

Get Fired Up About Get Lit at Alhambra High School

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The Little Theater was filled with the sound of snapping as dozens of students ranging from ninth to twelfth grade recited poems for a panel of judges in the annual Get Lit Poetry Slam.

“It all started back in college during a Spanish poetry class. We had to memorize poetry and I knew I wanted to do the same as a teacher. I found Get Lit on Google because my students wanted to [compete with their poems] and the rest is history. Mrs. Burkhart encouraged other teachers, Mrs. Hamilton, Ms. Keenan, Ms. Naylor, and Ms. Christian [to name a few], to implement the Get Lit competition in their classes,” Alhambra Moors Poet Society (AMPS) co-advisor Joshua Moreno said.

English teachers across campus gave their students the assignment of picking a classic poem, listed on the official Get Lit website. After this, students were to write a personal response poem.

“It was admirable and exciting [to watch the students recite their poems. I was] speechless. I love how honest poetry can be,” AMPS co-

advisor Nicole Hamilton said. “Watching poetry is beneficial because you can hear the words of some-



MOOR photos by SHANNON KHA and AAQIL KHAN
Left to right: (first row) Sarah Tang, Tina Le, Sania Luna; (second row) Joseph Ney-Jun, Vivyana Prado; not pictured: Alycia Whyte all placed in the AHS AMPS poetry slam on Jan. 15. The winners will move on to the 5th Annual Get Lit Classic Slam competition on April 7.

students memorized their two poems and recited them in front of their classmates. one else that you’re too afraid to say yourself,” junior Eden Goitia said.

Individuals were chosen from each participating class to compete in the schoolwide competition on Thursday, Jan 14 and Friday, Jan 15.

“I’m inspired by [poetry’s] power. I feel with poetry, your words can carry so much more weight than they would in everyday life. To be completely honest, when I presented my poem to the class, I did not expect much out of it besides a potentially good grade. But once I was given the opportunity to share my poem with others, it was relieving to know that people can somewhat understand how the world is seen from my perspective, and taking my message to heart.” junior Paula Kirya said.

After deliberation, the judges narrowed it down to the top six poets: senior Joseph Ney-Jun, senior Sania Luna, senior Vivyana Prado, senior Tina Le, sophomore Sarah Tang and sophomore Alycia Whyte. These six students will be moving on to the Tri-City poetry competition where they will compete against poets from San Gabriel and Mark Keppel on April 7 at Mark Keppel High School.

“It was exciting to see how far they’ve come to express themselves through their poetry,” sophomore Cassandra Ledesma said.

CCRC Report Indicates Decrease in Community College Transfer Rates

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In January 2016 the Community College Research Center (CCRC) released a report that showed only 14 percent of the 720,000 degree-seeking students included in the study transferred to a four-year university within six years.

“If [students] see less people transferring, they will be less motivated to transfer themselves,” said freshman Kevin Le.

Furthermore, only 42 percent of those students who transferred actually got a bachelor’s degree, compared to the 60 percent of students who attended a four-year college right after they graduated from high school.

“[Decreasing transfer rates] kind of makes me debate whether or not I should apply to a community college. If the transfer rate is decreasing I think I would apply for a four year

college instead of [attending] community college,” junior Dylan Trinh said.

Moreover, a study conducted by James Rosenbaum, a Professor of sociology, education and social policy, found that 44 percent of students believe high school courses are unrelated to future plans or college success. According to College Board, High school students who view their courses as unrelated to their future plans and who see community college as simply an extension of high school

are more likely to drop out of community college after a one to two semesters.

“I think students are struggling with their new classes or aren’t prepared for them so transfer rates have decreased,” junior Seiho Tengan said. Additionally, the report by the US Department of Education revealed

that lower-income students tend to have more difficulty transferring to four-year colleges than higher income peers. As a result of not having the same

amount of education as their wealthier counterparts, members of low-income families are generally less prepared for college than those who are members of high-income families.

