

# Mental Habulum

## Food For Thought

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**Editors: Jordan  
Garry and  
Emma Balsam**

### **Lawrence Live at the Presidential Debate**

**Ariana Brown**

On Monday September 26th, 2016, The first Presidential Debate took place at Hofstra University. Dr. Zangari was once again invited to this event along with former graduates of Lawrence High School, Natalie Azcona, Ashley Sandoval, and Frank Manera. Dr. Zangari was first invited to the 2012 Presidential Debate with four seniors from Lawrence High School to cover the debate. Dr. Zangari was originally connected with C-Span through a partnership with Cablevision's MSG Varsity. The bonds were severed between the school and the program two years prior to the 2016 debate, But Dr. Zangari kept in contact with several people that worked in Cablevision. Dr. Zangari reached out to Altice, working directly with their Meet the Leaders team, and he was able to be reconnected with C-SPAN, and receive the invitation to the debate. Since the requirements of who could attend the debate changed since the 2012 debate, Dr. Zangari could not bring anyone who was under 18 years of age. Due to the change he picked recent graduates who he knew well and were interested in

media and politics to attend the debate. A few days Prior to the debate, Dr. Zangari was allowed to take Jessica Moreno, Danielle Portillo, and Stan Faynblut 3 seniors of Lawrence High School who were given the opportunity to tour the debate area. Thanks to Dr. Zangari, and his amazing connections with Cablevision, and C-SPAN the graduates and seniors of Lawrence High School were able to have an unforgettable learning experience that'll be kept with them forever. You can read more, and watch fantastic footage online at [www.lawrence.org](http://www.lawrence.org)



**Safe Trick or  
Treat!!**

**October 27  
from 5-7**

# Hope for a Better Future

By: Yumna Rashid

2016. Cancer is cured. Babies are born in perfect health. No one dies from hunger. Natural resources are made abundant somehow. There is peace and kindness amongst everyone. That is what one would expect from a country that has become so technologically advanced. On the surface we are so far gone yet on the inside we're broken as ever. Don't get me wrong, there has been much innovation, but for every step we've taken we've gone back two. How can we move forward as a country when there is so much hate and animosity? 2016. Police brutality. Riots. Police officers killed. The relationship that requires the most trust begins to fade. Between the last two years hate crimes have relatively increased and even more so in 2016. Eric Garner, Michael Brown, and Alton Sterling are just a few of the names recently heard on the news. They were all victims of police brutality. Black men killed by white officers without reasonable cause. These men did not get the justice they deserved, sparking movements and peaceful protests throughout the country. Recently, things have taken a turn for the worst where some protesters have no longer remained peaceful. Five police officers were

shot and killed in Dallas, Texas and nine were injured. Micah Johnson attempted to shoot as many white officers as he could in search of justice for police brutality against black people. How can a country move forward when it's so divided? When the color of your skin determines your ultimate fate. When the skin under your uniform means more than the uniform itself. When there is no means of trust between civilians and law enforcement. When the actions of a few people are painted onto everyone else. Other nations look at us right now wondering if history is repeating itself, earlier than it ever should, or if we're simply still stuck in the past. 2016. Black Lives Matter. Blue Lives Matter. All Lives Matter. A year where the obvious has to be stated because it no longer seems so obvious. 2016. Orlando nightclub massacre. Shooter's mosque torched. Multiple bombings. All Muslims stereotyped. There seems to be a pattern. A strong kindred between hate and more hate. The work of a so called artist who sweeps everything and anything under the same brush stroke. The shooting at Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, was the deadliest mass shooting EVER in the history of this country. It was a clear crime of hate, where 49 people were killed and 53 were injured. The shooter had pledged allegiance to ISIS right before the shooting. He was eventually shot and killed by the police. Such a heinous act tore the heart of every American despite their sexuality, race, or religion. The shooter was a Muslim. On the 3

month anniversary of the shooting, one man torched the mosque to which the shooter belonged. The cops also treated this as a hate crime. Similar to this, after every ISIS bombing, such as the Paris attacks and the recent bombing in New York City and New Jersey, there has been a backlash on everyday American Muslims. There has been more hate crimes against muslims this past year than any year since 2001. The same sentiment that took place after 9/11 seems to be making a comeback. ISIS is condemned by anyone who has a sense of rationality and to associate all 1.6 billion muslims with them is absurd. Our country is being victimized by terrorists and a growing sense of ignorance. 2016. A year where any means of association is a dangerous thing. Have the pros outweighed the cons this year? Or has there been too much insolence to even begin counting? It is hard to focus on the good when there is a new tragedy on the news everyday. 2016. A year of deep division. A year where we can spot everyone's ignorance but our own. A year where vengeance succeeds justice.



