re small and compact so you can take them anywhere. As long as you make smart decisions as to when to use it, you’re fine.”

As the senior said, the small and compact design of the Juul is what attracts many people because of its discreet “USB-like appearance”. Though it’s innovative design may

make the Juul appear simple and harmless, a senior at New Trier wants people to know that it has just as much impact as a cigarette.

“The Juul is super addictive, because it’s concentrated nicotine. One pod is equivalent to a pack of cigarettes, and if you smoke a pack of cigarettes you’re going to get addicted,” the senior said. “I go through a pod a day, but some people go through two pods a day. I only use it recreationally.”

“One pod is equivalent to a pack of cigarettes, and if you smoke a pack of cigarettes you’re going to get addicted.”

With many people calling the Juul the “Apple of vaping,” it’s made students want to obtain the shiny, new product. Just like everyone wants the latest iPhone, everyone wants the newest and most efficient way to “get a buzz.”

Contrary to a sophomore who said, “I like the Juul because it’s a diverse alternative to other e-cig products, coming in different flavors

such as mint, fruit, crème brûlée, and tobacco,” other students have found little satisfaction with this hyped e-cig.

Students believe that vaping is currently a part of the “New Trier experience.” According to a junior, it’s more socially acceptable than smoking cigarettes.

Senior Eden Rane said, “If people use Juuls, it doesn’t change my opinion on them, it’s their choice as long as they’re the legal age of 18.”

Along with Rane’s belief, senior Dylan Horvitz remains unopinionated about the use of Juuls, “I’ve heard a lot of things about Juuls and I don’t know what to think because some people think it’s cool and some people think it’s bad for you.”

Though everything is expected to advance as we become more technologically savvy, students acknowledge that it’s disconcerting that even the dangerous habit of smoking has evolved.

A junior recalled her experience using a Juul as “unpleasant.” “It always made me feel sick after I did it. My throat felt like it was on fire after I ripped a couple, so I don’t do it anymore. It gave me a nice buzz for about two minutes and then it went away. I don’t understand the hype,” she said.