

# THE MLWGS Jabberwock

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## We the People Team Wins Regional Tournament

By Reshini Premaratne

This year's MLWGS We the People team has recently succeeded, winning the regional tournament on December 16. Over the coming weeks the team will ready itself for the upcoming state-level competition on January 30.

This is the second year that the We the People program is under the leadership of AP Government teacher, Mr. Sam Ulmschneider, who says he appreciates the opportunity it provides the group of 24 seniors to continue engaging with a subject they enjoy. Even though We the People has changed since Mr. Ulmschneider was a participant himself, it has nonetheless remained an integral part of the MLWGS curriculum.

Galen Green ('15), a member of Unit 6 this year, believes that the We the People program not only offers an invaluable understanding of the United States political system, but also that "the success of this program keeps [MLWGS] as an emblem of government studies." Mr. Ulmschneider believes that Maggie Walker is a wonderful incubator for this highly rigorous program. "We the People is a unique resource that the amazing students here have the interest to pursue," he said.



Members of MLWGS' We the People team speak to alumni about their experiences with the class. Photo by Srishti Sanya

subsequent state tournament and the chance to compete at the national tournament.

In preparation for the state tournament on January 30, Mr. Ulmschneider is bringing in scholars from local universities, such as University of Richmond and Virginia Commonwealth University, to edit the students' papers, discuss the topics, and simulate competition rounds by asking questions in return.

The process of forming next year's team will also begin soon. "Be ready to work hard, but also be ready to have fun through the learning," Debbie Mayo ('15) adds, "Even if you have second thoughts about the workload, I highly encourage you, if you have any interest in politics at all, to consider trying out for the team."

Students, past and present, recount some of their favorite memories of high school as those spent with their units. Aateeb Khan ('14), a member of last year's team, recalled having such intense debates with his unit that "[they'd] end up throwing shoes and random lunch materials at each other out of sheer philosophical rage."

Coly Elhai ('15) recalls wanting to join the We The People team because of the chance it provided to learn about all

of the issues that so deeply interested her in previous classes. "I was lucky enough to have Mr. Ulmschneider of AP Government and didn't want to miss out on having such a committed, knowledgeable teacher again," said Elhai. Mayo decided to join after talking to veterans of the previous year's We the People team and Mr. Ulmschneider. "I should not let [the workload] get in the way of my passion for government and politics," Mayo recalls thinking.

As the Maggie Walker We the People team works towards the upcoming tournaments, some members say they will remember the words of James Madison, the Father of the U.S. Constitution: "Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."

**“We'd end up throwing shoes and lunch at each other out of sheer rage.”**

All six units of the We the People team have been preparing for the state tournament at the end of the month. The team gained entrance to the state tournament after winning the district tournament comprised of high schools from the central Virginia region in December with a score of 976 points, 42 points ahead of the second place, Freeman High School. Mr. Ulmschneider stated that "districts is always rough but a good measure" of the team's potential at the

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# Students Should Choose Unique Classes

By Sophia McCrimmon

At the recent school board budget meeting last month, MLWGS students brought up many reasonable concerns regarding places where our school is not fulfilling its mission and is failing to meet the needs of its gifted students. One of the points that struck me was the complaint that many classes, such as Art History and Yearbook have repeatedly not been offered due to lack of student interest. In addition, seniors are losing the opportunity to take seminars on Architecture and International Law because their peers do not flock to those courses.

The loss of these distinctive and valuable courses is disappointing, but it is not fully the fault of the administration. It simply isn't reasonable to put time and resources into a class with six students. The reason why these crucial courses aren't being offered is not administrative disregard for our school's mission, but the changing motivations of our student body.

When my classmates make choices about what classes they take, I see many doing so with the intent of wracking up AP credits and constructing an "impressive" transcript. Often, this means choosing classes that will improve one's transcript rather than courses that will truly enhance one's academic experience. Obviously, the two are not mutually exclusive, but part of the reason that special classes are disappearing is because students choose AP classes over other, potentially more valuable courses because they want the credit on their transcript.

As the time for choosing classes approaches, I urge my classmates to mold a schedule that takes advantage of the unique experiences at our disposal. Don't choose classes based on whether they carry an "AP" next to their name. Choose based on what the class can give you, how it can help you grow, and what you can learn.

As high school students at MLWGS, we can explore advanced academic subjects and grow intellectually in ways many other people don't have the opportunity to do until they reach college. The courses offered at this school give students the opportunity to follow their passions and reach their full intellectual potential. Our priority during this critical stage in our lives should be improving our understanding of ourselves, not the impressiveness of our transcript or the number of AP classes we take.

