



The High School View

The High School View is staffed and prepared entirely by students from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, and published on their behalf by The Martha's Vineyard Times, with the generous assistance of the sponsors whose names appear below.

For young activists, the time is NOW

BY JULIA SAYRE AND LILA MIKOS

The National Organization for Women (NOW) Club is an exciting new opportunity at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) this fall.

Led by juniors (and twin sisters) El and Wren Christy, the club is inspired by the larger national organization, serving to empower women and promote positive change.

Women's studies teacher Corinne Kurtz, who is advising the club, said, "I was so excited when Wren and El got in touch with me at the very beginning of the year via email. I just thought it was so interesting that they didn't want to just start any club, they wanted to specifically start a chapter of



History teacher Corinne Kurtz speaks with members of the NOW club.

HARDY EVILLE

NOW at the high school."

Wren feels that the establishment of the club will create an inviting space to discuss and learn within the school community. "I feel like [women's rights and empowerment] are great things to educate young women on at

MVRHS, and also to have a place to talk about these issues and to feel comfortable with other women who are the same age is important," she said.

NOW was established in Washington, D.C., in 1966. "They have a lot of causes,

but their focus is typically enacting legislation. It's the political piece that they do," Ms. Kurtz said.

"More and more young women and men are getting more involved in general," she added. "The Black Lives Matter movement I think

did a lot for the school. Suddenly, people were getting involved, and I am seeing an uptick. There are more clubs specially devoted to some of these issues, like NOW and the Women of Color Club."

Sophomore Violet MacPhail joined NOW to further her knowledge about women's rights and to act on the issues women are currently facing. "I've always been passionate about women's rights and equality, and I think that getting together with other like-minded people is a really great way to make a difference," she said.

Violet wants to work on bringing awareness not only to national issues, but also to those that are international. "In Southeast Asia, young girls are being traded into sex slavery," she said, "and I feel like the USA doesn't touch on that in our school system, and that's not right. We should know more

about that, and try to fight for these girls who are getting taken advantage of, even though they're halfway across the globe."

The club is already focusing efforts on specific projects: "We're interested in doing letter-writing campaigns to pass certain bills," Wren said, "like the I AM (Increasing Access to Menstrual products) bill. We also hope to participate in women's and gay pride marches."

Ms. Kurtz believes that establishing an organization like NOW is crucial for students to create and understand social change.

"I think it's really important that students get the message that things do change. It's glacial, at times, and it sometimes seems like it goes backwards," she said. "But progress can be made. And it's only going to be made when people actively do it. So it's important that more generations get involved." **HSV**

Civics course fuels collaboration and engagement

BY HARDY EVILLE

This year, the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) is home to a brand-new "Civics and Current Issues" course, required for all seniors. The course is a collaborative effort between nine teachers, most of whom are from the history department, and uses the traditional classroom setting, in addition to large, all-grade lectures in the Performing Arts Center (PAC), to educate and inspire students.

"With how much politics is influencing our lives, understanding how to be an active participant in whatever community you are in is important," said history and civics teacher Lauren Goethals. "I think talking about these issues helps younger people to get involved."

Ms. Goethals feels the new class has brought about opportunities for collaboration among teachers. In the course, each teacher is in charge of one six-week unit on a topic of their choice. That teacher takes the lead during their unit, providing a framework for each day onto which other teachers can add.

History department chair and civics teacher Olsen Houghton agrees that creating a curriculum with eight other teachers is an exciting challenge. "A lot of us teachers like to have a bare-bones skeleton of what should happen and what the topic is," he said, "but then you get to put your own personal flair to it."

For many students, this curricular freedom is apparent. "Because it's not really a typical history class,

.....
"With how much politics is influencing our lives, understanding how to be an active participant in whatever community you are in is important."
 - Lauren Goethals

teachers have more wiggle room to be personal with their students, and have their own opinions with us," said Ava Vought, who especially enjoys the course's focus on

current events. "Every time a teacher asks [at the end of a course], 'What could I have done in this class to make you more interested?' I always put down, 'Current events,'" she said.

Each quarter the civics course undergoes a shuffle. On the first day of the second quarter, students will switch teachers, and classes will be made up of a different group of students.

Ingrid Moore is both excited and apprehensive about this switch. "It will be nice to switch teachers. That will be beneficial, I think, because it will almost be a different class," she said. Ingrid has also appreciated how the class is heterogeneously grouped, which means all students are working together as opposed to being on different

academic tracks. "There's a ton of people who I've never been in class with," Ingrid said, "some who I didn't even know were seniors, because our paths had never crossed."

Mr. Houghton has also appreciated that aspect of the class. "It's great to have people with mixed abilities, because everyone has an opinion; some just do better with the academic part," he said. "But there isn't really any academic weight on this. It's not hard to do well."

The only grades in the class are for participation and a project grade at the end of each topic. For the first topic, climate change, students had to write a short essay on how climate change will impact humanity.

The unique part of the new civics course has been the guest speakers who have been brought in to address the senior class in the PAC. Mr. Houghton, the

lead teacher for the climate change unit that just ended, brought in his father, Dr. Richard Houghton, from the Woodwell Climate Research Center, Dr. Marcia Macedo, also from the Woodwell Center, and a former student, Ben Gubits, a representative for the organization Protect Our Winters.

"It's good to see these people who have a profession in the topic we're learning about, so if you decide to go into that field, you can see what you can do with your passion," said Ingrid Moore.

For Mr. Houghton, that sort of student reaction is what he hopes the course can continue to inspire. "If I get one or two kids [who engage] from every presentation, it's a sort of magic which can't be artificial, it has to be authentic," he said. "We are doing the right thing, and now we can only improve it." **HSV**

EDITORS IN CHIEF: Hardy Eville ('22), Sara Creato ('22) • ASSISTANT EDITORS: Julia Sayre ('23), Theo Fairchild-Coppoletti ('22) • PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR: Parker Bradlee ('24)
 ART EDITOR: Madeleine Bengtsson ('23) • MASTHEAD ART: Madeleine Bengtsson ('23) • FACULTY ADVISERS: Kate Hennigan, Rachel Schubert

The High School View IS BACK!

Show YOUR support

Ads start at just \$50 per issue or contract rates available for the school year

email adsales@mvtimes.com | **MVTimes**



MVBank.com
 Member FDIC | Member DIF

