

**SCIMITAR  
STAFF WEIGHS  
IN ON THE NEW  
CARPET ON  
PAGE 3.**



# The Alhambra Scimitar

**JROTC SKILLS  
ON DISPLAY IN  
FLAGSTAFF ON  
PAGES  
4 AND 5.**

ALHAMBRA HIGH SCHOOL

PHOENIX, ARIZONA

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## New administrators signal new beginnings

by: **PAULINA VALDES**

Throughout the years, Alhambra has filled its classrooms with teachers who care about students and, more importantly, care about their education. From administrators to our front office staff, Alhambra has built a community of individuals who help students succeed. At the start of the school year, Alhambra opened its gates to three new administrators: Principal Deana Williams, Assistant Principal for Registration Leah Barton, and Assistant Principal for Student Success Martin Diaz. Each one of these

individuals comes with a unique vision that will foster continued growth here on campus.

Before arriving at Alhambra, Mrs. Williams was the principal of Bostrom High School and has been a part of the Phoenix Union High School District family for 16 years. Prior to becoming a principal, Williams was an assistant principal at Cesar Chavez High School. She also taught English and history on that campus. She believes in the importance of being conscious about individual strengths and weaknesses and the role working together plays in

being part of an administrative team. Williams says, "I was extremely excited to have the honor of joining the Alhambra community...I love being an educator, and I'm driven by the fact that I am a very competitive person... [and] as an administrator I still have that competitiveness that pushes me to want to be the best at what I do. I want our school to be top in academics, innovations, athletics, sports, engagement, and community outreach."

Mrs. Barton, Alhambra's new Assistant Principal of Registration,

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## Voting made easy

by: **KARYME SANTOS**

Voting might not be appealing to you right now, but it will be in the future. Voting is one of the many rights granted to American citizens. It promotes social awareness and gives Americans the opportunity to choose who represents them. In recent election cycles, many citizens have chosen not to vote, but that is a risky choice. Those who refrain from voting do not to utilize their voices and participate in American democracy. Further, those who do not vote frequently express dissatisfaction after the fact with the candidates who are elected, but did not think enough of the voting process to participate when they had the chance.

Registering to vote is not a complicated pro-

cess. Prospective voters can register online at [www.servicearizona.com](http://www.servicearizona.com). While online registration is the most convenient method, paper registration can also be completed at any Department of Motor Vehicles location. Youth can register to vote at the age of 17 as long as they are 18 by the next election. Many high schools, including Alhambra, hold voter registration drives regularly, making the process even more convenient.

The availability of voting locations has increased over the years, making it much easier for people to vote. Maritza Miranda Saenz, the Executive Director of the Maricopa County Democratic Party states, "In the Maricopa County, all the polling places are early voting lo-

cations in which voters can vote prior to the scheduled election day." Finding your designated polling place is easy. The information is available on [www.servicearizona.com](http://www.servicearizona.com) on the voter registration main page.

Prospective voters can also mail in ballots or drop them off at any voting location, but on Election Day voters must go to their designated polling places. "There are two different types of identification Americans must bring when they are at the poll, getting ready to vote. Voters must have an identification card and a utility bill. A utility bill is the amount a household or office is expected to pay for the house services; it is used to show proof of residency. You can

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## Dress code: Breaking the gender norm

by: **PAULINA VALDES and  
NGA TRAN**

Since the start of the school year, Alhambra has experienced change and growth. Some of this change pertains to the school dress code. For the first time in 15 years the Phoenix Union High School District has decided to revisit the current dress code and make major changes.

Phoenix Union's 2019-2020 student handbook states, "Phoenix Union High School District recognizes that each student's mode of dress and appearance is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. We will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance except when their choices affect the educational program of the schools or the health and safety of others."

Prior to this change, the school dress code focused more on female dress standards and less on the male. However, the new policy states that, "the dress code policy must be gender-neutral, non-discriminatory, and non-judgmental." Dr. Zach Muñoz, the district's Director of Student Connectedness, states, "We had a committee of students, staff members, administrators, and parents. We would meet monthly and review different pieces of the dress code... The



**Senior Ivonne Hernandez poses in a crop top with spaghetti straps. Both items of clothing are now approved by Phoenix Union's revised dress code.**

thing we looked at the most was being as gender neutral as we could be because a lot of times dress codes focus on what the girls are wearing vs. what the guys are wearing, so we tried to make it where things were fair and equitable in regards to your gender."