# Budget Analysis

By: Barbara Williams

Why are all of our schools closing? Who's buying them? Where does the money go? Why don't we know what's going on? We ask these questions amongst a multitude of others in desperate hopes of figuring out what is really happening with our beloved school district. We had eight schools total within our school district. The former #1 school campus is now an expensive, as well as expansive, apartment complex. The #3 school was sold and transformed into HAFTR, a private yeshiva, and #5 is apparently being leased to a Jewish all-girls private school. #6 school was closed down several years ago as well, with no one being quite sure of what would become of the abandoned campus. That leaves Lawrence Union Free School District with four schools. FOUR out of the preexisting EIGHT. The middle school is full to the brim with grades 3 through 8. Rooms in the basement of the middle school that had never needed to be filled with children are now used on a daily basis. The #2 school houses grades 1 and 2, regardless of how far they live from the Inwood campus. Previously, the #5 and #6 schools would have housed students from different areas

through grades 1-5, but now they must all fit in the #2 and middle school campuses. That being said, where is the money from selling our schools going? Where is the money that we should bring in from leasing #5? Is it being put to use wisely? Surely the academic, music, extracurricular, and athletic programs are benefitting somehow. Upon close inspection, changes are evident. A few new water fountains have been placed within the schools. The high school gym has been completely renovated, as well as the cafeteria a couple years back. This all sounds great until the realization dawns upon you: what about the learning and the clubs? Is there enough money being spent on academics and clubs? In the high school at the very least, the students in some classes have gotten new textbooks and calculators. What about throughout the district? On the school supply list for the middle school, sixth graders are asked to bring two boxes of tissues and 7th and 8th graders are asked to bring 3 packs of copy paper! It shouldn't be a student's responsibility to bring paper in order to learn, but it shouldn't be the teacher's job either. In other school districts these things are provided. A complete lack of paper for handouts whilst spending money on renovating a gym is not acceptable. But we accept it. Why is that? In many cases, teachers were not provided with workbooks that they wanted for their classes, and instead they scanned their own workbook to make handouts. There was apparently no paper then? There have also

been shortages of calculators not for regular classes. In many cases the calculators provided for the honors classes are much more expensive and advanced than those provided for regular math classes, which is unfortunate and unfair to say the least. There have been shortages of calculators, working computers and laptops, books, paper, happiness generally... well, not so much that. Despite lacking many things, Lawrence students can always be seen with a smile on their faces. We're tough students with hearts of gold, and our teachers are the same.



## Goodbye Mr. Perna, Hello Mrs. Devivo

By: Danielle Portillo

As the new school year began, Italian student's had to go through a weird adjustment in their foreign language class. Stepping into our foreign language class, there was something missing and rather off. We were no longer greeted by our beloved Mr. Perna who we had grown to love. It was a very difficult thing for us students to go through because we were not ready for a change like this. Although it was tough, the new Italian teacher, Mrs. Devivo, made it less difficult to adjust. In an interview with Mrs. Devivo, I got to know her a lot better. She demonstrated how passionate she is about what she does, but also about how passionate she is about helping her students succeed. Although Mr. Perna is greatly missed, having a new teacher has taught me and hopefully many others more than just the Italian language. Despite how difficult and unwanted change may be, sometimes it could be good for you. Q: Have you ever visited Italy? A: Yes, I studied abroad in Italy and got to know the language better there. Q: What was the most

