Hancock’s Girls Basketball Team Wins Big Game at the Last Second

Six years ago, JHCP and the Little Village girls’ sports programs started a Clash of the Birds Basketball Game: the winner would hold bragging rights and the trophy. The JHCP Lady Eagles have a record of 4 wins and 2 loses in this series. This year, with three minutes left in the game, JHCP was down by 12 points. The coach called for a timeout and gave his girls the speech of the game. The team started coming back. With 10 seconds left in the game, the team needed only one basket to win. Mackenzie Reagor was at the foul line. After the first missed shot, she also missed the second but JHCP rebounded the ball. As the time was winding down, the ball was passed around until it got in Josyln Rangel’s hands. 5,4,3,2, Jossy shoots 1 and the Lady Eagles won on a last second shot to earn the right to bring the trophy home. High Scorer: Skyler Cepek with 23 Points! Tough as Nails on the defensive side of the ball: Melanie Diaz!

How Chicago’s Gun & Gang Violence Affected a Hancock Student  By Erika Gonzalez

Despite wanting to live a normal life, growing up in a dangerous neighborhood on the Southside of Chicago pushes many into living a lifestyle that consists of guns and gang violence. Chicago is often known for the surging gun violence in the city. There are often reports everyday of new killings and shootings in the neighborhoods. Although some can’t understand what it’s like to live in constant fear and paranoia, there are a handful who can.

Eighteen year old Joshua Ponce who graduated from John Hancock in 2017 wants to live a normal life but with growing up in a dangerous neighborhood and having his best friend being taken away by gun violence, his current situation won’t allow it. So he continues to do what he needs to in order to Continued on page 2
Gun & Gang Violence  From page 1  

eventually get away. “Anywhere but Chicago,” Ponce answered when being asked where he wanted to go. According to the Chicago Tribune, Mayor Rahm Emanuel is trying to find a solution to lowering the gun violence in the city by announcing that they will soon begin to hire nearly 1,000 new police officers.

“I remember there was one time where I was driving probably like 8 o'clock at night and I went to go pick up money from my sister's house and my mom was going to come meet me in the alley because my sister lived in the basement and the police had me there like hung up for about like three hours and it was pointless because they thought I had a gun, and I don't carry no gun. But it was just messed up. I remember telling the cop, 'How are you still here? You haven't found anything. You could be out there looking for somebody that actually has a gun.' ”

As Ponce explains through his perspective, sometimes even those who serve to protect take advantage of their power.

Ponce lives with his parents and two siblings. He grew up seeing his older brother join the gang life and witnessed all the violence that followed with it. Being exposed to that, Ponce was quickly seen as affiliated with the gang his brother was in. People would generalize him as a banger and the rival gangs as well. He was and still is constantly exposed to killings, shootings, and threats. He soon realized that he could no longer live a normal life due to the fact that he had to be careful everywhere he went and that there were certain places he can no longer even go.

“Since I was a little kid, everyone was always like, 'Oh that's his little brother.' At times it saved me and sometimes it was just a bad thing because let's say I was in trouble or somebody's after me or I would feel endangered, I knew people would have my back because of my brother. But let's say one of the guys my brother was into it with saw me. It's like, 'Oh there goes his little brother.' They could've done anything to me. They could have shot at me because of my brother. I mean I'm lucky to be here,” Ponce explains.

He feels like he always has to watch everything little thing; he always has to be aware of his surroundings. “I feel like I can't live a normal life here. I always have to be aware. I have to act like an animal like I'm being hunted,” states Ponce. Then after the killing of his best friend Victor Felix, the situation skyrocketed into him feeling like nobody could help him. “I felt like I couldn't help other people anymore. I felt like nobody could help me with my pain. It took awhile for me to get out that mindset and to get back to normal. But at first I felt like I didn't care about nobody because I felt like nobody cared about me or nobody cared about Victor and I just kept my mindset there,” Ponce states.

A police officer Jason Sabo who was actually a teacher at Hancock before speaks upon his viewpoint on the violence in our city. He talks about how he thinks too many people are affected by gun and gang violence in Chicago. “Unfortunately I think there are too many people in Chicago affected by gun violence. I know of maybe 7-8 students who have been shot and killed over the years while I was at Bogan and then one from Hancock. Way too many young lives lost,” stated Sabo. When asked about the growing gang recruitment he spoke about how he believes some of the youth aren't shown enough love by families and they tend to go down the wrong path.

“They just get involved with the wrong group of people. These young people pick up guns to show that they fit in,” states Sabo.