While the reaction from staff has been mixed, students are generally positive about the new dress code. "I think it's really cool that the dress code isn't directed towards girls anymore. They should be able to dress how they want, everyone has their own style and they shouldn't have to change it," says senior Caleb Lela. Senior Mya Palomo also appreciates the changes. "I love the new dress code, it

see **DRESS** on **PAGE 2**

# NEWS

## ICE: Know your rights

by: **GEORGINA VALDES** and **ESTRELLITA ARELLANO**

On August 7, 2019, hundreds of immigrant factory workers in Mississippi were arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Fear and sadness filled the hearts of immigrants and those who support immigration rights not only in Mississippi, but all across the United States. The aftermath of this event left some afraid to leave their homes or go to work. Children of those arrested by ICE found it difficult to attend their first days of school, and many arrived home to empty houses. Undocumented immigrants live in constant fear of persecution. However, some still do not know what ICE is or how to protect themselves.

ICE was created in 2003 as a way to create reorganization in the government after the 9/11 attacks on the United States. There are different sections of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Department. A portion of the agency is in charge of deporting immigrants that are currently in the United States without proper authorization. As a result, many families are torn apart and children are left in ICE custody.

There are varying opinions on what ICE is and its impact on society. There are some who feel strongly that ICE's role is to secure our borders and protect the rights of those living in the United States legally. Others believe that ICE unfairly targets undocumented immigrants despite the lives that they have made for themselves and their families in the United States. Regardless of the stance, most agree that ICE plays a critical role in deportation. It is not uncommon for undocumented immigrants to feel hopeless after being detained by ICE, however there are things that can be done. In the event of an ICE raid, immigration attorneys and advocate groups advise those in ICE custody to remain silent. Doing this prevents a detainee from saying anything that could possibly incriminate them. Asking to speak with a lawyer is an important next step. Lawyers will serve as go-betweens with ICE and the detained individual, providing critical support to not only the detainee, but their family. A lawyer will also provide information about what will happen as the immigration case progresses and will help make custody or foster care arrangements for any mi-

nor children living in the household.

If the affected person has an alien registration number, it is important to know this number and have a family member know it as well. An alien registration number is a seven to nine-digit number assigned to non-citizens. Gather any important documents and put them in an accessible place. Having easy access to these documents will help in case a lawyer asks to see this information. If there are any undocumented children or anyone under the age of 18 living in the household that could be affected by a parent being deported, it is essential that there is documentation in place explaining who will care for them.

Undocumented immigrants are at constant risk of deportation or separation from their families. Shockingly, a large percentage of these individuals are unaware of the rights they have as human beings; they focus only on the rights they do not have as non-citizens. Nevertheless, they still have ways to defend themselves. Whether it is by remaining silent or speaking to a lawyer, those who are undocumented still have hope and a chance to fight back.

make sure every student is successful.

The final member of Alhambra's new administrative team is Mr. Diaz, the Assistant Principal for Student Success. Mr. Diaz works with other staff members to ensure that students have a place where they can escape the problems they sometimes encounter outside of school. "I'm not naive; I know we live in a pretty rough part of town. We live with a bunch of things that challenge the community in a lot of ways, and I don't want this place to be reflective of that... I want Alhambra to be a

to be able to do," says Barton. Mrs. Barton has been in the district for 12 years. She started at Carl Hayden Community High School as a science teacher and later became the school's Assistant Principal of Registration. She states, "I was excited to come to Alhambra. A new campus is always scary.... but I was excited about the new opportunity." Mrs. Barton's job entails helping students get into the right classes to be on track for graduation. She works closely with counselors to

## Helpful Resources

### Arizona Legal Women and Youth

#### Services

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, T visas, U visas, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) petitions  
Location: 24 W. Camelback Road, #A335, Phoenix, AZ 85013  
Contact: (602) 248-7055, <http://alwayfaz.org>, [info@alwayfaz.org](mailto:info@alwayfaz.org)

### Arizona State University - Immigration Clinic

#### Special Immigrant Juvenile Status

Location: 111 E. Taylor Street, Phoenix, AZ 85004  
Contact: (480) 727-9274, <http://www.law.asu.edu>

### International Rescue Committee

#### (Phoenix)

Adjustment of Status, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Employment authorization, Employment-based immigrant and non-immigrant petitions, Family-based petitions, Naturalization/Citizenship, Temporary Protected Status (TPS)  
Location: 4425 West Olive Avenue, #400, Glendale, AZ 85302  
Contact: (602) 433-2440, <http://www.rescue.org/us-program/us-phoenix-az>, [Chris.Debreceni@rescue.org](mailto:Chris.Debreceni@rescue.org)

## DRESS

was time for a change because women shouldn't be judged by what they wear and they shouldn't feel like they have to hide their body so a guy doesn't get distracted."

