

January & February VILLAGER VIEW

"Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!" Luke 1:45

STATE CHAMPS!

For the second year in a row, the OLMA Swim team has won the Cape-Atlantic League American Division, and this was definitely a season to remember. The Villagers' regular season was excellent and unforgettable, going 6-0 with four conference wins and two big out-of-conference wins against Cherry Hill East and Camden Catholic. Senior star Scarlett McGlinchey had an impressive season. The Duke commit got 1st place in 17 of her 18 races, capturing 1st four times in the 100 fly, and was named the Swimmer of the Meet at the CAL Championship. Another swimmer who is no stranger to winning is junior Gia DiLeonardo, who got 1st place in 14 of her 23 races and excelled in the 100 Free, placing 1st four times. Two sophomores who stood out this year are Nora Sandy and Gianna Cook. Both swimmers placed 1st in 13 of their 24 races. Simone McGlinchey and Rhiannon Stanker both had incredible rookie seasons, with McGlinchey claiming 24 1st-place wins out of 25 races and Rhiannon Stanker winning 14 of her 24 races. Simone claimed 1st six times in the 100 backstroke while Rhiannon placed 1st four times in the 100 breaststroke and four times in the 500 freestyle. OLMA also did exceptionally well in the 200 medley relay with Simone McGlinchey, Scarlett McGlinchey, Gianna Cook, and Gia DiLeonardo getting first in all of their races throughout the regular season.

The Villagers started the postseason off in a big way, winning the Division A SIISA Invitational for the first time in school history. Additionally, they won the Cape Atlantic League and Gloucester County Championship, and senior Scarlett McGlinchey was selected as Swimmer of the Meet for the second consecutive season. Going into the NJSIAA Non-Public South Tournament, the Villagers were seeded #1 and heavily favored to win the championship, and they did not disappoint. Defeating Bishop Eustace 108-62 in the semifinals, the Villagers had a good chance at taking home the championship. So they did, defeating #2 seed Trinity Hall 96-74 to capture their second NJSIAA S.J Non-Public South Championship in three years.

On Sunday, February 23, for the second time in school history, the OLMA Villagers won the NJ state championship. They took down the #1 team in the state, Immaculate Heart, 102-68. The Villagers are now ranked #1 in the state of New Jersey. Congratulations to the OLMA Swim team on this incredible accomplishment and a great season!

Amelia Voronov '27



VILLAGER VIEW

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

This year's Catholic Schools Week was beyond exciting! It was focused on our theme of "United in Faith and Community." This theme embraced the unique opportunity of Catholic education, where faith, learning, and sisterhood came together to shape a compassionate community. Father Murray encouraged us during our Catholic Schools Week Mass to not take the beauty of Catholic education for granted while emphasizing how important it is to have the presence of faith in our lives.



Students pictured with Priscilla Frederick Loomis after her assembly



Catholic Schools Week Mass

Festivities to celebrate the week included taking extra time to appreciate our staff, faculty, and students. On Monday, for Teacher Appreciation Day, we gifted the staff with mason jars full of heartfelt notes written by the students to show our gratitude. Then, on Friday, for Student Appreciation Day, our students enjoyed a complimentary breakfast and a showing of the beloved movie *The Lorax*. The week before, we also welcomed a brilliant guest speaker, Priscilla Loomis, who gave a fierce and motivating speech. Priscilla is a three-time Hall of Fame inductee, two-time Female Athlete of the Year recipient, and a World Record holder, attending the Olympic Games twice. Alongside being an Olympian, she is a successful businesswoman and entrepreneur who has started two businesses. Priscilla came in to talk to the students about the struggles she's overcome and how the Catholic school experience has shaped her into the inspiring woman she is today. We heard about her adventures as an Olympian and how big of a role faith played in her journey to success. After Priscilla's presentation, our students had the chance to talk to her one-on-one and ask any questions they had. She truly embodied the four pillars of OLMA, representing every strong characteristic a young woman should have.

Catholic Schools Week was enjoyable as always, reminding us of our blessings. It is important to be grateful for the wonderful opportunities we receive from our amazing education. We hope you enjoyed the celebration!