In the article “There's a story about why we shoot,” Jens Ludwig, an economist at University of Chicago, states that “there is something about these very disadvantaged South and West Side neighborhoods that are contributing to the gun violence problem. Those conditions seem to have particularly harmful effects on young people, teenagers and their risk of involvement in the gun violence that is different from what you see in American cities. That's a hugely important thing that we have to understand and try and fix.”
Teens are notorious for being moody. They’re known to throw fits, be over-emotional, and have attitudes. But these negative traits evolve from something else. During adolescence, hormonal changes occur in the body that make teens unable to effectively handle emotional and mental pressure. Emotional and mental health in teens in America highlight the negative parental guidance given at home resulting in growing rates of stress, nervous breakdowns, and severe mental disorders.

Their emotional pressure is being reflected on the things they say and do. It takes part in their everyday lives, affecting their actions and decisions. Instead of communicating their issues it comes out in bad attitudes or horrifying fits. Our Southwest Side community sees them as being only another emotional teen. Instead, we should be aware of these issues so we can prevent the mental and emotional struggle from erupting.

In Mott’s Children’s Hospital National Poll on Children’s Health, nearly 2,700 of the respondents believe youth today have higher stress levels, less quality family time, and poorer coping skills and personal friendships. Many youth in today’s society don’t spend much time with their family anymore, focusing more on social media than anything else. Parents lately have followed in their children’s footsteps, ignoring their children to be on their smartphones because it’s something they didn’t have growing up.

This is the lack of quality family time found in the research. Parents and their children are too busy focusing on everybody else’s lives on the outside, instead of focusing what really matters: the people they have at home. Parents need to focus more on their children than focusing on what their Facebook friends

Continued on next page
are eating for lunch. According to the Common Sense Research, about half of parents (48%) said they text while at work, 38% said they use social media, and 33% watch television. Teens need to actually try to open up with their parents instead of posting pictures on their story on Snapchat complaining about how they don’t get attention from anyone. On any given day, teens in the United States spend about nine hours using media on their phones, according to the report by Common Sense Media.

According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, adolescent depression is increasing at an alarming rate. Recent surveys indicate that as many as one in five teens suffers from clinical depression. Depression can take several forms, including bipolar disorder, which is a condition that alternates between periods of euphoria and depression.

The survey in Mott’s children’s Hospital National Poll on Children’s Health also found that 42 percent of the adults believe children today have worse physical health than when the adults were children. If a teen’s mental health is down the drain and the problem is not resolved because their problems are ignored, then the issues start slowly progressing to show on the outside.

Mental and emotional issues at home result in teens becoming unmotivated and having less energy. These symptoms of mental issues can eventually turn into physical disorders, such as eating disorders—which are caused by extreme emotions, attitudes and behaviors surrounding weight and food issues.

Approximately 20 percent of adolescents aged 13 to 18 experience severe mental disorders in a given year according to the Gale student resources. These severe mental disorders occurring in teens should remind us that they need special attention or else it can accelerate to physical disorders as well.

**What are some steps students can take to help build these supportive relationships with parents?**
Hancock Students’ Political Views
By Emmanuel Hernandez

I’ve always been concerned about how aware high school students are about what’s going on around the country. I decided to make a survey about politics because people don’t seem to realize that they’re the people that make the decisions about what happens in our country.

I recorded the responses and made a visual representation of how involved and aware students at Hancock are about politics. I created the survey in the beginning of December and by the end of December, I received over 230 responses.

I sent the survey out to all the social studies classes at Hancock so all the responses and data below are from Hancock students who are taking a social studies class.

For the first question, I asked students to take a “Political Type Quiz” which is another survey from Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world. This quiz determined each student’s political standing. The chart below reflects where students fall into the Pew Research Center’s categories.

Take Pew’s quiz to see where you fall:  http://www.people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/

- **Solid Liberals**: Solid Liberals strongly support the social safety net and take very liberal positions on virtually all issues
- **Opportunity Democrats**: Majority group departed from liberal satisfaction.
- **Disaffected Democrats**: Majority group that are financially stressed and have a positive feeling about the democratic party.
What a few students responded on the survey:

“At the end of the day teenagers will always worry about other things. They do not realize how important politics are. Here at Hancock, we aren’t really taught about what’s going on in the world during our classes. I feel like that needs to change.”

“Yes, politics are stressful and teens already face a big deal of stress. We need to know our limits. We are not Superman. We need to have a say and know about politics but not to make it a big part of our regular life.”

“If teens aren’t aware of politics, they might not do anything to help resolve issues or relations that plague current politics. Some people from our generation will end up as politicians, and if those politicians aren’t aware of these issues, America can’t improve itself.”

“It can be important depending on the mindset of the citizen, whether they believe in our government system or whether the current issue affects them. Recently, millennials are known to not trust the government going back to the 1960s and with liberal beliefs and being young, they take less political action than older conservatives. Teenagers don’t realize their voice in government. Their beliefs in politics depends on their own experiences.”
It is okay to have a high-pitched voice up to 6th grade. Around the age of 12-13, people’s voices are expected to “mature.” In my case, my voice stayed the same.