In recent years, self-expression through forms like clothing, dance, music, makeup, and art has

become more accepted in men, women and transitioning young adults. This has led older generations to be more open-minded about changes that are happening in the world. It is both encouraging and admirable to see people accept one another for who they are and how they look.

## VOTE

also have a voter registration card which is a card you receive in the mail before each election," says Saenz.

The importance of voting is

truly based on Americans' hopes and dreams. Utilizing your voice and being a part of America's democracy makes you the ideal American.

place where kids get away from abuse, from gangs, fear, drama, all the negative things they experience on the outside... I want to raise expectations of Alhambra," says Diaz. A common misconception is that Mr. Diaz and security are there to be mean and get students in trouble. However, their purpose is to make sure every student can come to school and focus on learning without other distractions. Mr. Diaz states, "...I love you guys, as corny as that

sounds. We are committed to you guys and this community. I'm not here as visitor. I'll do anything to help you guys succeed because you guys have so many cool things to look forward to in life, and I want you guys to experience all of them."

At Alhambra, every adult on campus plays a huge role in the success of students. Alhambra welcomes its new administrators with open arms, and thanks them for the important jobs they do.

## NEW

feels strongly that administrators should always put themselves in the shoes of classroom teachers. "Administrators should never forget what it's like to be in a classroom, and that they are a small piece of a really big picture. Being transparent in why you're making the decisions you're making is important to build relationships with teachers, students, and your classified staff. To make sure all of those systems work, it's something that is very important for an administrator

# OPINION AND FEATURES

## Point-Counterpoint: Is the new carpet a help or a hassle?

### POINT BY: BRANDON CHAVARRIA

I thank whomever made the decision to install carpet in Alhambra's classrooms. I have personally always preferred carpet to tile flooring, and this new change has affected my junior year in a positive way. The carpet makes for a better classroom environment and allows students to feel more comfortable and absorb information easily. Not only does it improve the atmosphere, but it also reduces noise disturbances throughout the class.

Compared to tile flooring, the carpet can be easily maintained with the right equipment, alleviating stress on our maintenance staff. Carpet detergent spray is used to clean and deodorize, and the carpet can be

vacuumed shortly thereafter. The carpet fibers also catch allergens in the air, improving air quality in classrooms. Some teachers have purchased vacuums to help keep the floors clean, but it appears the carpet is being vacuumed regularly by our campus maintenance staff.

Student safety is a large factor to consider when addressing flooring. Slips and falls are the leading cause of injury in schools, and carpet offers significantly more traction than hard surface products thereby creating a safer environment.

So, in conclusion, do I love the carpet? Yes. Will I install it in my own home? Tomorrow.

### COUNTERPOINT BY: VIANNEY MENA

Although I do appreciate and respect those who were involved in the installation of the carpet, I am not necessarily fond of it. Carpet is high maintenance in homes, so imagine how much time and effort the maintenance team here at Alhambra has to put in to keep all the classrooms' carpets clean.

Autumn is right around the corner and, as the season changes, the majority of us are visited by some wonderful friends: the flu, the common cold, and allergies. As students sneeze and cough, the carpet acts as a virtual magnet for allergens, mold spores, and dust mites. To be fair, carpet fibers do trap al-

lergens making it difficult for germs to spread, but the slightest movements can trigger the germs to be lifted from the fibers, sending them airborne. This can cause allergens to circulate in the air for several hours. With students walking in and out of classrooms every hour, the carpet fibers do not seem too promising in trapping allergens.

Maintaining clean carpet is a hassle. Hundreds of students who may have stepped in mud or on a piece of chewed-up gum track those items into classrooms. Also consider the rainy days that come during autumn and winter; wet carpet will make classrooms feel moist and create

unpleasant odors. If a student spills a drink, one has to act fast and blot the liquid before it stains. Carpet cleaning machines work well to wash the carpet and get rid of any stains, germs, and unwanted junk that has accumulated. However, these machines are expensive.

Carpet does have a few benefits like providing warmth in a room during winter and preventing the obnoxiously loud noise of a chair being moved. I do not have a passionate hate for the carpet, but I do not think it should be in classrooms. I happen to miss the airy lightness and splashes of green tile.