Juliet Felicetti '28 & Theresa Thomas '28



VILLAGER VIEW

LEGALLY BLONDE

Legally Blonde (a movie turned musical) is about Elle Woods, a sorority girl with a big personality. Elle's life is unexpectedly turned upside down when her boyfriend, Warner, breaks up with her because he is looking for someone "more serious." Determined to win him back, Elle decides to follow Warner to Harvard Law School, surprising everyone when she gets in and also surprising herself as she begins to unlock her potential and talent. After years of hard work and determination, Elle finds success and realizes she is more than a dumb blonde. *Legally Blonde* sends a powerful message about confidence and breaking through stereotypes to discover your true self and where you belong.

Let's ask the director, Mrs. Ciampo!

We asked: Why did you choose *Legally Blonde* as this year's musical?

Mrs. Ciampo answered: "I chose *Legally Blonde* as the musical because of the show's themes of sisterhood, resilience, and empowerment- especially for women- reflect the OLMA community. The show seemed like the perfect way to celebrate and uplift the community that I am so grateful to be a part of."

We asked: What is your favorite song from *Legally Blonde*? Why is this your favorite song?

Mrs. Ciampo answered: "It is so hard to choose, but I think my favorite song is 'Ireland,' sung by Paulette (MJ Howard). This moment of vulnerability in the show highlights the character's desire for a better life and underscores her emotional growth and eventual empowerment. It gives me chills every time, and I believe it will truly touch the audience."

We asked: What are you most excited about seeing on stage once the musical is complete?

Mrs. Ciampo answered: "A musical is a beautiful fusion of so many elements, including vocals, choreography, blocking, sets, costumes, props, live music, and lighting. It is a collaborative effort involving the creative team, cast, stage crew, and many others, all working together to bring their skills and talents to life. The final production is truly a labor of love, with countless hours spent in preparation. Watching it all come together is magical, and seeing the students' growth is incredibly rewarding. I cannot wait to cheer them on as they take their much-deserved bows."



CAST LIST

Elle Woods.....	Adriana Verrico
Emmett Forrest.....	Michael Sherron
Warner Huntington III.....	Joseph Coco
Vivienne Kensington.....	Olivia Robinson
Professor Callahan.....	Francis Natale
Paulette Buonofonte.....	Meagan Howard
Brooke Wyndham.....	Christianna Figurelli
Kyle B. O'Boyle.....	William Dukich
Enid Hoops.....	Marissa Monzo
Serena.....	Kaitlynn Kirk
Margot.....	Mia Mauriello
Pilar.....	Abigail Bryson
Elle's dad/Winthrop.....	Puri Garzone
Elle's mom.....	Camila Andeliz-Bello
Store Manager.....	Syerra-Lynn Mills
Judge.....	Madison Bullock

VILLAGER VIEW

MONTHLY SPECIALS

L.A. FIRES

Over the past few months, Los Angeles has faced a series of devastating wildfires that have impacted thousands of residents and their homes. These fires have spread across dry terrain, fueled by unusually hot weather and high winds. While fires are common in California, the frequency and intensity of these recent blazes have been alarming. Many of the fires have forced people to evacuate their homes and seek shelter in safer areas as the flames rapidly take over acres of land, leaving destruction in their wake. The smoke has also caused air quality to decrease rapidly, affecting the health of many people across the city and state.

The causes of these fires are complex, but experts believe that climate change is playing a big role. The state has been experiencing a prolonged drought, which makes the vegetation more receptive to catching fire. High temperatures combined with dry conditions are two things that, when mixed together, cause wildfire to spread quickly. Human activity, such as power lines sparking or campfires left unattended, also contributed to the start of these fires. As the world continues to warm, it seems likely that these dangerous fires will only become more frequent and intense, making it harder for firefighters to contain them.

In response to the growing threat, the local government and firefighters have been working tirelessly to control the flames and protect people and property. Firefighters from all over California and even other states have come together to overcome this, risking their lives to battle the fires. However, the damage is already widespread, and recovery will take months, if not years. This crisis shows that we need better disaster plans, stronger environmental laws, and a focus on sustainability to help prevent these dangerous fires in the future.

