



FIREBIRD GAZETTE

FIREBIRD NATION

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FIUMUN

BY ISABELLA BELLO

A chill envelops over the room as our interview begins, Sarai Cardenas, a junior here at Doral Academy, looks back at me through her thick, brown-framed glasses with eyes that hold a myriad of thoughts behind them. Perhaps some of them are about what her plans will be once school lets out for the weekend later today, but without a doubt many have to deal with her academic promises.

The Doral Academy Model United Nations team is not one without prestige, as they have attended multiple conferences and competitions this year, the most notable being YaleMUN a while back held at the prestigious Ivy League University. Recently, they competed at FIMUN, a yearly competition at Florida International University, where Cardenas was amongst those who attended.

She has been in the club since the eighth grade, with the 2022-2023 school year marking her 4th year participating in it. She describes the club humorously, as "A bunch of theatre kids running around performing academically," given that the basis of the club is enrooted in simulations. The delegates are, for the most part, placed into conferences where they are asked to solve real-world problems such as Global Warming, Poverty, World Hunger, etc., all acting as different countries that are in fact part of the actual United Nations. Every now and then, they have a session called "crisis," where they resolve made up issues from made up worlds; "it's like if you have a Harry Potter crisis and you're acting as Dumbledore," is how Cardenas put it, lightly chuckling at the fact.

CALENDAR



March 10th
ArtRev

March 17th
St. Patrick's Day

March 20th - 24th
Spring Break

April 7th
Teacher Planning Day

April 9th
Easter

April 12th-15th
FSPA State Competition

April 18th & 20th
Tennis Regional Competition

April 22nd
GradBash

April 19th- 21st
Tennis States Competition

April 25th
Academic Award Ceremony

April 27th
Take Your Child to Work Day

FIUMUN CONTINUED...

BY ISABELLA BELLO

In regards to FIMUN, specifically, it is a competition held by the host University's Model UN team, which is ranked in the Top 5 U.S. Collegiate teams. Some of our own alumni, she notes, are actually on the team itself, which proves to be a delight as they look forward to tender reunions and reliable guidance once there, as well as inspiration to succeed further in the organization. It proves to be a great first experience for newer members, as on a home front they get to see the ins and outs of Model UN competitions, and really get to hone their skills with not just their Upperclassmen mentors, but the ones they had as well.

Doral Academy had 10 Model UN members attend the conference this year, with Cardenas acting in a dual delegation with one of her peers in the World Hunger Committee acting to integrate technology into the medical field. The weekend was spent speaking on telemedicine, new regulations, data protection, and creating accessibility for technology in health care across the globe. This, according to her, helps her also understand real world

problems such as this one on a deeper level and larger scale, as well as forces her to think and compromise on worthwhile solutions. It has also helped her gain, over time, a larger perspective on the world as a whole and has brought awareness to all of the team on certain issues and topics that they previously would not have been aware of.

Competitions do more than just bring them closer to real world issues, but also to each other. Usually, the conventions pair with a Charitable Organization to host at the event so that the delegates can support them. At FIMUN, the hosted Charity provided candy grams for those attending, which the Doral Academy delegates distributed amongst each other with encouraging words and kind messages expressing how great they will all do at the competition. Cardenas regards it as one of her favorite parts of the experience, and a heartwarming demonstration of teamwork and mutual respect within them.

At the end of the competition, our team brought home five awards, with Miriam Trujillo and

Luca Alberti winning "Best Delegate," Sarai Cardenas and Amanda Sibello winning "Outstanding Delegate," and Diego Cortes winning "Democratic Condemnation." We could not be more proud!



ARTREV

BY LAUREN CORDERO

ArtRev, the annual Visual Arts exhibition hosted by the National Art Honor Society, was once again brought to life this year on March 10th. For those unfamiliar, ArtRev is an exhibition where members of the club and independent artists alike can showcase the work they have created throughout the year.

From the music to the exhibition itself, students in all mediums of Visual Art are given the opportunity to present their work to an audience and gain that first hand experience of showcasing their work. Among the long planning process, NAHS Board members, club sponsor Mr. Pita, and Art teacher Mr. Zarate selected the contemporary theme "Metamorphism".

