

ISSUE. 9 | APRIL 2021

# FIREBIRD GAZETTE

NEW CHALLENGES ARISE



FIREBIRD NATION

## APRIL INTRO

BY: GABRIELLA BEHAR

April brings with us a time of new beginnings and challenging obstacles. With testing and college acceptances approaching Firebirds are getting tougher than ever as they face new challenges. Our Firebirds however, continue persevering and making us proud. Here is to another successful month at Doral Academy Preparatory.

## CALENDAR



APRIL 6TH

- GRADE 6 WRITING FSA

APRIL 7TH

- GRADE 7 WRITING FSA

APRIL 8TH

- GRADE 8 WRITING FSA

APRIL 9TH

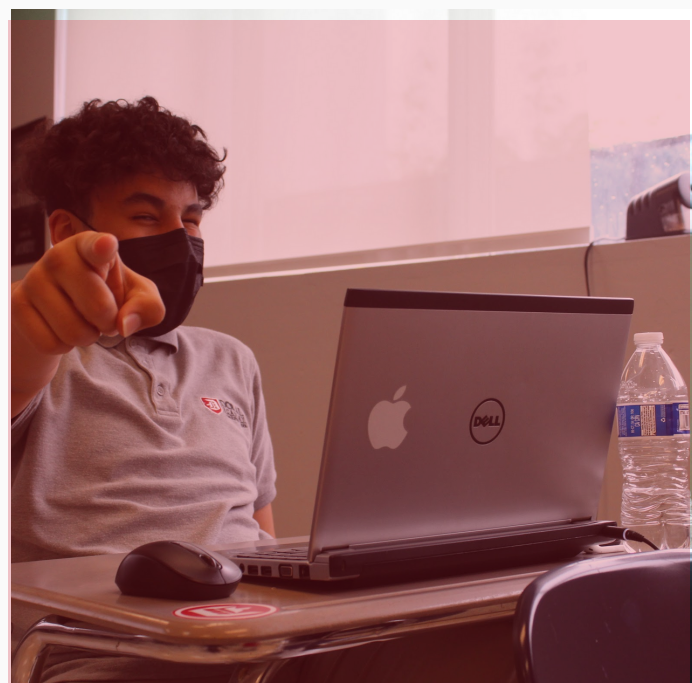
- GRADE 9 WRITING FSA

APRIL 12TH

- GRADE 10 WRITING FSA

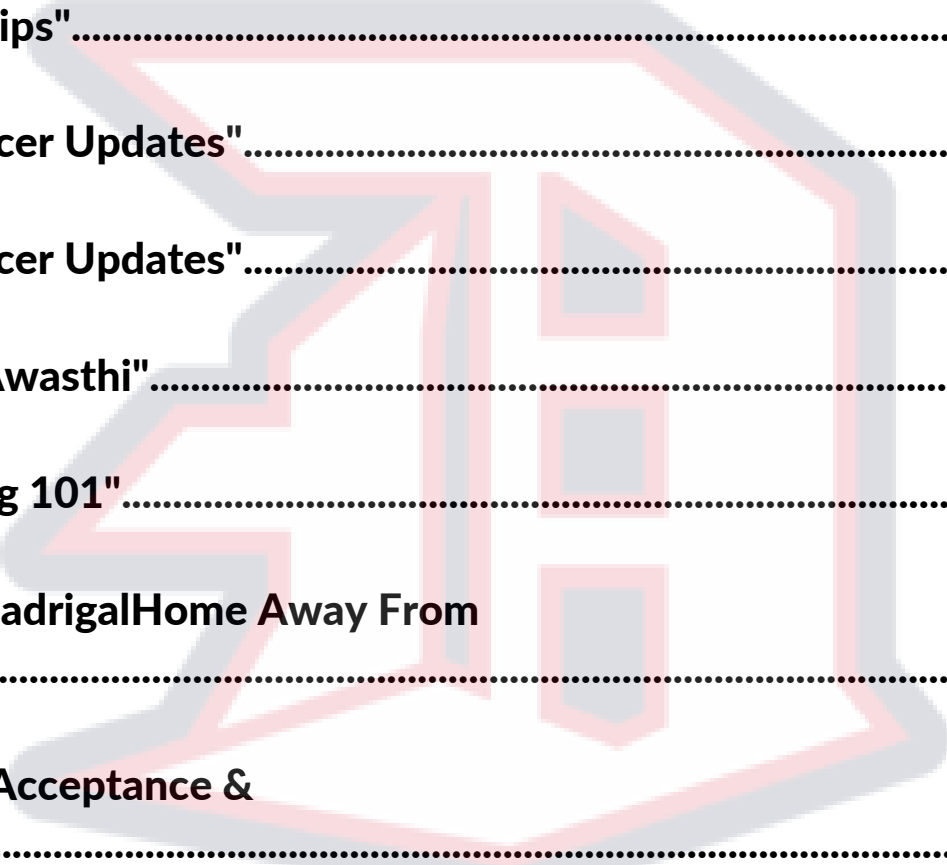
APRIL 13TH

- JUNIOR ACT



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# Testing Schedule

2021

APRIL

SUNDAY



Doral Academy  
Preparatory Spring  
2021 Testing Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	01	02	03
				SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	
04	05	06 Writing Grade 6 (PBT)	07 Writing Grade 7 (CBT)	08 Writing Grade 8 (CBT)	09 Writing Grade 9 (CBT) RLD Day except for students testing	10
11 Writing Grade 10 (CBT)	12 Junior ACT	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	01

PBT- Paper-Based Test  
CBT- Computer-Based Test

Students definitely have to stay attentive more than ever with all these testing updates. In April underclassmen are expected to take all their state exams and Juniors will be taking a free ACT provided by the school. We wish luck to all these Firebirds.





## Assistant Principal's Week

By: Gabriella Behar

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NAESP celebrates National Assistant Principals Week every April to recognize the significant role assistant principals (APs) play in the overall academic achievement of students nationwide. In collaboration with the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the American Federation of School Administrators, we will honor the impact assistant principals have on the success of schools across the country.

We are very appreciative of our staff and want to wish our Assistant Principals a happy Assistant Principal's Week.





## Class of 22': College Tips

By: Folukemi Olufidipie

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As final college decisions begin to roll in for the Class of 2021, a new frenzy of Common App essays and looming deadlines is on the horizon. The most important part of it all? Choosing what schools to apply to. The first college list you make is by no means final, and that is perfectly okay. Preferences change and believe me, your best fit is out there somewhere. Keep reading for some tips on how to form the perfect list for you!

The biggest question when it comes to formulating a college list is how many?

Unfortunately, there is no magic number that will guarantee X acceptances but there is a way to categorize the schools you choose: safety, target, and reach. Safety schools have a high acceptance rate (around 60% or above) and your test scores/GPA should be above the average range. Target schools have slightly lower acceptance rates and are more competitive than safety schools. For target schools, your test scores/GPA should fall within the average range. Finally, reach schools- Ivy League and Top 20s- are the most competitive of them all, with acceptance rates falling below 20%. Regardless of your scores, they are considered a reach for everyone because of how selective and unpredictable they are.