Natalie D'Ottavio '27

SUPER BOWL CHAMPS

Super Bowl 2025 took place on February 9, 2025. It was a highly anticipated and exciting game between the Philadelphia Eagles and the Kansas City Chiefs. This year, it was held at Caesars Superdome in New Orleans. During the pre-game festivities, Lady Gaga gave a stunning performance of her hit, "Hold My Hand," to remember those lost in the New Orleans tragedy on January 1. Grammy award-winning Jon Batiste sang a jazzy rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner" right before the game began. By the end of the first half, the Eagles had a gigantic lead, leaving the score 24-0. The Super Bowl halftime show was performed by the incredible Kendrick Lamar, featuring the beloved SZA. This performance also had cameos from Samuel L. Jackson and Serena Williams. After the first three quarters of no scoring by the Chiefs, they got a few touchdowns, putting them on the board. However, the Philadelphia Eagles were able to hold their own, leaving the final score 40-22. This is the second Super Bowl the franchise has won, and they held their championship parade on Friday, February 14. GO BIRDS!

Ava-Jo Driscoll '27 & Adriana Gomez-Pertierra '27

GRAMMYS

The Grammys took place on Sunday, February 2, at Crypto.com Arena in LA, with an impressive lineup of nominees, presenters, and performers. Some of the most famous celebrities that attended were Taylor Swift, SZA, Shaboozy, Lady Gaga, Cynthia Erivo, Ariana Grande, Billie Eilish, Phineas, and even Kanye West and Bianca Censori, who arrived at the awards ceremony uninvited. Beyonce won the Album of the Year for her album *Cowboy Carter* - a controversial topic because many people do not consider Beyonce to be a country artist due to her high-achieving legacy in the pop industry. Chappell Roan was recognized as Best New Artist, highlighting the emergence of fresh talent in the music industry. Kendrick Lamar won Record of the Year and Song of the Year for "Not Like Us". He also performed at the Super Bowl halftime show along with SZA. The 2025 Grammy's rewarded emerging and returning artists for their numerous contributions to the music industry this year.

Lily Cresci '27

VILLAGER VIEW

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

During the month of February, our OLMA community has celebrated Black History Month by serving, listening, and learning. The morning announcements included stories of influential and inspirational Black Americans and their contributions to our country. Campus Ministry led a book drive in partnership with "Root for Books," collecting diverse children's books for schools and orphanages in Africa to promote literacy and education. We also welcomed Mr. Bobby Battle, who came to speak to the school about his experience in the Civil Rights Movement.

Throughout Black History Month, we take the time to honor and recognize the contributions and achievements of Black individuals throughout history. Black History Month began as a weeklong celebration in 1926, inspired by the work of Carter G. Woodson, who founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. In 1976, President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month during the nation's bicentennial, calling on Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history." While Black History Month originated in the United States, it is also celebrated in other countries, including Canada and the United Kingdom. In the UK, Black History Month is observed in October, and it often highlights the contributions of the African diaspora across the globe. The global celebration of Black History Month also raises awareness of issues of race, equality, and social justice that resonate in different parts of the world.

One of the most important Civil Rights Activists was Martin Luther King, Jr., a pivotal figure in American history, renowned for his leadership during the Civil Rights Movement and his advocacy for racial equality through nonviolent resistance. His legacy continues to shape discussions on justice, equality, and freedom around the world. He was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. He was the son of Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr., a prominent Baptist minister, and Alberta Williams King. He attended Morehouse College, where he was influenced by his philosophy professor, Dr. Benjamin Mays, who encouraged him to pursue social justice. Later, King went on to pursue a doctorate in theology from Boston University in 1955. King's involvement in the Civil Rights Movement began with the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, which was sparked by Rosa Parks's arrest for refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a segregated bus. King was chosen as the president of the Montgomery Improvement Association, a group that organized the boycott. Under King's leadership, the boycott lasted for over a year, culminating in a Supreme Court ruling that declared segregated buses unconstitutional. This success marked the beginning of King's leadership in the larger Civil Rights Movement, and he won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, which made him the youngest recipient of the award at the time. Martin Luther King Day is on January 20 to celebrate and honor his dedication to racial equality.

Black History Month powerfully reminds us of the resilience, contributions, and ongoing struggles of Black individuals. It urges us to honor their past, celebrate their present, and continue striving for a future rooted in equality and justice for all.

