

Headlight

Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community
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MHS Program Mentors Freshmen

Grace Perry
Reporter, Sophomore

Summer, a season of beautiful weather and memories, eventually comes to a depressing end. Marblehead High School students are forced to return to the very halls they left in late June. That is, unless you were a senior, of course. Eager freshmen arrive at MHS ready to fully submit themselves into the school and all that it has to offer. Beside these eager freshmen lie older and wiser peer mentors ready to guide them through their obstacle course of a freshman year.

Judy Luise, a clinical social worker at MHS, enters her seventeenth year of working within Marblehead High School. Luise developed Marblehead High School's very own peer mentor program. When asked about her long and successful career at MHS she notes: "I have worked here for seventeen years, seventeen wonderful years!"

The Peer Mentor program is an orientation system that puts together ninth grade students with an upperclassman from grades eleven and twelve. The Peer Mentor program has been popular year after year. Inside this year's program there are about 260 incoming freshman that will arrive in September. All in

coming freshmen have been placed with a peer mentor. Luise notes: "My favorite part of the program is watching students take leadership and feel pride in being a positive role model inside the school environment." Luise has high hopes for this year's program. Luise notes: "This year the program has been brought up several notches. I hope that our mentors are trained better and that the new trainings will guide them with their own mentoring experiences."

Luise works towards extending her program's training into late October 2012. She has also started to make positive changes within Step-Up Day and other fun activities that will better the program overall. Luise has already accepted over 200 upperclassmen mentors for next year's freshman and hopes that these new mentors will go above and beyond. She notes: "I hope that the new mentors will not just talk the talk and walk the walk." When asked what types of characteristics she looks for in mentors she notes: "integrity, determination, commitment and compassion."

Luise notes: "Part of being a mentor is reflecting on life experiences that you have had and reflecting back on those experiences to guide others."

Stein's Corner: Let the Games Begin

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Editorial Manager,
Senior

I had another article planned this week, but after my weekend viewing of The Hunger Games, I thought my views on this blockbuster series has to be addressed. I don't intend this to be a movie review but more an overall examination and I will do my best to avoid any spoilers...

I sat in the theatre late Saturday night stunned. While everyone else picked up their popcorn and jackets and exited the theatre I couldn't stand up. I didn't know why. The Hunger Games is just another movie based on a book, cashing in on its quick success. Suzanne Collins' blockbuster story has skyrocketed to the top of the charts and taken America by storm. It's the next Twilight and this year's Harry Potter, captivating every child and adult in its path. I was first inclined to read this book last year when my grandfather called me raving about a book about "kids who kill each other in an arena." I nodded and dismissed it; I had better things to do and more interesting books to read. Fast forward a year and the story about "kids who kill each other in an arena" has reached the status of "the boy who lived." Still I told myself, I'll get to

it at some point; I had moved beyond teen novels. Then the movie came out, and everyone jumped on the Hunger Games bandwagon. I'm not saying I'm a follower, but then again, "it's about kids who kill each other in an arena." Regardless, I thought I'd give it a try.

I'm not one of those Harry Potter fanatics, but I appreciate the series and I commend J.K. Rowling for creating a world that is both different and fascinating. The wizarding world was what made Harry enthralling and downright epic. The Hunger Games setting of Panem takes this to a very different but equally unique level. For those who have not read it, North America has been wiped out and a new nation has been established called Panem. It is here that 13 districts have been set up, ruled by a dictatorship only known as the Capitol. What makes this nation so unique is every year they have a "celebration" picking 24 children to battle to the death until there is one winner. This battle royale is instituted to keep the citizens from uprising and to show the power the Capitol wields over its 13 districts. As you may have realized, this isn't Wonderland.

When reading The Hunger Games I was not captivated by the nature of the writing but more so by the nature of

the environment. I had no idea what Panem would look like. We are left to our own devices to envision it. The Hunger Games is nowhere as good as Harry Potter, mainly because I feel like I'm reading a book written by a 5th grader. It isn't particularly well written, and is quite choppy but then again it's written for "tweens." Shortly after finishing it, I still hadn't decided if I actually liked the book. Yes, it was interesting and captivating, but not exactly fun to read. It felt more like a chore than a hobby. I finished it at a breakneck pace only because of my curiosity to find out what happens to Katniss. Then the movie comes out, and my biggest question going in was "how do you illustrate Panem?" For me, this was crucial. Everything else wasn't important.

Fast forward two and a half hours and I'm sitting in the theatre while the audience and my friends are getting ready to leave. Half my brain is telling me that this is the greatest story to ever exist while the other half is telling me this is the most overrated joke ever created.

My movie review boils down to two points:

1) Don't let Gary Ross ever direct another movie again. He is solely responsible for my latter half's brain response. I felt like I was on a tilt-a-whirl for 2 hours.

Every single shot had a camera change and the handheld camera doesn't help either. No one will ever refer to The Hunger Games as a well-paced story. What good are the action scenes if the camera angle is changing every half second?

2) Give an Oscar to the team that designed Panem. My main concern was how you illustrate Panem. The visual team did an amazing job. There were several times throughout where I sat in amazement at how everything looked. It's hard to describe and it's something that has to be seen.

So what is The Hunger Games? Is it the greatest story ever told or the most overrated? I'm 130 pages into its sequel, Catching Fire, and I'm trudging through it. But for some reason I can't seem to stop. I suggest everyone read this book at some point just to bask in the world of Panem. If you just see the movie on its own, then it is what it is—another action movie. But if you read the book first it's an action packed tour through Panem. Just remember to bring motion sickness pills.

The movie sequel to The Hunger Games, Catching Fire, comes out in 2013. I'm waiting with hesitation because if Gary Ross is directing, I won't be catching anything.