Last but not least, reach out to current students and alumni! If you do not know anyone personally, YouTube is a great resource because there is no one better to tell you what a school is like than the people who go there.

As you search for schools keep an open mind. From personal experience, the schools I would have never even considered in the early stages of the college application process are now my favorites. Finally, apply to that dream school! You never know what a school is specifically looking for in a specific applicant for a year and that could be you. Take every opportunity you get to look into a school and best of luck on this journey!



# Boys Soccer Updates

By: *Danielle Gelpi*

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The Doral Academy Boys Soccer team has won an outstanding 9 district and 2 regional championships, but after their loss in the 2017 state championship, the team vowed they would come back stronger. This past Saturday, March 6th, marks the date that they made history as they won the first soccer state title for Doral Academy. Consequently, this season presented itself with many obstacles from the challenges that came with playing in the midst of a pandemic to losing multiple players to personal reasons and having to bring in Junior Varsity players. Despite it all, every drawback they faced only pushed them to work even harder.

Head coach, Pamela McDonald, has been coaching the Boys Soccer team at Doral Academy for 13 years now. As she told the Daytona Beach News on Saturday, "It's been a long time coming. I

t's a remarkable achievement for this team. I knew that one team would do it, and I believed that once we get one, we'll continue to win state championships." For most of the players on the team, they have been under Coach McDonald's guidance since middle school, and she is extremely proud of the players they have become. Not only is this the first soccer state title for Doral Academy, but Coach McDonald has become the first female coach to lead a boys team to an FHSAA state championship in the 44 years since it began.

For anyone who watched the game, it was an intense 80 minutes where Doral managed to prove their dominance. In the first 40 minutes, Doral's game was unmatchable as they were continuously creating opportunities having 4 shots on target in which 2 hit the post. Enzo Traini (senior) scored in the 15th minute which put Doral up 1-0. After Niceville managed to tie up the game with

16 minutes left to play, Doral came back even stronger. With 3 minutes left on the clock, Manuel Calvo (junior) ran in behind the defense and received a ball from Massimo Traini (senior). He was able to get around the keeper and score the game-winning goal. Calvo describes the moment as "a sudden rush of adrenaline and happiness. Then what came after I can't explain. The feeling of embracing your teammates and seeing the smile on their faces because of what you did is something that is indescribable."