Gianna Cook '27 & Rhiannon Stanker '28



VILLAGER VIEW

ART THROUGH FILM: INCEPTION

Christopher Nolan's 2010 science fiction and psychological thriller *Inception* stands as arguably one of his most ambitious works. Known for his intricate storytelling and distinctive camerawork, Nolan pursued creating a film that explored the nature of dreams and reality. Inspired by the subconscious mind, he spent nearly a decade refining the screenplay. His goal was to craft a movie that not only entertained but also challenged the audience as they watched his movie. With *Inception*, Nolan pushed the boundaries of conventional films and blended philosophical themes with his high-stakes storytelling through action to create a thought-provoking experience.

At the surface level, *Inception* is a heist film set within the realm of dreams. Leonardo DiCaprio plays Dom Cobb, a thief who specializes in entering people's minds through their dreams to steal secrets. Tasked with the seemingly impossible mission of planting an idea rather than extracting one, Cobb and his team navigate multiple layers of dreams, each more dangerous than the last. The film's purpose extends beyond examining reality by also highlighting memories, guilt, and the power of an idea. Hans Zimmer's fitting score adds to the haunting feel the audience is presented with while watching *Inception*.

One of the most debated aspects of *Inception* is its cliffhanger ending. In the final scene, Cobb is seen spinning the top used throughout the movie. The top, being a device used to distinguish reality from dreams, is never seen by the audience to fall in the final clip. The screen cuts to black. By leaving the ending open to interpretation by the audience, Nolan ensures that *Inception* lingers in the minds of viewers long after the credits roll, solidifying its legacy as one of the most intellectually stimulating films in modern cinema.

Film i-Block's Rating: 9/10

Jenna Callan '26 & Lauren King '26



WHAT DOES OLMA JOURNALISM LOVE ABOUT OUR TEACHERS?

Their willingness to help - When Mr. Spalding extends the due date - Mrs. Keating's stories and quotes - Mrs. Donovan's stories with Little Suzy - They are always there no matter what - their support and encouragement - Ms. Hop helping us when we crash out in chemistry - their kindness - How they have good relationships with students, even outside of schools - Mr. J's stories (specifically about Wii and his Army stories) - Mrs. Fortis always asking how we are doing and always being smiley - Mr. Spalding driving to Virginia to get our boats for crew on a random Wednesday

OLMA JOURNALISM'S NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

Do a handstand - Lock in at school - Stay organized - Not procrastinate - Get out of comfort zone - Stop door dashing every day - Read 10 books - Save money - Eat healthy - Be an academic weapon - Improve SAT score - Be genuine - Sleep more - Get a job - Get outside more - Drink more water - Absorb lessons to learn, not just for the grade - Be open to change - Save money - Lessen my screentime - Not be so hard on myself

VILLAGER VIEW

TEACHER FEATURE

This month for OLMA's "Teacher Feature," it was only fitting to interview Mrs. Ciampo. As a new addition to the Our Lady of Mercy Academy community, Mrs. Ciampo is already making a wonderful impact in our school. In her role as a guidance counselor, she continuously spreads positivity throughout the school with her dedication to helping students. This winter, Mrs. Ciampo is taking the stage as the director of this year's musical at OLMA, *Legally Blonde*!

Mrs. Ciampo provided great insight into what personally drew her to our wonderful school. She credits Mrs. Coyle by saying, "For me, it was Mrs. Coyle and my interview with her, and I really believe that she is such a great leader, and I loved her vision for the school. As I came to OLMA more often, I got to meet other people who worked here and the students, and I just really like the mission of the school and its environment." When asked how OLMA has changed her as a person, Mrs. Ciampo expressed how the emphasis on sisterhood throughout our school encouraged her to lift other people. Mrs. Ciampo shared her love for working with teenagers and how they brightened her day. She said, "I love that they are so willing to try new things and to learn and are hopeful for the future." Next up, the million dollar question, according to Mrs. Duke, was, "How has it been working on *Legally Blonde*?" to which Mrs. Ciampo responded by sharing how theater and dance were her "first love" and how excited she was to bring that passion to the students at OLMA. As a final bonus, we had to ask Mrs. Ciampo about her favorite musical, to which she replied without hesitation. responded with *Wicked*. Mrs. Ciampo is an amazing addition to OLMA, and the whole school is extremely grateful for what she has done and will continue to do.