## Emotional support, you need it!

by: REGAN CAIN

Having supportive people in your life helps you cope with not only the small day-to-day problems that arise, but the major curveballs life throws at you. Family, friends, and coworkers are some of the foundations of a solid support system. As a result, you have a better chance of

forming trusting relationships, staying focused in school, and making good decisions. You do not need a big group of people for you to feel supported.

Tony Johnson, a counselor at James W. Rice Elementary School, has worked with thousands of students who struggle with a lack of emotional support in their lives.

"Young adults are in the process of finding their place in their families [and] peer groups while navigating [through] new relationships and the fast-paced world around them," says Johnson. He also explains the issues associated with a lack of emotional support. Young adults may face problems like "unwanted/unprepared pregnancies,

drug and alcohol use and or addiction, social isolation, hopelessness, lower self-esteem, unhealthy relationships, poor academic performance and accountability to name a few."

Emotional support has a major impact on everyone's life. Teenagers often struggle the most because they are still trying to find their place in the

world. Some teens are also forced to take on responsibilities that they are not prepared for. Having that extra support can put someone who is at risk on the right path and make issues and unwanted problems easier to cope with. Not everyone has emotional support, but if you see someone who needs it be that person who cares for them.

## Sleep habits affect teens, grades

by: KENIA HERRERA, GEORGINA VALDES and IRIS MENESES

Getting a good night's sleep can be a difficult task, especially for students. As the school year has gotten underway, sleep schedules have become even more unpredictable. A sporadic sleep schedule can have catastrophic effects on students' performance in school. Fortunately, there are a variety of solutions for troubled sleepers.

In recent years, people have looked to pre-

scription medication to help them fall asleep. However, there are natural ways to do the same thing. Jennifer Averyt, a local sleep therapist, states, "One of the treatments that I offer is called cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia and it's a type of therapy that helps people with insomnia. It doesn't involve medication and therapy takes about six or seven sessions and it helps people change their night time sleep routine so that they are able to get better quality sleep." In the case of students, lack of sleep is often associated with their mobile phones.

Averyt explains that natural sleep rhythms are affected by the light in electronics.

"There is a particular type of light, you'll sometimes see it referred to as blue light, and it's emitted by certain electronics devices and that is basically seen by a part of our brain that tells our body when it's time to be awake and when it's time to be asleep. That part of the brain is very sensitive to that light and, although it's not sunlight, it's a similar type of light that makes your brain think that it's daytime and it's time to be awake." In other words, reducing ex-



posure to technology before going to sleep could create a healthier sleep schedule. Averyt also suggests that reducing daily behaviors like napping or drinking too much caffeine can improve

sleep.

Dr. Don Townsend, a specialist in insomnia research, has found that the leading cause of insomnia is

see SLEEP on PAGE 8

# CENTER

## Alhambra's RECONDO team showcases skills at Flagstaff competition

by: **ANTONIA MEDINA, VI-ANNEY MENA, and XAVIER SMITH**

Over the weekend of September 20th-22nd, Alhambra JROTC's RECONDO team participated in the 2019 Varsity RECONDO Competition in Flagstaff, AZ. During this three-day event, the cadets pushed themselves to their physical limits as they showcased their skills and determination.

Competition day began early in the morning. The team awoke at 5:00 a.m. to the frigid cold and huddled around the fire. They broke away from the warmth to start their warm-ups which consisted of a few stretches. The team

needed these for their first activity, Endurance. Each cadet wore a backpack with sandbags varying in weight, and they did squats and push-ups. As soon as they finished with the push-ups, they picked up ammo tanks and stretchers to carry along a half-mile trail through the woods. Despite encountering many obstacles and exhaustion, the team soldiered on and worked together to complete the challenge with an outstanding time of 18 minutes.

The second activity, Recovery and First Aid, began at 8:15 a.m. One cadet was randomly assigned to be the victim and the team had to address the chosen cadet's wound as quickly as they could

and carry the victim on a stretcher from one point to another. The team successfully finished its mission within an impressive two minutes and two seconds.

Next, the group headed back to camp to rest up before the next activity, Leadership Reaction Course (LRC). The LRC puts problem-solving skills to the test when the team is given a mission that has to be completed in 35 minutes. In this case, they were faced with a hypothetical scenario in which they had to take medical supplies to the other side of the gorge in order to help sick civilians. They were given planks of wood and concrete blocks to aid them in making a bridge to cross the gorge. Alhambra's

team had the idea of connecting the wood with their belts for additional stability in crossing. After trial and error, the team successfully crossed the gorge along with the medical supplies.