Metamorphism is a profound change in appearance or in character. It may be considered a physical, spiritual, intellectual, and/or emotional change that occurs over time.

"Given the almost three years since the lockdown from the COVID-19 pandemic", NAHS event coordinator Emma



Hernandez noted, "We intended for this theme to convey the major shift in our lives during and after the pandemic and how its impact is shown through the visual art mediums".

Overall, the NAHS board was extremely successful in bringing metamorphism to life. With the colorful decorations, senior time capsules illuminating the 7th floor, and ceramic feast displayed in the main exhibit, artists and supporters alike were able to indulge in a pool of talent and expression.



SNEHA NAIR: STEM WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

BY MARIAN NAVARRO

The Miami Herald Silver Knight Awards is a prestigious program that recognizes outstanding high school seniors in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. These nominees must not only demonstrate exceptional academic achievement, but must also prove themselves to be leaders and selfless in their community service programs. The Silver Knights, which was established in 1959, has become a highly respected tradition in South Florida and is widely recognized as one of the most prestigious and competitive student awards programs in the United States. Each year, hundreds of students are nominated, but only a select few are chosen to receive the coveted award in their respective categories. These categories include a wide range of disciplines such as art, business, drama, and literature.



I was fortunate enough to interview Sneha Nair, Doral Academy's nominee in the science division, and got an inside look at the program.

Nair started at the beginning of her story, walking me through the process of becoming a Silver Knight and proving just how determined prospective nominees are. First, she reached out to Ms. Matamoros, a coordinator at our school, for the preliminary application in June of her senior year. After gathering the necessary documents and obtaining her letters of recommendation, Nair was notified that she had been nominated for the science category and immediately got to work on locking in her application. Since then, Nair and the other nominees have been put through the ringer to prepare for their official interviews in April, subjecting their essays to rounds of revisions and even sitting through mock interviews coordinated by the staff at Doral Academy. "The process of becoming a silver knight nominee was definitely lengthy and took a great deal of commitment and perseverance from both nominees and silver knights coordinators who worked tirelessly to help us perfect our applications."

Although the Miami Herald Silver Knights award is an extraordinary recognition to add to one's resume, it means so much more than that.

"I wanted to inspire more young females to take robotics and programming classes because the future of the world will depend heavily on software."

According to Nair, "I have always felt that although it is amazing to be able to contribute to the revolutionization of technology and medicine, it is an even more impressive feat to be able to inspire young minds to follow your path and persevere through any obstacles that may come your way to find success in these difficult fields." This distinction not only serves to display one's academic achievement, but also to inspire others to follow the path past Knights have paved for them. Being a woman in STEM, Nair has faced many obstacles in her path that could have dissuaded her from pursuing her career, often being the

SNEHA NAIR: STEM WITHOUT BOUNDARIES CONTINUED...

BY MARIAN NAVARRO

only woman in elective science classes. Because of this, Nair started her project, Stem Without Boundaries.

Clearly, Sneha Nair embodies all the characteristics of the Silver Knights Award: intelligence, perseverance, and, above all, selflessness. Though she is a graduating senior, she leaves a lasting legacy in her wake. "My advice [to prospective nominees] would be to make sure to start a meaningful service project early on, and to thoroughly plan out the sustainability of the project.



In other words, how will the project continue when you eventually graduate from Doral Academy and go on to university?" Through their commitment to excellence, leadership, and service, nominees have made a positive impact on their community and demonstrated their potential to become a leader in their chosen field.

Congratulations to all the nominees for their exceptional achievements and contributions to the Miami community.

JUNIOR RING CEREMONY

BY MELISSA RUIZ

The junior ring ceremony marks a time of change in a junior's life. The ceremony is a rite of passage from being an underclassman to finally being a senior in your last year of high school. Started in 1835 by the United States Military Academy at West Point, the tradition of juniors having rings first started as a way for underclassmen to be recognized as they were and the eventual alumni that they would become. This custom spread very rapidly and eventually became a

tradition in United States schools nationwide. With a junior ring the ideals and traditions of the school are kept alive and honored.