Samantha Juarez '27 and Ella Cummins '27

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

"I hope my journey inspires others to pursue their passions fearlessly, embrace leadership, and create positive change—no matter their field of interest."

Adriana Verrico is a senior who has dedicated herself to academic excellence, leadership, and service. At OLMA, she is a member of the National Honor Society and successfully balances her social and academic life. Beyond her academics, she has found extracurriculars that she has a great passion for. She is the proud founder of Sisters Support, a program dedicated to providing hygienic products to four underfunded schools in her area, helping to ensure young students can get the resources they need. Along with her program, she has created an iBlock at OLMA called "Empower Her." Adriana's iBlock is designed to equip OLMA students with practical life skills, such as financial literacy, self-defense, and vehicle maintenance. However, Adriana's biggest passion is her love for theater. "I have been performing since first grade, and this year's production of *Legally Blonde* is especially meaningful as it is my final high school performance—I have the honor of playing Elle Woods. Theater has shaped me in countless ways, from building confidence to fostering creativity, and I will forever cherish the memories and friendships I've made on stage."

Next fall, Adriana plans to attend college and major in neuroscience on a pre-med track while minoring in linguistics and musical theater. Her goal is to combine her love for science and medicine by becoming a neurosurgeon. She is involved in STEM research and recently collaborated with a researcher from Columbia University to write a review paper on epigenetic changes in the prefrontal cortex due to opioid addiction, an experience that solidified her passion for neuroscience and research. "I am passionate about mental health, addiction research, and neurodevelopment, and I hope to make meaningful contributions to these fields in the future."

Adriana has truly made her mark on our school while developing confidence and a sense of purpose throughout her years at OLMA. Her hard work has resulted in many impressive accomplishments, and through that, she can inspire others around her to do the same. Her iBlock and the Sisters Support program show how impactful she has been and how much she cares about helping others. Through her work in theatre, she has been able to build strong bonds with others and create a sense of community. As she is preparing to graduate, her kindness and leadership will leave an impact on the whole school and will stick around in the years to come.

Abigail Bryson '27 & Harriet Riley '27



VILLAGER VIEW

CAMPUS MINISTRY

During January and February, Campus Ministry stayed busy. The January winter clothing drive collected coats, hats, scarves, and gloves to donate to Creative Achievement Academy. Next, for Catholic Schools Week, Campus Ministry brought back the very successful baby shower. They decorated the cafe and brought in baked treats to celebrate the goodness that the donations will bring to those in need! In February, to honor Black History Month, Campus Ministry held a book drive called "Root for Books," which encouraged people to donate new or gently used books featuring African American characters or authors. The books will be donated to children in Africa to promote literacy and inclusion. The drives presented by the Campus Ministry remind everyone to be grateful for their blessings and to always help those in need.

Audrey Loughlin '26



Campus Ministry Baby Shower



Freshman Retreat

REMINDERS

UPCOMING DATES / EVENTS

March 7th - Freshman/Sophomore Spring Fling/Career Day (12 pm dismissal: don't forget to inform your rides!)

March 10th-14th - SPRING BREAK

March 20th - Junior Ring Mass

April 14th-16th - Spirit Week!

April 16th - Sisterhood Day! (12:15 dismissal: don't forget to inform your rides!)

RETREATS

The junior class recently had a retreat where they were gifted the chance to learn about the nonprofit Habitat for Humanity. The morning started with a Mass given by Father Frank Berna from La Salle University, reminding each student that our service to others does not go unnoticed. Two speakers from the organization came in to talk about their mission of building homes for people in need. The juniors had the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about how to help make a difference. One of the coolest parts of the day was decorating the wooden studs with positive drawings and messages that will eventually be used in homes that Habitat will build. It was an amazing way to be creative and contribute to an organization, making a positive impact.

In February, the freshmen participated in a retreat to get a break from their normal routine and enjoy the activities planned for them. First, they entered the gym and started with a guided meditation to reflect and relax. Then, there were several activities, including the spaghetti and marshmallow challenge, where groups competed to see who could make the tallest tower with the given materials. They also created pinwheels, coloring them and including bible verses. The retreat allowed the students to act creatively, collaborate, and demonstrate teamwork. The freshman students built bonds and created memories to cherish forever.