exciting/adventurous thing you did in Italy? A: Well, when I studied abroad I got the chance to go Capri (an island in Naples). In Capri there is sea cave called la Grotta Azzura. To get through the small entrance, you have to lie on your back. In the sea cave, the water is crystal clear and has a beautiful color to it. Q: When you went to Italy did you know you wanted to become a teacher? If so, what made you want to pursue this career? A: Yes, I did. I love kids and I also love helping kids. I'm very passionate about teaching kids of all ages and helping those with disabilities. I have fun teaching a foreign language, sharing my experiences, and sharing that you don't have to grow up speaking a language to become proficient in it. I'm third generation... my parents did not know how to speak the language, and my grandparents knew very little. Studying abroad helped me a lot and I also married an Italian so that helped me as well. Q: Do you have any hobbies/interests? A: I love to run. I also love to play volleyball and have always wanted to join a league. I'm very passionate about music and I love to dance and sing! Q: What is something so far that you love about Lawrence? A: I love that it is a diverse population and it's something that I would want my own children to have and to be around. I think it's important for students and teachers to be around other cultures because it helps you understand the real world. You have a better under-

standing of other cultures, backgrounds, and customs. It helps you succeed in a more global community.

## School Shakes, Scares Many

By: Nicholas Williams



Anyone hear an explosion over the high school and wave of shock on Wednesday, September 21st? Well chances are, if you were on the first floor, you probably didn't hear or feel any of this. But for those of you who did, this may be of interest.

During the day, at about 2:20 pm, a loud explosion could be heard from outside, and a shock wave went through the school, shaking the classrooms inside. From what it felt like, many would think it was an earthquake or a bomb. In addition, the fire drill that queued right after the shock wave only caused more theories to be spread around the school. Not only was our school confused, but the civilians of Queens and Nassau County were as well. The sound and shock wave were reported throughout the areas, many people calling police because they were afraid of another terrorist bombing in the area. After investigation, the rumors of a bombing were proven false. The NYPD believed that the explosion was caused by F-22 fighter jets crossing over the area. However, this accusation was also false, as the North American Aerospace Defense Command reported that they had no F-22 fighter jets around the area. Though the Defense Command later revealed that they did have other fighter jets in the area for protection over the United Nations General Assembly, they say the jets were flying too high for any noise to be heard so low on the ground. Despite this, many believe that the jets were still the cause for the noise, perhaps by causing a "sonic boom." But this still hasn't been proven and there's no evidence to prove anyone's opinions on what happened. However, it's relieving to know it wasn't another bombing.

# Cultural Appropriation

By: Lianne Byrd

Cultural appropriation around the time of Halloween is a sensitive yet important topic. When appropriating culture one is pretending to be a member of an ethnic, racial, or religious group solely for personal enjoyment and/or profit. When it comes down to whether costumes are appropriating culture or not, ask yourself, is it flattery or mockery? Ask yourself how you're depicting the culture and if anyone of that particular group has been shamed for dressing or looking like it. A popular costume seen at parties, on social media, and in stores is a 'Gangsta' or a 'Thug'. The model for the costume usually consists of cornrows, a big chain, a bandana, and a gun as a prop. Some of them even wear blackface in order to make their costume more "realistic". It is undeniable that this is imitating people of the African American race with a negative connotation. Black men have a history of being seen as dangerous or intimidating and dressing like this directly makes fun of that. Indian costumes are also a popular costume seen in catalogs, magazines and Halloween shops across the country. Dressing up as an 'Indian' and wearing a skimpy outfit that somewhat emulates what Native American women wore is wrong. While you're trying to look "cute",

your costume is not even accurate and sexualizes Native women. For one, they are Native American, not Indian. Most people know that Native Americans have a history of dictated assimilation to America because they were stripped of their land, culture, and clothing for being seen as uncivilized. Therefore, dressing up in buckskin, beads, and something resembling a headdress is pretty offensive. What Native Americans were once made fun of for, you're wearing incorrectly for fun. From scrolling through social media and google images, terrorist costumes can be seen. A good question is what does a terrorist look like? In almost all of the photos the person modeling the costume was dressed as an Arab or someone of Islamic culture. They are seen wearing turbans, thobes, and hijabs. There is no denying that this is offensive to all people of the Islamic religion, Middle East, and Northern Africa. By the costume being based off an Arabic culture you are putting a face on terrorism which isn't right. It is implying that all Arabs are terrorists. How disrespectful this is truly speaks for itself. People argue that there is too much oversensitivity when it comes to Halloween costumes, but it is important to understand: it is not your place to determine how sensitive a particular group should or should not be. The bottom line is stereotypes offend people. So this year when picking your Halloween costume, ask yourself how you are depicting the people of any particular group