It was the first day of 7th grade and I was excited to see my friends again. Our homeroom teacher made us introduce ourselves one by one to her. As my classmates were introducing themselves, I noticed something odd. The boys’ voices got deeper and the girls’ voices got a little less high-pitched as well. It was my turn and as I spoke, in my head, I was comparing my voice to the other girls. There was no change to mine but I was not sure if I should be upset about it or not. It caused me to be confused as to why it has not happened to me; however, I decided to forget it and just move on.

A few months after, my friend came up to me to tell me something. He told me about a conversation he had with his ex-girlfriend who told him my voice was weird and babyish; as a result, he defended me. He said that it bothered him hearing his ex-girlfriend judge my voice. I was confused in the beginning as to why they were talking about me in the first place but what disturbed me the most was her comment. It hurt me a little bit to hear that someone was criticizing me about my voice behind my back. I told him “thank you” for defending me.

One year later, school was over and we were all going to our lockers to get our book bags. All of a sudden, another friend asked me, “Monica, why does your voice sound so high and like a baby?” I stared at him for a few seconds because I was insulted. Finally, I told him that I didn’t know. I was just born with it, so I have no control over how I sound. His question made me feel insecure because it was my last year in my elementary school and my voice has not matured.

I started to think about the other times my friends would randomly comment on my voice by saying how soft and squeaky it was. After that day, I tried to not speak because I was embarrassed by it. I felt like everyone has been judging my voice because I sound different. Yet, without mentioning it, I had a few friends who would cheer me up and make me forget about it.

One day, my reading teacher assigned a group project to take a random background music from a song and make our own lyrics. It needed to be about a part of a certain story from *The Odyssey*. We had to sing it to the class as well. My group was a little uncomfortable and embarrassed to sing, so I was actually the only one singing. After our song finished, my classmates clapped and my teacher said, “Beautiful voice, Monica.”

My friend, Viviana, also told me I have a great voice after the class ended. The compliments and the applauding made me feel confident and grateful for the voice I have. People with a voice like mine are also not expected to be intelligent; however, I beg to differ. I have a reputation of getting straight As, and I was valedictorian in my elementary school which can be surprising to people. I am not going to let those who criticize my voice bring me down and thwart me from talking. I was born with it and I was taught to love myself no matter what.

I still have the same voice, but now I am not insecure about it. I have amazing friends who think it is cute and that it fits my personality because I am sweet and kind. In addition, some have told me my voice comforts them. It was risky to stand out from everyone with my voice and be different, but at least I would be remembered as a sweet girl with a sweet voice. That is what makes me an individual and not a conformist. Everyone has something special that defines them. They should not be afraid to embrace it because it is not a flaw. It is a strength that makes one an original. My voice use to be my imperfection. Today, I consider my voice what makes me unique and powerful.
Hancock Boy Bowling Team Strikes!

Members of the Hancock Boys Bowling Team Joey Padilla (left), Christopher Martinez (center), and Juan Duron (right) qualified to Individual Playoffs in Bowling. Juan qualified in 1st, Joey in 9th, and Christopher in 10th. Despite the team not making it to playoffs, these three players progressed.

After playoffs, Joey was the only one from Hancock—and first bowler ever—to move on to the Individual Championship. He qualified 5th and, while he didn't make it to sectionals, he finished in 36th place out of 70 South side bowlers.

Hancock Band Gets $5000 Check for Instruments

Dea Mr. Catomer,

On behalf of the GRAMMY Museum, congratulations again on being selected for a GRAMMY Signature Schools Enterprise Award grant. Enclosed you will find a $5,000 check for your school’s music program.

We are grateful to Cisco Systems for providing the financial support that makes this award possible. Their commitment enables us to continue our mission to identify and support public high school music programs around the country. Please feel free to be in touch and let us know what type of impact this award has made on your music program.

We deeply appreciate all that you continue to do to keep music education an important part of the public-school experience.

Sincerely,
Scott Goldman
Executive Director
GRAMMY Museum

The Signature is published every month October through June in print and online versions on our Website. Submit your art, photography, or writing. See Mr. Salazar in 201.

Follow us on Twitter & add us on Snapchat: @CPSHancock

Hancock College Prep High School

A Chicago public neighborhood high school with a Selective-Enrollment program serving mostly Southwest side students that remains committed to preparing all students to be critical thinkers and life-long learners

Principal: Devon Herrick    Asst. Principals: Natalie Garfield & Vanessa Puentes-Hernandez

Journalism Teacher: Ray Salazar, NBCT

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