

We're not the best of the best



by Carly Travis

As New Trier students, it's ingrained in our brains that we're the best at everything. Our sports teams win state championships, we boast hundreds of club options, the average ACT score is incomparable, and alums have graced the screens of Disney Channel and beyond. There's a lot to be proud of coming from New Trier.

When we encounter those from surrounding high schools, comments usually consist of the phrase "rich, white kids." It's well known that our reputation doesn't sit well with others. Our credentials can easily inflate our ego, causing us to exude obnoxiousness and arrogance, whether we like it or not.

On April 29, for the first time, I felt inadequate to other schools. Joined by my video production and broadcasting class, I went to the Midwest Media Educators Association (MMEA) Film Festival. This was my first year going, which meant I was going in blind; I had zero expectations.

We arrived at Neuqua Valley High School in Naperville, Illinois around 9 am. The exterior of the school was impressive, however we only stayed in

the auditorium section of the building, which was modern, felt comfortable temperature and seating wise, and made our Gaffney auditorium look like trash.

The day began with the broadcast journalism awards. As the announcer read off the winning schools, I noticed that she was also saying their TV channels.

The speaker exclaimed, "1st place for the category of 'News Package,' BHS-TV!" Barrington's section erupted with cheers and then sent someone to the stage to collect their crystal pillar.

"Do we even have a broadcasting station?" I wondered. The same thought ran through my head the week prior.

On April 23, I attended the IHSA Journalism sectionals with my fellow editors and competed in the broadcast journalism heat, once again, completely blind. Before entering our editing room, my opponents were chatting about their high schools TV stations. I, however, sat on the side and listen, intrigued and intimidated.

One student from Downers Grove South explained to me his position as the host of the video announcements that are shown in home room every Friday.

I immediately had memories of middle school when it was the coolest thing to be featured on the morning announcements; if video production was your elective that quarter, it was a fight to be an anchor on the show.

The thought of having a New Trier broadcasting studio sounds great. With the diverse personalities in the school, the interviews would be highly

entertaining and also insightful.

I know that in the years to come, the Media, Speech and Theatre department looks to expand their facilities and will offer students the choice of taking a variety of classes under the journalism/media umbrella, which will put us on par with surrounding high schools.

Back at the film festival, we had the opportunity to watch small clips from the winning projects. Needless to say, all of the films shown at the MMEA Film Fest left me floored.

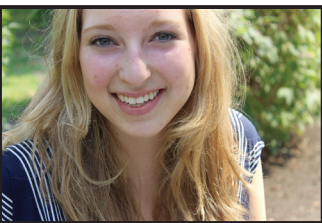
That may sound dramatic, but I had to continuously remind myself that this is a student film festival. All writing, filming, and editing was carried out by freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors in high school.

This year was my first year dabbling in filmmaking and I can say, firsthand, that it is not easy work. The creativity that goes in to every detail is crucial in determining a decent outcome.

Watching the impressive films on Friday made me wonder what other talent is hidden behind the names of high schools besides our own. It's great to feel proud that we're from New Trier, but the perception that we're incomparable and 'the best' needs to go away.

Through two different competitions last month, I've had the opportunity to talk to students from all over and see their work through several creative mediums. There are other talented teens out there; we're not the only ones.

Learning to speak your mind is more valuable than you think



by Camille Baer

With seniors leaving, and the school year coming to an end, it's time to start thinking about the people we want to be next year. And for graduating seniors, this seems to be even more pertinent.

Once we step onto our future campus, our new story begins, but this time it can be written however we want it to be.

The most important aspect of this "self-invention" is that without our parents there to guide us, we have the opportunity to think more critically on our own.

This allows us to be more open to other ideas, and I think this can become valuable in a time of self-exploration.

A couple of months ago, I was visiting a college campus for an event, and towards the end, I was able to talk to some current students at the university.

After a little while, the conversation drifted towards politics, (but not in a "oh god here we go again" type of thing--it was

because Bernie Sanders was visiting the campus that same day).