The fourth activity was the Land Navigation Challenge. The team was split up into five pairs and were given a map and a compass. They put their orienteering skills and stamina to the test as they collected two targets and raced to have the whole team back at the starting point within 45 minutes.

The final activity of the competition, the Rope Bridge Challenge, was the most anticipated, and the team prepared nonstop. The objective of the challenge

was to connect a rope from one tree to another, separated by a ditch. The team had to get across and take medical supplies as well as gallons of water and other materials needed for survival. The cadets crossed to the other side by using carabiners (clips that attach an object to a rope) and pulled on the rope to be able to move. They successfully crossed the ditch with all of the supplies in an astonishing nine minutes and two seconds.

Throughout the trip, the cadets persevered regardless of any daunting obstacles in their way. There is no doubt that this team will continue to push beyond their limits and thrive in the face of future challenges.



Cadet Nathaniel Ford gets his face painted and prepares for the challenges that lie ahead. The competition consisted of five challenges that test the cadets' skills, knowledge, teamwork, strength, and stamina.

(RIGHT) Cadet Aboutalif Abdoulaye instructs the other cadets to dump their bags for a materials check and ensures they packed everything that was required. Cadet Abdoulaye spoke with authority as he gave commands to the other cadets, but also made a few jokes to lighten the mood.



James Lian, Frankie Banderra, Aboutalif Abdoulaye, Nathaniel Ford, Fernando Gonzalez, Brent Allen, and Giselle Gonzalez march toward their first activity while holding the guidon. The endurance run demonstrates how the team relies on one another and works together in order to finish the challenge.



Commander Frankie Banderra and Cadet Ashley Sandoval finish a run that has prepared them for the competition. This run consists of many steep hills and was challenging, but the cadets kept each other motivated throughout.

# SPREAD



Cadets James Lian, Fernando Gonzalez, Yuredia Lopez, Devyn Ford, and Brent Allen work together to get the stretcher containing backpacks with sandbags through the woods as part of the Endurance task. The Endurance activity tests cadets' physical strength as they face obstacles during a ½ mile run through the woods.



Frankie Banderra shakes the hand of a JROTC instructor as she accepts the award for her team. The team won first place in the Rope Bridge Competition with a time of 9 minutes and 2 seconds.



Cadets Jonathan Palomino, Juan Ramirez, Brent Allen, Nathaniel Ford, Aboutalif Abdoulaye, Julian Moreno, Devyn Ford, Fernando Gonzalez, Marvin Sanchez, James Lian, Ashley Sandoval, Estephanya Haros, Pam Marrufo, Giselle Gonzalez, Yuredia Lopez, Frankie Banderra, and Colonel MacDonald pose for the last picture of the weekend. The group enjoyed the obstacles, hard work, and laughter that came along with the competition.



Moments before the teams take off into the woods to find their targets, they discuss strategy. The Land Navigation Challenge tests the cadets' orienteering skills along with their stamina.



Pam Marrufo crosses the rope bridge as the rest of her teammates, Devyn Ford, Aboutalif Abdoulaye, James Lian, and Marvin Sanchez hastily follow behind her. The Rope Bridge activity is one of the many challenges the team prepared for vigorously.



Cadets Estephanya Haros, Yuredia Lopez, Fernando Gonzalez, Devyn Ford, Julian Moreno, Frankie Banderra, James Lian, Aboutalif Abdoulaye, Ashley Sandoval, Marvin Sanchez, Nathaniel Ford, Brent Allen, Jonathan Palomino, Giselle Gonzalez, Juan Ramirez, Pam Marrufo, and Colonel MacDonald smile proudly as they show off the trophies they earned through their hard work and training. The team practiced extensively to prepare for the competition and are happy with their rankings.



Cadets Nathaniel Ford, Fernando Gonzalez, Devyn Ford, and James Lian carry Cadet Aboutalif Abdoulaye on a stretcher. Cadet Abdoulaye was assigned the role of the victim in the First Aid and Recovery activity.

# FEATURES

## Step into the sandbox: Minecraft reemerges as gaming favorite

by: XAVIER SMITH and GEORGINA VALDES

The theme of 2019 seems to be what was old is new again. Forgotten trends have resurfaced and replaced current and mainstream interests. Minecraft, a game that has existed for nearly 10 years, fell out of favor with gamers for several years, but has recently made its way back into the spotlight. Created by Markus Persson, Stephen McManus, and Jens Bergensten, Minecraft is a gaming program that enables players to build their own world in an infinite space that includes animals and plants and allows gamers to interact with each

other.