Persuasive Essay: A Case for Compensation of College Athletes

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Special to Headlight.
Senior

The smartest people in the United States are located at colleges, universities, and... the NCAA? These people have tamed one of the richest gold mines of modern day business, all while letting others do the heavy lifting, and/or hitting and dunking. By manipulating Division I college sports (specifically football and basketball), administrators at our nation's centers for higher learning reap benefits from the hard work of young "student-athletes." These administrators are facilitated by the NCAA, which keeps the profits made from these athletes flowing back into the pockets of seemingly everyone involved with running college athletics, except for the people actually competing on the field. In a system resembling fair and honest enterprises of the past, such as feudalism and slavery, Division I football and basketball removes the right of individuals to profit from their work and likeness. If a star running back that will declare for the draft early rushes for thirty touchdowns and attracts thousands of fans to the stadium, ticket sales could help finance the building of a new math building at his school...one that he will never attend classes in! If a

basketball player leads his team to a March Madness title run, the money the school gets for reaching the championship game does not go to the player or anyone else that touched the floor, but rather the pockets of an athletic director who was watching the game on television just like millions of other viewers. Just to clarify, I am an avid college sports fan. Nothing excites me more than a late fourth quarter comeback or an improbable Cinderella upset in the NCAA tournament, but the business side of these sports is downright unfair. Yes, expanding your school with the funds you bring in from your play is a great thing that helps many young minds, but the players definitely deserve a cut of THEIR money. Division I college athletes should be paid because they bring in lucrative amounts of money for their school, they are as strapped for cash just like every other college student despite what most people think, and the very top teams are no more than glorified farm teams for professional sports.

To see the impact that Division I sports have economically on college campuses, one merely needs to have a set of functioning eyes. Penn State University, for example, is set in the legitimate middle of nowhere, seemingly an open patch of fields littered with matching build-

ings. Shortly after I arrived on campus, I started to look for the famed Beaver Stadium, which boasts a capacity of over 110,000 people making it the second largest stadium in the country. Looking off into the distance, I noticed a devilishly huge monstrosity from about a mile away. This was Beaver Stadium. It was financed largely by football revenue. With the ability for top college athletics programs to potentially bring in millions of dollars to fund projects like billion dollar stadiums and sprawling training facilities, they could surely afford to pay their athletes even a small stipend to get them through the month.

While most college athletes will never go pro, there are a handful of teams that seem to merely function for the purpose of sending kids up the pipeline to the NFL or NBA. Two examples of this are the University of Miami football team and the University of Kentucky basketball team. The UM football team has always been a powerhouse in college football, perennially being ranked in the top 25. An enormously high percentage of Miami players end up making it into the NFL. How high? Considering that a Miami alum had scored a touchdown every week (of the season) in the NFL from December of 2002 to November of 2011, pretty high. And that only counts

skill positions (players that touch the ball), so there were plenty more UM grads on the field in each of those weeks. From the 2001 Miami team that ended up winning the national championship, 18 of the 22 starters ended up getting drafted, which is almost unheard of. If athletes are choosing Miami for the chance to go pro, not necessarily for the education, then why not pay them for essentially doing their job? Not every player on the team will go pro, and a lot of them are indeed there for a great education and football playing experience. For the ones that are chiefly there for football, why not pay them strictly for their performance on the field? A scholarship is essentially useless if one has only three quarters of a Miami undergrad degree if they decide to come out and enter the draft, so why not just give them a cut of the revenue they earn for the school and be done with it. If you cringe at the notion of the situation at Miami, the situation at the University of Kentucky is much more extreme. Kentucky has brought this issue even more into the forefront with their NCAA basketball championship. John Calipari, the coach of the UK basketball team, is known for his notorious "one and done" system. Since the NBA began requiring one year of college experience for recruits to make it into the

league, teams like Kentucky have been taking these recruits in for a one-year deal of sorts. These players take the bare minimum course load during the beginning of the season and after the season is over just stop going to classes altogether, seeing as they are a lock for the NBA draft in the summer. They drain academic resources and money that could be going to students that are there for a four-year education and desperately need it, but instead this money goes to these "student"-athletes. These players should be treated for what they are, as simply athletes for hire. The revenue that they bring into the school from tournament appearances and publicity can go back towards academic funds to help pay for the scholarship that was taken away from a deserving student to help a kid play basketball.

Division I football and basketball are too lucrative to ever stave off corruption completely. As long as TV contracts, apparel sales, ticket sales, and all the other ways these sports make money continue to thrive, the notion of amateurism in college sports is just a lie. These are businesses, not mere "extracurricular activities." While most student-athletes are as advertised and actually hold up the student end of their title, a large handful of them are on these teams just as ath-

letes. For an athlete, money is better spent not on the portion of education that they will be abandoning for riches and fame in pro sports, but rather directly on themselves. Many of these kids would not be able to get in these institutions on academics alone, but reap the benefits of a sliding GPA scale all but guaranteeing them admission. Is this fair to the physics student who gets rejected from his dream school in favor of someone who will only experience the physics of lifting weights? What about a student that tries to fight his way out of poverty and carry his 4.0 all the way to a scholarship...but instead of going to him the money goes to a 6'7" basketball recruit who will be turning pro the next season anyways? Colleges have important decisions to make about the direction of athletic programs in the near future. If they are going to use athletic programs strictly as a cash cow to reap profits and send kids to the pros, then they need to stop using the illusion of "student-athletes." These kids are simply not students, just hired bodies to enhance the prestige of universities. If these administrators are truly dedicated to breeding student-athletes, then they could at least allocate a small stipend for these kids to live on. College athletes should be paid, plain and simple.

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