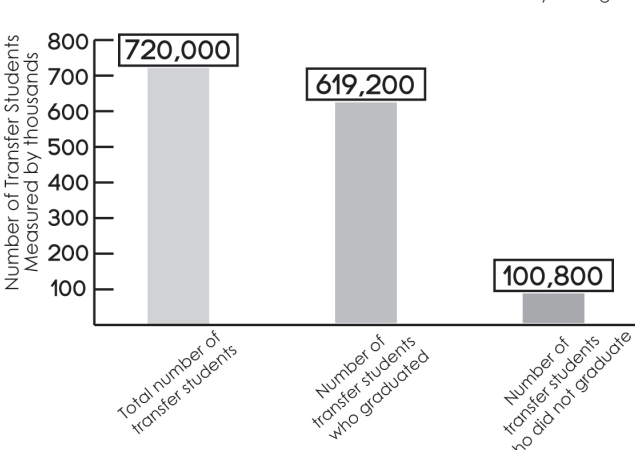
“I think transfer rates could be improved better if the 4-year colleges have better price ranges and financial aid packets,” freshman Marianna Kwok said.

In order to improve transfer rates from community colleges, new systems have been created. According to the National Center for Policy Analysis, some states have tried to increase transfer rates by developing common course numbering systems.

Common course numbering focuses on creating a system that helps advisors and students find appropriate courses using numbers to differentiate courses that are appropriate for a particular student. This system eases the process of transferring from a community college to a four year college.

MOOR graphic by LESLIE HWANG

Transfer Rate Report by CCRC



Education’s Place in Presidential Race

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Though much of the presidential debates have focused on matters such as foreign policies, economy and social movements, presidential candidates have also spoken about their different takes on how education in the U.S. should be reformed or changed.

“It’s important to see who’s running for your government and to see what their values and beliefs are so that you don’t vote for the wrong people,” junior Alyson Perez said.

In particular, candidates such as Bernie Sanders and Jeb Bush have spoken about how they would plan the nation’s education system.

According to the Washington Post, Bush desires to expand charter schools and reduce federal influence in local schools, among other plans and ideas. Other candidates such as Marco Rubio and Ben Car-

son agree with the idea to expand charter schools as an alternative to traditional schools while candidate Chris Christie desires teachers to be paid based on performance and merit instead of tenure.

According to Public Broadcasting Station, candidate Bernie Sanders plans to create a system for free preschools and free public college tuitions by increasing taxes on the wealthy. Candidate Hillary Clinton also expressed desires to expand preschools so that more children are able to attend, according to the Washington Post.

According to the Washington Post, candidates such as Donald Trump and Ted Cruz desire to eliminate the U.S. Department of Education completely, while Bush claims he would cut the department employees by half.

“I feel like a lot of authorities just throw money at a problem and expect the problem to be solved,” senior Aleida Yu said.

Minecraft: the New Game Changer in Education?

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Microsoft plans to incorporate Minecraft into education by acquiring an existing version of the software, MinecraftEdu. The company aims to bring more personalized form of teaching through technology, according to CNNMoney.

As an online video crafting game, Minecraft allows players to create their own virtual worlds. Microsoft considers that the game has great potential to become a learning tool because of its popularity and versatility, according to Vu Bui, CEO of Minecraft developer Mojang, in a recent interview with CNNMoney.

“As a Minecraft player, I am rather fascinated by Microsoft’s ambition,” junior Skyler Quach said. “It will take a lot of program-

ing on the original game’s algorithms in order to incorporate educational elements.”

According to CNN, many people feared that the game will cause antisocial behavior among kids, but Rafranz Davis, a teacher and technology planning administrator in Texas who tested out the MinecraftEdu, claims the game is great for group projects because it involves activities that require teamwork and cooperation among students

“Hopefully [MinecraftEdu] can make our learning experience more fun and enjoyable,” sophomore Aaron Kuo said, “although I have not played Minecraft, I am looking forward to the launch of the software and its impact on our school.”

The company intends to launch the game in the summer of 2016 and also announced the beta launch of several educational software such as Office and OneNote along with Minecraft on its home page.