With 12 graduating seniors on the team, these state champs are leaving behind quite the legacy that will carry on for years to come. Massimo Traini recalls his journey with the program and states, "coming into the program in 7th grade, the dream was to play on varsity and win a state title. To be able to accomplish this my senior year is beyond amazing, and I wouldn't trade this experience for anything."



# Boys Soccer Updates

By: Danielle Gelpi

As a manager for the team myself for the past 3 years, it's been a pleasure to work with this team and see their constant effort and hard work pay off. This won't be the last time you'll be hearing from Doral Academy's Boys Soccer team, as they will begin to condition and train for the upcoming season very soon!



Scan to watch a Doral Boys Soccer highlights video created by Ana Garro



## Pranjali Awasthi: Multitalented and Multicultural

By: Ana Garro

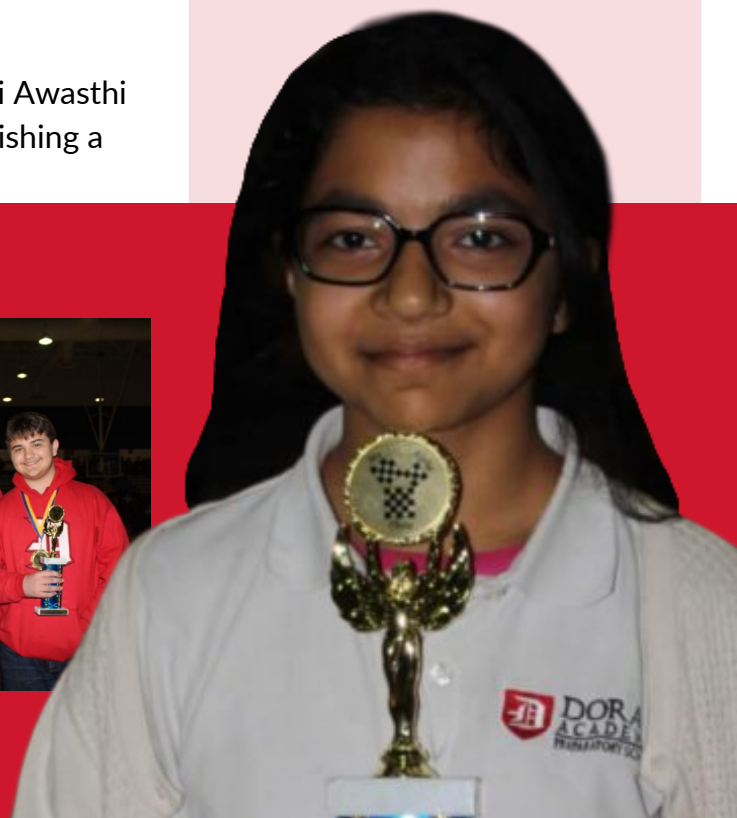
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At only 14 years old, humanitarian, future neuroscientist, and Doral Academy's very own sophomore, Pranjali Awasthi, has already established two organizations, won a myriad of awards for both science and math, and has shadowed professors as a research assistant at Florida International University. Among these accomplishments, she has also served as a great contribution to our school by being involved in the Science National Honors Society along with the Doral Academy Math Club for which she has won multiple awards. Essentially, not only is Awasthi a multi-talented individual but she is also a multicultural one as well.

With humble beginnings in India, Awasthi has demonstrated incredible persistence for success since a young age. Moving several times in her country and then to the city of Miami at 11 years old, she has been able to experience distinct cultures and languages that have shaped and offered her incredible opportunities for her future as an international trilingual student. Though the transition was initially difficult, she was able to find a home in Doral Academy and settled in a community that she has now made her own. Additionally, gaining inspiration from her parents who pursued PhDs in both the STEM and the Humanities areas, she aspires to "live a life of meaning and service" by becoming a humanitarian entrepreneur in the areas of neuroscience and computer science simultaneously. Awasthi also enjoys art, playing the piano, and reviewing and watching her favorite Bollywood films in her free time.

As a sophomore, Pranjali Awasthi has accomplished establishing a

legacy as an impressionable young philanthropist, scientist, and student, continuously seeking to help her community with the latest technological advances. Having discovered neuroscience through her father, she says "I was really interested in it, and I just became passionate about [it]." So much so that she decided to seek out the International Youth Neuroscience Association, which is a global, youth-led non-profit organization dedicated to encouraging young students to get into the field of neuroscience and research. In September of 2020, she decided to open up her own international chapter here in Doral, becoming the founder and president to about 30 members who share her passion and drive.