Over many years, the tradition of junior rings has prevailed throughout Doral Academy. Years and years of junior ring ceremonies have led to this year with the Class of 2024's ring ceremony. It will take place on Thursday, March 30th and will be held in the gym. Juniors are expected to arrive at 5:30 in order to

prepare for the ceremony that will start at 6:30. There is a business attire dress code and students are expected to follow it. Make sure to follow the dress code if not you will be turned away from the ceremony. Overall, this is the most important marking point for a junior's life and is a great opportunity for the class of 2024 to become unified as one.



NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

BY JENNIFER GIRALDO

March is National Women's History Month, a time to celebrate the contributions and achievements of women throughout our history. This month provides an opportunity to acknowledge the vital role that women play in shaping our society, and to honor the many women who have fought for gender equality and rights.

The theme for this year's National Women's History Month is "Valiant Women of the Vote: Refusing to Be Silenced." This theme celebrates the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which granted women the right to vote in the United States. It also recognizes the women who have worked tirelessly to secure and protect voting rights- especially in cases of women of color due to their long history of being faced with systemic barriers to voting.

Throughout history, women have made significant contributions to all areas of society, including science, politics, literature, and the arts. Yet, their achievements have often been overlooked and undervalued. National Women's History Month is an opportunity to rectify the

impact of their accomplishments and to bring attention to the countless women who have made a difference in our world.

This year, we honor trailblazers like Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman elected to Congress, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the second woman appointed to the United States Supreme Court. We also celebrate modern-day pioneers like Kamala Harris, the first woman to hold the title of Vice President in the US, and Malala Yousafzai, the youngest Nobel Prize laureate for her advocacy of girls' education.



As we celebrate National Women's History Month, let us remember that there is still much work to be done to achieve gender equality and justice for all women. Let us continue to recognize and amplify the voices of women in our communities and around the world, and support the efforts of those who continue to fight for women's rights.

In conclusion, take this month to say thank you to the many women who have shaped you into the person you are today. Recognize that each barrier, record, and hurdle conquered is the tearing down of the stereotype that "women can't do it". Take the time to reflect on the many contributions of women throughout history, and commit yourself just a few minutes to the ongoing work of building a more just and equitable world for all. After all, if a woman devoted nine months to you, can't you devote nine minutes?



AP ART SCHOLASTICS

BY JENNIFER GIRALDO

This year, high schoolers taking Advanced Placement 2D Art were offered the opportunity to apply for the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Encouraged by the Doral Academy Art Program, this was made a part of their final grade for the semester, resulting in an impressive total of 80 submissions this year alone. From September 1st, 2022, to January 13th, 2023, Doral Academy students were able to create, question, and cultivate their artistic creativity for the chance of winning scholarships and nationwide recognition from the most prestigious programs in the United States. Not only does this improve morale, but it opens a world of opportunity to disadvantaged students whose passion for learning can change their lives.



Far too often, there is a misconception held around the arts: that the debt gained by investing in an art-based education outweighs its monetary gain. In other words, the phrase "Art majors make no money" is a phrase that most art students know all too well. It's heard from authority figures when a child wants to draw; it comes from family members during Thanksgiving dinner; and it even manages to slip from a parent's tongue when their kids change their major from medicine to design. Doral Academy is a school that takes pride in its vibrant Hispanic community, with the majority of students being first or second generation Americans. However, this results in massive pressure from parents for their children to succeed, leaving the great voices of the American dream silenced under high expectations.

However, Scholastic Corporation has made it their mission to change that. The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are presented by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, a nonprofit organization whose aim is to find students with great artistic

and literary potential and showcase their work to the world. Through the Awards, students are given job opportunities, exhibitions for their work, publishing, and scholarships.



To give an understanding of the amount of exposure this brings, hundreds of students and their mentors are honored in The National Ceremony in New York City, a television-broadcast event featuring A-list guests and trailblazers that shaped the face of education today. This once-in a lifetime opportunity reaps rewards like international recognition and scholarships covering up to \$12,500 worth of tuition. All regional entries in Miami Dade were considered for Gold Key, Silver Key, Honorable Mention, American Voices Nominee, and American Visions Nominee awards.

So how did we do this year?