So this girl I ended up talking to told me something that I realized was missing in my life, and that was: "College was the first time I ever had real intellectual conversations with students my age about topics that are genuinely important."

It's strange. I always felt that the conversations I was having with people around me had some sort of importance, but in reality I was just regurgitating back what the adults in my life were telling me.

Not like this is a good or bad thing, considering I respect my parents and teachers, but I never took the time to research current events and form my own opinions.

This is what makes college intimidating-- being self-reliant and aware of how we think of things.

It's always easy to stand on the sidelines of conversations, trust me-- I tend to be a culprit of this-- but I realized that I'd rather find my own voice.

Obviously it sounds cheesy, as it usually does with this kind of motivational-type talk, but it also rings true.

Once you're living on your own, you're on your own, so take advantage of this newfound freedom, especially because politics do begin to matter more as we get older.

I always assumed that my

parents would just tell me who to vote for because I've pretty much agreed with their political views, but with this upcoming election, there's so much more at stake for our country than usual.

It pays off to think and take part in conversations revolving around the political storm that's been brewing for the past year, considering we have the chance to vote this year.

If you're picturing a group of self-righteous political followers clad in sweater vests dishing out snarky comments, erase this image immediately.

Having a voice doesn't mean you must become something you aren't-- it simply means you have the ability and responsibility to think for yourself, and to learn how to listen but also stand your ground in the face of disagreement. (I'm not saying no one already does this, but I believe that its importance grows, as we become adults.)

Freedom. This is a major key, (thanks DJ Khaled), because there is a side of this that can also be "dangerous." Without any adults to keep us in check, freedom of speech can become, quite quickly, an offensive liberty.

That's why the "thinking critically" aspect to use our voices proves to be an asset we, as future college students, cannot afford to lose.

Words of wisdom

As this is the editors' last New Trier News issue, here are our final thoughts on high school...

Elizabeth Byrne, Editor-in-Chief :

"Make an effort to try things you haven't tried before that you can only do when you're in high school. Don't let school work or studying keep you from hanging out with your friends or even making new friends."

Emma Willcocks, Editor-in-Chief:

"Don't be too quick to judge others. New Trier students have so many talents and interests, so take the time to get to know people you may not usually be friends with."

Anna Ferguson, News Editor:

"Don't just live for the weekends. High school isn't always about Friday and Saturday nights; make the most of the time you spend at school and don't overlook your classmates."

Sarah Zhang, News Editor:

"People are going to change. You are going to change. In fact, everything might change throughout your four years here. And that's okay. Figure out what makes you happy and don't let the rest bring you down."

Camille Baer, Opinion Editor:

"Don't sweat the small stuff. I know it's much easier said than done, but if you learn to let go of the silly things that just add to your anxiety, you'll enjoy your final time at NT much more."

Carly Travis, Opinion Editor:

"By the end of these four years, you meet a lot of people and it's important not to burn bridges, but to keep an open mind. Also, cherish the relationships you have with your teachers, they're pretty cool peeps."

Michael Blickstein, Features Editor:

"Do everything you can. Take every opportunity that's offered to you, no matter how above or beneath you the opportunity seems. Some opportunities you may come across can push your life in a direction you never could have imagined."

Melanie Mandell, Features Editor:

"Don't be afraid to take risks. High school only lasts so long, and before you know it, it'll be over. Don't be afraid of what someone may think of you; go out on a limb because you never know what might happen."

Rachel Melancon, Sports Editor:

"Get involved. Whether it be theater, a club, or a sport, don't be afraid to put yourself out there. You will meet so many amazing people by doing this. Also, this will sound cliché, but be yourself. Find people that make you happy, because in the end, that's all that matters."

Adam Sheffield, Sports Editor:

"Try a bunch of new things at New Trier, because you never know what you might end up liking. Keeping your mental health is a major key for success. Set aside some time for yourself, as well as time to go out and have fun, in addition to your school work. Oh, and stay classy."

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