# Journaling 101

By: Jonas Terleckas

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Whether it was a busy day at school or a nerve-wracking event, you may find yourself looking for an escape that could erase all the stress from your life. Fortunately, journaling is an outlet that many people can rely on to feel relaxed after an overwhelming day. It may sound boring at first, but this activity is more than just words on a sheet of paper—occasionally, it abandons words altogether and rather relies on doodles. If you are looking to start your own journaling experience, here are some powerful techniques for you to experiment with.

This is probably the most common form of journaling. I started this way as well, which helped me ingrain this practice into my daily routine. All you have to do is simply write your reflections down on one page of the journal after the entire day has passed. Sometimes, I would write one in the morning and another at night in order to record the difference. Although it is quite refreshing at first to pour all of your thoughts onto a page, it can sometimes feel draining once it becomes part of your routine. If you still want to do reflections but feel as if you have outgrown them, maybe do one every other day or even on a weekly basis. Freewriting is also one of the most common techniques out there. Often used in creative writing courses,

In the end, journaling is not a perfect art form. There is no “right” way to journal, so trust what you think is best for you. Perhaps you want to write down a message to someone you don’t know, manifest a future outcome, write one word over and over again, develop an idea for an app, create a dream journal, list your biggest insecurities, or even write down your worst thoughts and burn the entire journal after filling it in. Whatever it is, do what you think will help you the most at that moment. You will soon realize that journaling is for everyone, but it is more important to pick the right approach that fits you. If you don’t enjoy journaling at first, try a different technique.



## Home Away From Home: Ashley Madrigal's Musical Journey

By: Gerrany Norrari

Ashley has always been drawn to music; she tapped into her artistic side in elementary school, when she decided to pick up the violin. All of her friends were joining the orchestra at her elementary school, she reveals, so she thought why not try it out herself! From there, her love for music only grew stronger. In middle school, Ashley joined the Miami Music Project (MMP). This was her first time experiencing what it was like to be in a symphony. Her musical knowledge only increased being surrounded by amazing and talented musicians.

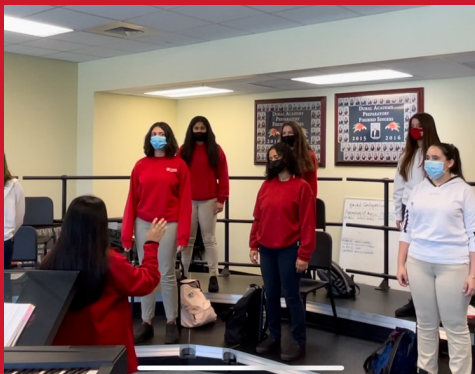
Fast forward to high school, having been in the orchestra under the instruction of Mr.

Ercilla since 6th grade and having always been an extra help within the orchestra family, she became known as the “orchestra mom” amongst her peers. Given her altruistic and selfless nature, Ashley took her love for music and her leadership into the Firebird Choir, under Dr. Llanes’ instruction. She auditioned for Performing Arts in freshman year after Josephine Mendez, a Doral Alumni and President of the Choir at the time, encouraged her to do so. Eventually, she landed a position as an officer, and now Ashley is a co-president of the Firebird Choir.

Living up to her “orchestra mom” title, Ashley is very much involved in the “behind the scenes” aspects of both orchestra and choir. “Choir helped me develop my leadership skills, and how to communicate better and work as a team,” she says. She’s displayed her leadership abilities by constantly managing and organizing many of Doral’s music events, such as Café Amore, Christmas shows, and more. But Ashley could not have done any of

his without them.

When she’s not working with music, Ashley is actively participating in community service and challenging herself academically. She’s been a Key Club member since freshman year (now a Key Club Representative) and has participated in numerous beach cleanups, food distributions, and more. She was also part of Doral Academy’s math club and has taken classes at Doral College. Ashley hopes to continue down this path in her future by potentially volunteering as a section leader in a choir or by mentoring other aspiring musicians—whether it be elsewhere or right here at Doral Academy. The young musician has traveled to many states, met amazing people (such as Tori Kelly), and so much more. She sums up her relationship with music, “As cheesy as it sounds, music is my escape. Whatever I can’t put into words, music does it for me.”



## Harvard Acceptance

By: Gabriella Behar

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Current Senior Folukemi Olufidipie celebrates getting accepted to Harvard University. This is definitely a time of celebration for all of Doral Academy. Folukemi makes a positive mark on anyone she comes by so it came as no surprise when she was accepted to this prestigious institution. She currently spends her time giving underclassmen college application advice as she celebrates the last few months as a Firebird. We know she has so much left to accomplish in her life and wish her only the best in the bright future she has ahead of her.

"Getting into Harvard was a dream come true. i put in all these years of hard work and to get accepted into one of the top universities in the country after this crazy year was definitely the best feeling."



**THANK YOU**  
**APRIL 2021**