Recently, Minecraft has been another diamond in the gaming crown, sparking the interests of gaming veterans and those new to the program. “There’s so much to do,” says Isaiah Aguilera, a student and video game enthusiast, “like player versus player, just playing with your friends, having battles, racing or build anything you can possibly imagine. What also keeps me into it is that there is always updates.

Osvaldo Vazquez, a self-proclaimed gamer states, “I’ve kept my interest because the game is genuinely good and interesting. There is no end to Minecraft. It’s an infinite

sandbox that can be explored and created throughout the player’s imagination. Mostly the internet hyping it up all of a sudden gave me an urge to play it again. I regretted not playing it for two years.”

The player vs. player feature and ability to play with friends is not unique to Minecraft. What has signaled a renewed interest in the game is the boundless world where gamers can create and interact. Minecraft was created so people could build anything they want and explore the world without stopping. There is no doubt that this game will continue to grow (and mine) its way into gamers’ hearts.

## Fast fashion cause of environmental damage

by: ANTONIA MEDINA and KENIA HERRERA

The fashion industry has a disastrous impact on the environment, and the damage is increasing as the industry continues to grow. In fact, the fashion industry is one of the largest sources of pollution in the world.

The term fast fashion refers to cheaply and rapidly produced clothing, designed to bring the latest trends to the public as quickly as possible. This practice not only drains non-renewable resources and energy, but also releases harmful substances into the environment.

The majority of inexpensive clothing being mass produced is low quality and made from cheap



materials. Synthetic fibers are often favored by the fast fashion industry because they are far less expensive to produce than natural fibers. Nylon, polyester, and

acrylic are plastics made from petroleum which take years to decompose. Even the simple act of washing

see FAST on PAGE 8

## Behind the scenes of the audition process

by: XAVIER SMITH

Alhambra’s performing arts department provides many opportunities throughout the year for students to explore their creative passions. The fall play and spring musical are two of these opportunities; unfortunately, many people neglect to try out because they are nervous or scared. Auditioning for a play or musical may appear to be an intimidating process, but in reality, anyone can do it. When auditioning, have a clear and flexible mindset to prepare yourself for improvisation. During an audition the director will give you a scenario—usually based on or influenced by the plot of the play—and it is up to you to interpret it by acting it out. In improv, there are very few limits so take advantage of that. Finding a certain emotion to move to the plot along is a great technique. Depending on the plot, sometimes it is good to find two or more emotions to convey. After all, in the three to five minutes you are given, you want to focus on making the time you have as meaningful as possible.

The director will test your ability to focus on one task—the scene! The director will instruct you to stand still while he or she walks around you and the other actors on stage. Do not move! He or she will try to distract you by waving a hand in front of you or talking to you. Being in a stable position will help you narrow your focus mentally. Plant yourself firmly on two feet, focusing on a fixed object in the room. The director will also try to distract you while you hold a conversation with another person. Focus on the person’s words, not other people’s

movements.

The last trial you have you undergo is memorization. In a play, it is inevitable for actors to have lines, even if they only have a few. The director will give you lines audibly, usually sentence by sentence, to remember. Most likely, you will be given an excerpt from a Shakespearean tragedy or something similar. A key memorization trick is to connect the words with some sort of movement. For example, if a line relates to the winter or the cold, you can rub your arms to signify warming up.

When auditioning for a musical, have a song prepared ahead of time. Directors frequently expect you to sing a piece of music from another musical. Try to look for a song from a musical that is not currently popular. This ensures that you are not singing something the director has heard over and over. When selecting an audition song, make sure it is in your vocal range. A musical theater song is meant to be performed, so give it your all: movement, facial expressions, emotion, even dance! These tips will help your performance be more unique and special than others who are auditioning. The most important part of an audition is to be confident. Even if you bomb the entire thing, keep your head high. The director does not only need good actors, but bold, courageous people. If you get a part that is considered small or insignificant, remember that your part matters just as much as everyone else’s. If you don’t get cast, keeping hanging out and be a techie. The more commitment and persistence, the more you build not only a way onto the cast list, but a dedicated reputation.

# FEATURES

## New coaches bring renewed energy to spiritline

by: KYLA BARRAGAN

As the end of the 2018-2019 school year approached, Mrs. Pitts and Ms. Torres became the new coaches of the Alhambra Spiritline, and the changes they've made to the program so far have paid off. The team is working hard at practice, performing at school events like the freshman welcome assembly and open house, and running through the halls raising the school's spirit. With an opportunity for a fresh start, the team's goals are to perform even more daring stunts and to

compete in the spring.