# Respect Big Brother

**By: Stacy Portillo**

What does student government actually do? That is one question that pops up all the time, especially during the elections and the beginning of the school year when the new (or not new) officers take office. Most clubs can give you a good idea of what they do based off of the name alone. There are those honors societies, those community helping clubs, and some where you just explore your interests in a subject. Well, student government is kind of a mix of all of that. Let's face it, people think student government does nothing because the changes aren't exactly prominent. Student government actually does a ton however. They organize a majority of the activities that people take for granted or think are too lame to participate in. This is despite the fact that the reason they do all that work is to be able to give their class the opportunity to participate in costly class activities. They do fundraising activities like the junior talent show, and selling roses for Valentine's Day. Student government also tries to help out the community. Last year, for example, they went with some additional students to clean the park. Student government also creates apparel for the class, so that even after you've graduated you'll still have a piece of your past. So before you say,

"Student Government doesn't do anything", keep in mind that the class officers were chosen by you. You should believe they can handle the stress of organizing events in order for you to make memories of Lawrence High School as opposed to memories of you just watching the clock tick. In order for student government to achieve anything, the students have to be willing to do their part.

## Imagine a 9 Period Day

**By: Emma Balsam**

If there is one thing that students at Lawrence High School talk about, it is how they wish the 9 period day still existed. Due to a combination of desire to increase class time and budget cuts, District 15 eliminated the 9th period at Lawrence High School a few years ago. While the school board claimed that this plan would "increase instructional time" and "raise test scores," it has taken quite the toll on the students over the past couple of years.

While the reduction of one period may seem small, the results have not been popular among students. The majority of Lawrence High School's students do not have a lunch period.

This is because if one wants to take more than one elective, their schedule simply cannot fit in a lunch peri-

od. High school is a time for young people to expand their horizons by taking extracurricular courses. Kids want to have a break from their core classes during the day by adding in an art class or possibly a business course. Therefore, the students are giving up their lunch periods in order to keep busy with classes they love and keep calm throughout the day.

Teachers have had issues with the implementation of the 8-period day as well. When students do not have a lunch period, they eat during their mid-day classes. While most teachers sympathize with their pupils and allow them to eat, some claim that it takes away class time. The newly added "L Passes" allow kids to leave their mid-day class to grab a "Grab and Go" lunch.

Many of the students I've talked to have participated in this system against their wishes, and reveal that they sometimes wait on the line for 15-20 minutes just to get food! Ironically, the 8-period day does not "increase instructional time" when the students are missing a third of a period waiting on a line to get a meal. In fact, test scores have not dramatically changed over the past few years of the 8-period day. Due to these results, it makes no sense to keep this scheduling system. Hopefully, more students will protest the 8-period day as well, and attempt to make an influential change in Lawrence High School.

## Student Spotlight: Allen Green

By: Jordan Garry

Summer is usually a time for fun with friends, relaxation time from the stress of school, and going to the beach. However, this was not the case for Allen Green, one of Lawrence High School's most prominent seniors. Allen spent most of his Summer performing research on hydrogen fuel cells, committing countless hours to writing research papers, and traveling to SUNY Stony Brook. I got a chance to talk with Allen about the future of his scientific research after school one day. However, when Allen began talking to me about his research, all I heard was a lot of scientific mumbo-jumbo (I do not specialize in science whatsoever). Despite the initial confusion, Allen was able to give me a nice, coherent summary on what he's been up to these past few months. When I asked him what his research was on Allen responded, "Improving the power output of a hydrogen fuel cell and reducing the cost by using gold platinum and iron nanoparticles embedded in graphene sheets". Since I had no initial idea what Allen was talking about, he was able to explain it to me. Apparently the nanoparticles in a hydrogen fuel cell are usually gold-platinum. By changing these plain gold-platinum nanoparticles to

