

## Life lessons learned from Mariano's



by Max Minogue

With the start of the new school year, it's officially my one-year anniversary.

One year ago, a smaller version of myself walked into a neighborhood corporate grocery store and asked for a job. One year later, I still find myself returning to work as a humble barista and devoting hundreds of hours of my life making lattes for North Shore residents.

I'm an employee at a local Mariano's grocery store. I get a strange and probably pathetic source of pride when I can say that I've been in my department longer than anyone.

I always refuse to skip a shift of work for any reason, while at the same time I complain incessantly about work.

A great example of my horrible lack of priorities was the day last year when I stayed home sick from school, but still went into work that night.

Very often I get the question of why I choose to do this to myself. It does serious damage to my sleep schedule, and everybody knows that the real money is in babysitting.

I never have a real answer, but this drive stems from me being one of those odd kids who grew up legitimately excited to become an adult. So, obviously, I would try and play grown-up by working a dozen

or so hours a week with other adults.

My first lesson in adulting was that many adults are not as put-together as they seem.

Working in a small 4 by 10 space for hours at a time with only one other person leads to forced conversation, and for me this forced conversation always somehow ends with me learning the intimate details and problems of a person's life.

With my first manager, this meant learning about the intimate details of her relationship with her boyfriend, including but not limited to his faltering comedy career and their lack of an active sex life.

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With a different coworker, this meant hearing about a severe deficiency of money for basic things like food, combined with spending extreme amounts of money on deluxe animal costumes, along with the relationship issues that come with dating an unemployed Satanist.

These are obviously the more extreme issues, but the overarching theme has always been that stability and composure in adulthood don't simply come with reaching a certain age. It's a hard thing to reach, and something worth working towards.

Along with that, I feel like I need to mention the immigrants who work at the store, especially with the upcoming election. Saying that immigrants are some of the hardest working people is starting to become

a cliché, but that's fine because they are.

One of the most interesting coworkers I had was a middle-aged woman who brought me baklava roughly once a week.

At first I would get pretty frustrated with her since she couldn't speak great English and couldn't make a good latte even if her life depended on it.

And although the baklava-lady's barista skills never got much better, I did learn that while she was not a fluent English speaker, she was fluent in Arabic, Assyrian, and Italian. She had left Iraq in her early teens, moved to Italy and lived there for 5 years, then came over to America.

Still, after living in America for decades and having her kids all grown up, she had to keep working two jobs to support herself and her sick mother.

So I guess the biggest lesson that came out of my job is being an adult in the real world is a lot different than I expected.

I'm sure that for a majority of us, our career paths will be an upward climb, simply because of the opportunities we've been given. But for most adults in the real world, simply maintaining status quo is hard enough.

As a current senior in high school, I'll try to relish the days I have in high school rather than count down the days towards graduation, no matter how much senioritis spreads through the halls.

In the words of Andy Bernard of "The Office," "I wish there was a way to know you're in the good old days before you've actually left them".

## Why do people act like staying in the Midwest for college should be avoided?



by Marie O'Connor

Small talk as a senior is something to avoid at all costs. This is because when conversation slows and you strain for topics to casually chat about, undoubtedly the topic of college will come up.

I've already had to talk about my college plans in Spanish class multiple times, and talking about it in another language makes the whole topic even more confusing.

Talking about college is, at this point in life, unavoidable. One thing I didn't expect to make the whole conversation even more unpleasant was judgment of my college preferences.

I know many New Trier students want to graduate and move on to some prestigious university with a well-known name, and this seems fitting for the competitive culture we live in.

The exclusivity of a college becomes, in some cases, more important than the actual school itself. The Post-High School Counselors office loves to flaunt their motto, "College is a match to be made not a prize to be won," but I don't think many of the New Trier students, or parents, have gotten this message.

Clearly, Ivy League schools are impressive, and attending one is the

dream of many students, but it's ok if that's something you don't want. Right?

The majority of students end up going to big schools in the Big Ten, and still this is somehow looked down upon.

When I tell classmates that I want to stay close to Chicago, or at least in the Midwest for college, I usually receive slightly confused, or full on judgmental looks. I find myself adding on a couple extra schools, "Colorado College, Tulane, Vanderbilt," that I have no interest in, just to satisfy what my classmates expect me to say.

Lately, though, I've embraced my senior status and have given up on caring about what people think of me. So when most people I ask say that they, "want to get as far away as possible," I usually remind them that living within a couple hours driving distance allows for free laundry a couple times a year.

Not to mention, even though I am an angsty teenager, I don't hate my family all the time. Going to a school far away takes away the convenience of traveling to and from home.

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A plane ticket or gas money is one more expense that many college

students can't afford. I want to come home more often than once a year, maybe to see my little sisters, my parents, and most importantly, my dog.