Coach Pitts, Alhambra's nursing teacher, and Coach Torres, a former Fairfax cheerleader, have improved the team's unity and spirit since coming on board. Senior Eddy Beceril, the varsity spiritline co-captain, feels like the team is closer to each other and the coaches this year. There is a sense of acceptance, and the athletes are able to speak freely to the coaches and bring up issues they have.

In previous years, the Alhambra Spiritline focused mostly on cheering, but the new coaches want

the cheerleaders to prove that they are more than just a spiritline who chants. The team has also improved its techniques. At the first varsity home game of the season, they performed multiple stunts between quarters and a new routine during halftime. Despite a rough start at the beginning, they were able to show their newly acquired skills and crazy spirit during the rest of the game.

Come out and show support for spiritline as they perform at homecoming this Friday. They are very excited to pop off this season!

## Studying abroad: Is it a possibility for you?

by: YANNI RODRIGUEZ and NGA TRAN

There are many factors to consider when pursuing a study abroad program. Financial considerations like the amount of money needed to pay for tuition, housing, food, and supplies are frequently overwhelming. Taking care of these essentials can be difficult, and not every person who wants to study abroad can easily afford it. Finding a scholarship to finance a study abroad program is an important step in making the dream a reality. Meet with your counselor and ask them about study abroad programs and ways to pay for them. Research programs that look interesting and also consider summer programs. They tend to cost less money and require a smaller time commitment.



Khanh Giang Nguyen, a business major at Grand Canyon University, encountered struggles when she first came to the United States to study abroad. She says that it was uncomfortable living with another family at first. She likes her host family, but their way of life is different from her family in Vietnam. Of course, learning about other customs is one of the main reasons to study abroad.

Nguyen also notes that the language barrier has been a challenge. She has found it difficult to adjust to English being spoken and printed everywhere.

In spite of some of these challenges, studying abroad presents many new opportunities. "GCU is a pretty good school. It is private and it is a safe environment for me. They gave

see STUDY on PAGE 8

## Now playing: The Goldfinch

by: REGAN CAIN

A devastating explosion occurs at a museum, shaping a little boy's life for good. He loses so much in one day that, even as an adult, he is unable to escape what happened. This story unfolds over the course of 149 minutes in a movie called "The Goldfinch."

The film "The Goldfinch," is based on the book of the same name by Donna Tartt. If you're into dramatic and complicated movies then this is perfect for you. The main characters, Theodore Decker (Ansel Elgort) and Pippa (Ashleigh Cummings), are involved in a sub-plot of their own that builds throughout the movie, but both share the same tragic event at the museum involving Theo's mother and Pippa's uncle.

When a bomb detonates in a New York museum, Theo and Pippa are immediately confronted with loss. Theo's mother dies and Theo is knocked unconscious temporarily. When he awakens, he sees Pippa's uncle Welty (Robert Joy) close to death.

With his last breath, Welty tells Theo to take a ring to his partner, Hobie (Jeffrey Wright). He also instructs Theo to take the museum's prized Goldfinch painting. Theo runs home and waits for his mother to return, but she never does. As Theo struggles with her death, he clings to the painting as a reminder of his mother and what he has lost.

A large part of Theo's journey involves his friendship with Boris (Finn Wolfhard). Theo and Boris support each other, and Boris' primary objective is to protect Theo and keep him safe. At one point, Boris takes the Goldfinch painting and replaces it with a book so there is nothing to trace Theo back to the day of the explosion and the theft of the painting.

Despite all the plot twists, "The Goldfinch" is not worth the two-and-a-half hours you will spend watching it. There are far too many sub-plots happening at once, and the movie drags in places. It may be good for a single viewing, but this is likely not a film you will watch again and again.



Ansel Elgort stars as Theo Decker, who continues to be haunted by the death of his mother when he was 13. Nicole Kidman plays Mrs. Barbour who takes in Theo and serves as a mother figure for him.

# FEATURES

## Tech terms and conditions are critical for safety

by: **PAULINA VALDES and YANNI RODRIGUEZ**

Every year there are numerous technological advances. They can be overwhelming, and it becomes difficult to keep up with the new devices and apps that are released. With these new devices and updates comes a lot of fine print. Most users hit agree without reading the pages of information provided. This can have negative and potentially dangerous effects on users' experiences.