gold-platinum and iron nanoparticles embedded in graphene sheets, Allen hoped to reduce the cost of running a fuel cell and simultaneously increase the power output. Fortunately, Green was successful on both counts. The original power output of the gold-platinum nanoparticle fuel cell was .14 watts. However, the power output of the fuel cell with gold platinum and iron nanoparticles embedded in graphene sheets was .26 watts - a 1.86 times better outcome! Despite the change in type of nanoparticle, this result was also due to Green being able to reduce the effect that hydrogen monoxide had on the power output. In a separate test on carbon monoxide, Allen found his control group to have a power output of .08 watts. However, after reducing the effect that hydrogen monoxide had on the fuel cell, Allen's new sample fuel cell had a power output of .2 watts - 250% better than the control group! As aforementioned, Allen was also able to greatly reduce the cost of running a fuel cell. Since a fuel cell's running cost primarily depends on the use of purified hydrogen, Allen was able to find a method in which the cost of a liter of purified hydrogen would go from \$4.20 all the way down to ten cents! While these leaps in scientific research are great, they came at a big cost for Allen. Practically ALL SUMMER, Allen was devoting time to this project. Even at the end of the Summer Allen had to travel 5 hours total, to and from Stony Brook, to continue his research. It wasn't until September 20 that Green was done

with the research paper for his first competition. Needless to say, there will probably be many more competitions coming up for Allen in the future. When I asked Green where he sees his research bringing him, he stated, "I have big hopes for science competitions such as the Siemens Competition, STS, ISEF, I-SWEEP, and JSHS." Though Allen's research has been superb, competitions like the one's he mentioned are very difficult to even qualify. Despite the obstacles ahead, I have no doubt Allen's research and hard work will pay off for him in the end. Hopefully, he can reach the goal of getting far in all of the competitions he mentioned and somehow add even more "PRIDE" to the name of Lawrence.



## Atlanta Educator Causes Uproar with Her Clothes

By: Amy Barrientos

A fourth grade teacher's aide in Atlanta, Patrice Brown, has recently been exploited for her choice in work attire. As shown all over social media, Brown's attire ranged from fitted dresses to tight jeans and tee shirts. So what exactly caused the huge commotion over her wardrobe? Many say Ms. Brown was not dressed appropriately for work. "She's working around fourth grade students. It doesn't seem right for her to be wearing tight outfits that would work better at a party." stated an anonymous source. Many of those against Brown's attire state it is not appropriate because it may cause children to be distracted from learning. Recent research suggests that fourth grade students typically ranging from 9-10 years old may already be concerned with body image. These children, especially girls, could be focusing on Brown's curves and body rather than learning. On the other hand, many people believe that we need to stop focusing on our bodies in a negative way. Why should women with beautiful

curves, such as Patrice Brown, feel the need to conceal them? Many agree that the bigger problem is our constant focus on "who's body will distract whom?" School codes for teachers and students alike, have ridiculously increased with negative connotations towards our bodies. Many of these codes arise from attempts to keep people in the school environment from distracting others. However, is it so bad to have a body to be proud of? Ms. Brown was not only was blessed with her curves, but she had also worked hard for it in the gym. Women should be allowed to feel beautiful and wear what they want without "distracting" those around them.



## Welcome, Mrs. Frommling

By: Erika Kirchner

Ms. Fromling is new to the high school but definitely not to the Lawrence School District. Ms. Fromling has taught in Lawrence for 32 years now! For her first four years she was a substitute teacher/ aid at the High School. For the last 28 years she has worked with the younger children as a gym teacher for 1st - 8th graders. I decided to ask Ms. Fromling a few questions about her transition: Q - How has your transition been so far from the elementary school to the high school? A - The transition has definitely been hard for me. I haven't worked with "adults" in such a long time, it's different. Q- Do you miss teaching the younger kids? A- Yes, in many ways I do. I've learned that the older kids aren't as enthusiastic towards participating as the younger ones. Also, the gym classes at the high school are much larger than at the elementary school. I have approximately 35 students in each class now compared to 20. Q- What is your favorite thing about teaching at the high school now? A- A lot of the students I now have, I had already. I had most of them in number six school when they were 6-10 years old so it's really nice for me to see how they've grown since then. Well there it is! Ms. Fromling is slowly but surely adjusting to everything and she is positive she will adjust just fine.