Katie Capalbo '26 & Ava Monzo '28

VILLAGER VIEW

OLMA TRIVIA

1. Paulette from *Legally Blonde* was played by the fabulous sophomore _____
2. Senior _____ is heading off to Duke University next year to continue her swimming career.
3. The month of _____ celebrates Black History Month.
4. Valentine's Day is on February _____ every year.
5. Forrest Gump once stated, "My mama always said, life is like a box of _____ You never know what you're gonna get."
6. _____ is famous for his monumental work during the Civil Rights Movement.
7. The January birthstone is a deep red gem, _____
8. The zodiac sign _____ covers the period of around January 20 to February 18.
9. _____ is a famous founding father born on January 11, and a Broadway play was created about his life.
10. Superbowl 59 was held on February 9 at Caesars Superdome in the city of _____

1. Meagan Howard 2. Scarlett McGlinchey 3. February 4. 14 5. chocolates 6. Martin Luther King Jr. 7. garnet 8. Aquarius 9. Alexander Hamilton 10. New Orleans



TIKTOK BAN

TikTok, the worldwide social media app with millions of users, was banned in the United States on January 19, 2025. All across the country, people were devastated and shocked that the ban occurred. However, in twelve hours, the app was available again. Additionally, TikTok was removed from the app store for about a month.

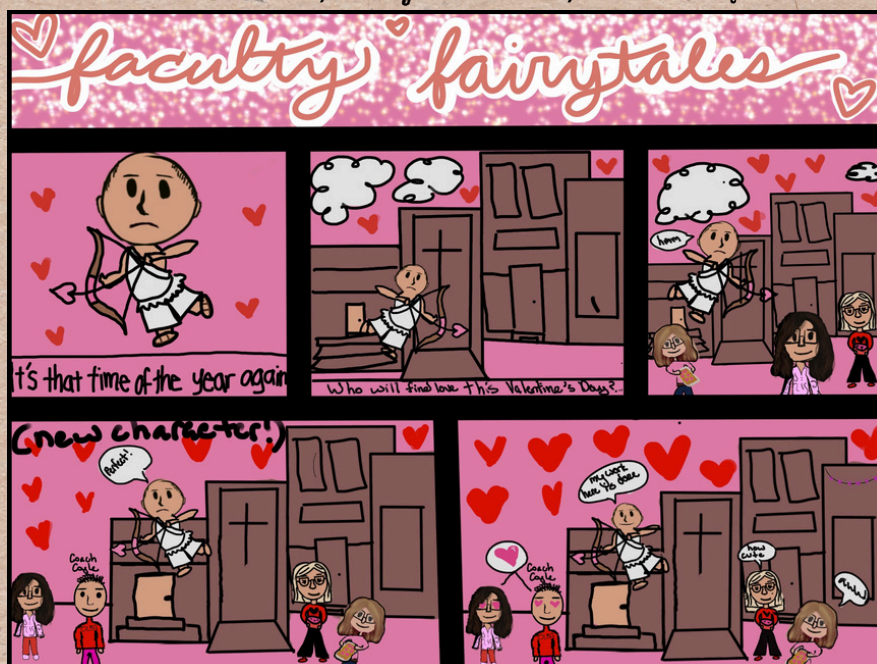
This ban occurred because the US government was worried about our national security. They were afraid that the app could gather personal information without their consent. TikTok, however, has denied these claims, saying it keeps user data safe and follows U.S. privacy laws. Since the app is from a Chinese company, the U.S. government is not able to regulate the app itself, but some states and government agencies have already banned TikTok on official devices.

Still, people are divided on the issue. Some believe a permanent ban is needed for national security, while others think it is unnecessary and a violation of our rights. Only time will tell how the government moves forward with this recurring issue.

Sophia Corridori '28 & Francesca LaGuarina '28

FACULTY FAIRYTALES

Sadie Seabrook '27, Laney Yates '27, & Isabel Quinlan '27



Edited By: Evangeline Catanese '26 & Erin McGonigle '26