One thing consumers do not realize is that some devices are set on a constant recording setting. This means that even while a phone or other device is turned off, it is still recording audio. Many are not aware that when accepting terms and conditions for certain apps, they are also allowing companies to access their pictures, camera, microphone, SMS conversations, contact information, passwords, etc.

Another concern is the more common feature of fingerprint and facial recognition. These can be modified by a hacker in order to access all of the us-

er's information. As convenient as these features are, they are also an invitation for identity theft to occur more frequently. Statistics show that in 2018, there were 1.4 million fraud reports. Some of these reports dealt with Biometric ID Theft which uses the physical and behavioral features that many devices utilize as a security feature.

Apart from the risk of identity theft, technology also gives users access to potentially harmful social media platforms. Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other platforms can put users at risk of information being leaked. In most of these apps, there is also the option of sharing an individual's location. This is a potential danger since every 40 seconds a child in the United States goes missing. Having this feature gives kidnappers an easy way to track their targets. Although most apps have the option to turn this feature off, how can one be sure that it really is?

Officer Huddleston, the SRO here at Alhambra, helped shed some light on this topic. "We do every-

thing with our phones. A cell phone is a part of us... It really becomes attached to us because we do everything on it. We do banking, we browse social media, we schedule appointments, [record] our reminders, [track] our workouts... we do everything on our cell phones. [They] know more about us than some people do because it tracks every aspect of our lives, both personally and professionally... So, when you accept those terms without reading it, you give companies and the people who run these apps access to all that information, [which] allows them to grab it, take it, and share it anyway they want," says Huddleston. What one may think of as personal information is never truly secure; it is always at risk of ending up in the wrong hands.

Reading terms and conditions may seem like a waste of time. However, when it comes to safety and security, taking extra precautions is crucial. One should consider this when disregarding any of the given information in an app because the outcome may be destructive.

## SLEEP

stress. The best way to cure insomnia, according to Dr. Townsend, is to use problem solving and relaxation techniques. One common remedy is to take a deep breath in for six seconds, hold it for seven seconds, and exhale for eight seconds. This kind of rhythmic breathing can quiet the mind and help lull the body to sleep. If techniques like this one prove

ineffective, it is always helpful to seek the help of a doctor or sleep therapist.

Teens' sleep habits are influenced by what they do in a daily basis. By taking a few basic steps to eliminate harmful environmental and physical stimulants, both teens and adults alike increase their chances of sleeping soundly.

## FAST

synthetic clothing is harmful. A single synthetic garment can release more than 1900 micro plastic fibers in one washing machine cycle. These chemicals are dumped into streams and rivers, thereby polluting the nearby clean water and seeping into the healthy soil. The contaminates are not only chemical, but physical as well. Three-fourths of the clothing manufactured ends up in landfills. Even clothing that is not thrown away is still difficult to repurpose and recycle. Synthetic fibers fall apart more easily and do not stand the test

of time like quality natural materials. Sorters at resale stores worldwide note that inexpensive clothing that is donated is harder to sell because it is in poor condition when it arrives.

Many fashion brands are committing to ethical standards of clothing production. Conscious consumers are also taking steps to prevent the spread of this toxic practice. Everyone's decisions count, and if you decide to avoid buying this type of clothing, the market for it will be weakened.

## STUDY

a lot of scholarships, and it helps me a lot... the benefits I've had by studying abroad is adapting to new cultures and gaining better knowledge. Also, coming to a country with a wide diversity makes it much easier," says Nguyen.

There will always

be pros and cons to studying abroad, but that should not be a barrier to giving it a try. If there is a country you have always wanted to visit, why not explore the option of earning high school or college credit in the process.

### The Alhambra Scimitar

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**Editorial Policy:** All editorials will reflect the majority of the editors' opinions and will be written by an editor.

**Ethics Policy:** All stories are accurate to the reporter's best ability and the information in the story must be able to be documented. We vow to do no harm nor print

obscene or vulgar media of any kind. The source's name can be withheld upon request. Everything is written for the reader. We are the voice and public forum for all Alhambra students and strive to represent all students regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, and ability.

**Letters to the Editor and Guest Submission Policy:** All letters to the editor must not exceed 200 words.

They may be handwritten or typed. All letters can be submitted by either e-mail, via Ms. Walsh's mailbox, or delivered to room 4018. All guest submissions must be submitted electronically. All submissions must include the author's name, grade and English teacher. All letters and guest submissions that are to be printed will be edited for clarity and length.