During your high school career, learning about things you are passionate about truly is more valuable in the long run than having the "perfect" transcript. Don't leave high school regretting the opportunities you missed. Don't blindly follow a certain academic path in hopes of reaching your ambitious goals. Make the choice that is best for your education and your personal growth. At MLWGS, we are losing distinctive courses, courses that shape the academic lives of students and challenge them in unique ways. Blame it on the administration or the budget, but the true culprit in the death of these courses is us, the students.

Have an opinion?

WRITE A LETTER TO  
THE EDITOR

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## THE MLWGS Jabberwock

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The MLWGS Jabberwock covers news events related to the school community and provides a forum for students to share their ideas. Statements expressed by columnists or in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff. However, all editorials are the combined work of both the Editor-in-Chief and her staff.

All members of the MLWGS community are invited to submit letters to the editor on any topic, although the publication of all letters is not guaranteed. The newspaper reserves the right to edit letters for grammar, language and length. Please e-mail letters to [themlwgsjabberwock@gmail.com](mailto:themlwgsjabberwock@gmail.com).

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# Teacher Feature: Ms. Darlene Bowman

By Helen Li

**HL: Where were you born and how has that influenced you?**

DB: I was actually born right here in Richmond, Virginia. I don't know...it's kind of a cross between we're not too Northern and we're not too Southern. I like it here, I like the weather. I moved away and lived in Georgia for about five years, which was really rural. I don't know...I like Richmond. It's home. I don't plan on remaining here for the rest of my life though. I kind of like Charlotte, North Carolina [and] Wilmington, Delaware.

**HL: I heard you're getting your Master's Degree?**

DB: Yeah, I'm working on it in Human Services, with a concentration in marriage, family, and children. I'm not quite sure where I want to go with that, maybe work for CASA [Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children], you know, being a court advocate for children. Or if I want to work with social services. I just want to keep working with children.

**HL: So, you have a lot of photos on that wall, and I was just wondering what the story was behind all of those pictures?**

DB: Well, students started...when we were back at TJ, they started giving me their prom pictures and everything. I would hang them up. And then when we got here, I had all this space. So that's how it got started. I actually have an album at home with students, from like '98 and '99 and 2000. Because we didn't move into this building until September 2001.

**HL: What is the craziest, wacko excuse that somebody has given you for a tardy or attendance?**

DB: Oh God! Oh..hmmm. I've gotten "I was abducted by aliens."

**HL: Interesting things that people come up with in the most stressful of times!**

DB: Well, then I have one guy, not going to say his name, he's late about two times a week. Every day he's like: "Just give me unexcused. I have no reason." You know,



**Ms. Darlene Bowman, Clinic Attendant/Attendance Technician at Maggie Walker, smiles for a picture. Photo by Srishti Sanya**

throws his hands up like this [gestures].

**HL: What's something you're really, really proud of?**

DB: I'm really proud that I went back to school after 30 plus years and got my degree. I have two years left. And I got a taste of the working world, and I chose that. You know, I was single. Nobody but me. And I was enjoying traveling and everything. If I had one regret, it would be not graduating back in the early '80s. Because now it's altogether different, and I'm doing my Master's online. And I hate it. Oh I hate it with a passion [laughs]. You know I'm still learning a lot about technology-everyday it's something new. I have a great niece, she's about four. She can actually show me some things! I'll be working on a Powerpoint and she'll be saying: "No! You do this...you do that..." I'm like: How does she know this? You know. I'm proud that I did go back. But you know, I'm 54, and I wish I had done it back in my twenties and I would have been finished with my Master's! So, that's kind of challenging. I wish I would have waited like a year after I got my bachelor's, and then gone to grad school. Because balancing fami-

ly, full time job, you know, I'm active in my church, and trying to have a social life – it's like [gestures]. And it's no Darleen.

**HL: What is something that you do in your free time just for yourself?**

DB: Just for me? Shop.

**HL: Shop. [laughs]**

DB: [laughs] I'm so serious. Just for me. Or I'll go and do a little spa day, but that's so far few and between! If I get them in two times a year, you know, I get a massage, a facial. I actually had a gift card that was given to me for my birthday last year and it was about to expire. I had never used it. When I went to pull it out, it had actually expired. A few weeks ago.

**HL: What is one piece of advice that you would give to your children and the children here at Maggie Walker?**

DB: Follow your dreams. Follow your dreams. You know, there's going to be obstacles and challenges, but follow your dreams. If you said: this is what you are going to do, no matter how long it takes – do it.

## Girls Basketball

 Walker 6 14 6 14 42

 Nandua 5 4 8 21 38

 Walker 7 3 8 8 26

 Godwin 8 15 6 9 38

The Lady Dragons defeated conference rival 42-38 on their home court. Cynthia Ong ('15) led the team with 17 points and Ashley Rice ('16) added 8 points to a hard-fought win for the Walker girls.