Those who want to go to school far away simply to be far away might believe that it's the only way to escape the North Shore. But all around the country there are environments as competitive and wealthy as New Trier.

Fleeing to the coasts, as many students dream to do, may not prove to be drastically different. It doesn't take thousands of miles to change one's environment—the city of Chicago is drastically different than living in Wilmette or Glencoe.

What started as applying to schools close enough to visit, has now engrained in me the desire to stay in my comfortable Midwest. I'm not afraid of change or to take risks. In fact, I'm really excited to go to college and experience life outside the New Trier school district.

The truth is, being a college student might not be as easy as many New Trier kids think. It's the first time we will be on our own and responsible for ourselves, and observing my peers, I'm not sure we're all ready for this. We might be 18, but most of us are not mature adults quite yet. Having the safety net of living somewhat close to home might actually be a good thing.

Whether it's due to financial reasons, or personal preference, don't be ashamed of admitting that the next four years might be spent in the Midwest. Despite what everyone keeps saying, most of your peers will be staying, too.

## Staff Editorial Dear Administration, student voice matters

At New Trier, students are granted an enormous amount of trust and freedom from the administration. We have the power to sit in the hallways, use our phone during off time, and decide for ourselves what to do during our free periods.

However, this trust is dwindling.

This past year, Student Alliance, the student government, was moved from ninth period to a third period class and their sponsors, Carolyn Gerhardt and Steven Drajpuch, were replaced.

Coinciding with the change of both sponsors came alterations to typical club operations. Student Alliance members used to have access to a Student Alliance specific email that was used to contact faculty and administrators. However, now it must go through the sponsor who can make edits to these emails before it ever reaches the eyes of the administration. This new protocol mutes and edits the authentic student voice.

Student Alliance was formed so it could express the voice of students, not the administration. The change in protocol and sponsors seems to be an attempt to remove power from the governing body of the students.

The changes brought to Student Alliance highlight the weakening trust and understanding between the students and administration. But this diminishing trust did not start with the recent changes to Student Alliance.

Last year, New Trier administration blocked many apps that were important to students' daily routines such as Snapchat, Facebook, and music apps including Spotify. This was a precursor for the rift of trust between the administration and students. Although these apps are no longer blocked, it still looms deep in our memory.

The current president has said that now they are acting in "accordance with New Trier regulation." The student government should be free from such regulations by the administration, otherwise what is the point of a student voice if the administration edits it?

The regulations and changes that have occurred to Student Alliance have exemplified what most New Trier students think, that Student Alliance can't make change. But it's not because they aren't trying, but because they aren't allowed to. It's ironic that the administration doesn't want to hear our concerns through an outlet they created for that very purpose.

The same Student Alliance the administration created claims to be transparent. However, in repeated attempts to contact members, most would not go on the record. The one response we did get, however, was solicited with requests to view and edit the quotes before they could be published. These students do really care about our school and our needs, but their silence is not because of laziness but from fear of the administration's disapproval.

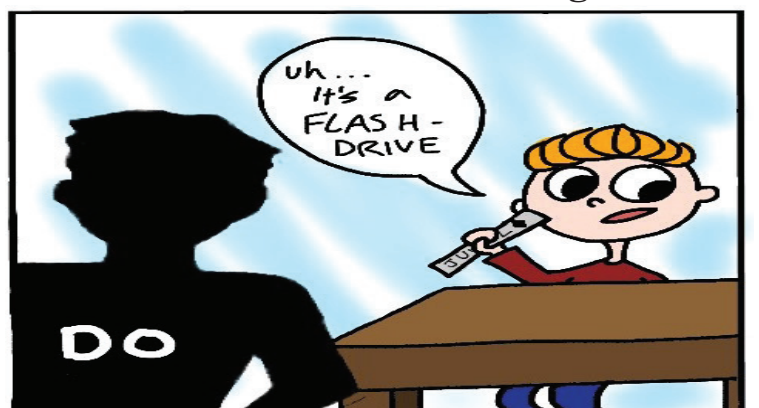
Our Student Alliance should have influence on the direction of New Trier and should not be hindered from fear of the administration. Our voice is important, and how to improve New Trier should not be solely decided by administrators; students who walk the halls and experience it day in and day out should also be included in the process.

Our student government should be the middle man that finds compromise between the administration and the students, to create a working partnership.

In order to fulfill their mission statement, they must do that and we must have representation in policy making. Our unedited voice should be heard.

A voice isn't just an outlet for people to express distaste in the world, it's a powerful tool of expression that should not be drowned out. In the same way that the administration should not be in charge of what is published in this very newspaper, they should not be in control of our voice. New Trier is about the students and if the administration doesn't start to realize that, they will continue to fall farther out of touch with the student body.

## The Do's and Don't's of Juuling in Class



by Sam Blanc