The girls fell to Godwin but gave the Eagles a run for their money in the second half. Cynthia Ong ('15) scored 14 points and Mariko Lewis ('17) added another 5 for the girls.

## Boys Basketball

 Walker 14 16 9 22 2 63

 Nandua 12 21 15 13 1 62

 Walker 17 14 6 9 46

 King William 6 11 9 14 40

 Walker 13 15 16 13 57

 ARGS 2 9 12 20 43

Zach Jacobs ('16) led a vigorous Walker comeback in the fourth quarter against conference rival Nandua with 32 points and 20 rebounds, almost breaking the school record. Shalin Shah ('15) added 3 three-pointers to the Walker offense.

Walker basketball improved to a 3-5 record with a win over King William. Like Nandua, King William is also a big conference rival. Zach Jacobs ('16) scored 23 points and Ben Bowers ('15) added another 8.

The Maggie Walker boys took care of business Monday against Appomattox Regional Governor's School. Zach Jacobs ('16) scored 23 points, while Shalin Shah ('15) and Jake Morris ('16) contributed a combined 15 points.

## Swimming

Both the boys' and girls' swim teams placed first in their meets on December 17 at Lee Davis. The combined team scores were 214 MLWGS to 126 Lee Davis. The relay teams were especially strong, with first place finishes for both the boys and girls in the 200 yard medley. Jake Holweger ('18) placed first in the 200 yard freestyle and Geoffrey Gill ('15) took first in the 50 yard freestyle to lead the boys to victory. Ellie Deglau ('15) had two first place finishes in the 200 yard IM and 100 yard butterfly to edge out Lee Davis. The next swim meet is on January 13 at Collegiate where the Dragons will face strong competition.

## Wrestling

Maggie Walker Wrestling achieved two strong finishes at different tournaments over the past few weeks. At the Monstrosity Duals Tournament, the team recorded a 4th place finish with a 3-2 record. Parker Matthew ('16), Nick Jones ('15) and Frankie Celentano ('16) were all victorious over opponents, and Celentano ('16) won tournament MVP. At the Amelia Invitational on January 3rd, Maggie Walker claimed a 4th place team finish with Joe Paul ('18), Frankie Celentano ('16) and Nick Jones ('15) all earning first place finishes. Ned Cooper ('18) and Chris Solden ('15) each finished in 2nd, while Nate Ashburn ('15) and Gordon Hadley ('16) placed 4th in their divisions.

## Indoor Track

The MLWGS indoor track and field teams have had a strong season so far, securing individual and team wins at recent meets. On January 3 both the girls' and boys' teams participated in the Suffolk Stars Invitational. The boys came in third place, beating Western Branch, who is in competition for the 6A state title, by 2 points. Joseph Boyle ('15) came in first in the 3200m, with Patrick Wachter ('15) and Evan Fisher ('16) finishing in second and fourth, respectively. Scott Miller ('15) broke his own school record in the 500m dash, and a fourth place finish in the 4x800m relay also helped to secure team victory.

The girls have a much smaller team compared to their competitors and specialize in distance as opposed to sprinting. With so few sprinters the girls' team is often unable to enter runners in many events, making it more difficult to place at invitationals. Despite this obstacle, MLWGS was well-represented in the individual events. Emma Call ('16) placed fifth in the 500m dash, and the 4x400m relay team finished sixth. Katie Pokorny ('16) placed seventh in the 3,200m run, and Celia Wilson ('16) finished twelfth in the 1,000m run.

## All Metro-Athletes

For the 2014 fall sports season, MLWGS athletes accomplished multiple records and gained major ground in the Richmond Sports area. Overall, eight MLWGS athletes were chosen for all-Metro teams. Khloe Pointer ('17) was picked as the girls cross country runner of the year and Emma Call ('16) made second team. Ryan Buscaglia ('17) and Evan Fisher ('16) were both picked for the boy's cross country 1st and 2nd teams, respectively. Laura Fuhr ('15), Eliza Bellamy ('15) and Tierney Whelan ('15) all made 1st team Field Hockey and Marissa Raper ('15) was chosen for the 2nd team. Congratulations to those athletes for their achievements!

## Next Week in Dragon Athletics

The girls' and boys' basketball teams will take on J.R. Tucker today, away. On Monday both basketball teams will face off against Colonial Heights. The track team will be participating in a Varsity invitational at the Ashe Center on Tuesday. The swim team also has a Varsity meet on Tuesday. On Wednesday the wrestling team has a Varsity quad tournament.