



Great Vision Great coverage

# The Gazette '19-'20

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## Franklin's Own Rosalind Marfo Running For SMOB

By Matthew Rubinstein

Every year, students in Baltimore County elect one of their peers to one of the most important yet unseen jobs in student council. Most student know who the president and vice president of their class is, some students might know the names of the secretary or treasurer or historian, but few students know the name of a student in a much more pivotal position. Sitting on the Baltimore County Board of Education are 11 adults and one student, known as the Student Member of the Board of Education, or SMOB.

This student, the SMOB, is tasked with representing the 115,000 students in Baltimore County on the board of education. As the only member of the board who experiences the life of a student every day, the input of the SMOB is essential in ensuring that the board is acting with the student's best interest in mind. Angela Qian, President of the Baltimore County Student Councils and senior at Dulaney High School recognizes the importance of this position. According to Ms. Qian, her job is to "advocate for students and offer them opportunities to grow as leaders" and in speaking about the position of SMOB she recognizes its significance. According to Ms. Qian, among the multitude of interests and issues in education "it's the SMOB's job to make sure that students are at the forefront".

Despite this position's importance, very few students know what it is or even that it exists.

One of the reasons for this lack of awareness of the SMOB position is the small number of students that vote for the SMOB. According to Ms. Qian, in past years around 200 students in Baltimore County would go to an event to choose the SMOB for next year. Outside of these 200 students, very few were ever made aware of the SMOB as their representative. Thankfully, this changes this year, as the election process for SMOB undergoes a significant change.

This year, for the first time, all High School and Middle School students in Baltimore County will have the opportunity to vote for their representative on the board of education. All students will be shown candidate speeches and will have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates. Three candidates were chosen to be finalist for the position, and this year one of those students attends Franklin High School.

Junior Rosalind Marfo, class of 2021 president was recently chosen as one of the finalists for the SMOB position and will record her speech shortly. Asked about her choice to run for SMOB, Ms. Marfo says that she is "someone who really cares about other people, cares about the problems and wants to fix it". Asked about Ms. Marfo's selection as a finalist, SGA advisor Mr. Tortolero said, "when I opened the email my heart just smiled". All Franklin students and students across the county will receive more information about SMOB and will be able to vote in the coming weeks.



Top left: Franklin's Rosalind Marfo

Bottom left: Dulaney's Vinay Khosla

Top right: Dundalk's Joshua Muhamuza

## Juniors Get Ready for the SAT

By Vaughn Everette

The SAT, the test that everyone in the nation must take. Every college looks at your score. On March 25<sup>th</sup> every junior at Franklin will take this test for free. Some people are wondering why it was implemented. The college board introduced in 1901. At that time, the test had an essay portion, subjects like Greek, Latin, and physics, and it took five days to complete. The school pays for juniors to do the SAT once, but some people take it multiple times. At that point you would have to pay for it. Franklin has classes available to take to prepare you for the SAT. The teachers are Ms. Jennings, Ms. Scannell, Ms. Roth, and Ms. Patrick.

They teach an SAT prep class throughout the year. Junior Evan Jones has taken the SAT three different times. This way he can get the best score possible. This is a good way to prepare for March 25<sup>th</sup> and to get into a good college. His highest score was a 1190, which is the average score in Maryland. Evan wants to go to Howard University. They accept an 1140 and higher so he has his goal SAT score to hopefully get accepted.

SAT prep teacher Ms. Scannell said that they prepare for the SAT all year by learning strategies and taking practice tests. A good thing that Franklin has is what they do after the SAT.

Ms. Scannell said she can read their college essays and practice filling out applications. Every teacher will be cheering on the juniors to do great on the test. They don't need luck for this when Franklin prepares them to succeed.

### ATTENTION 11th GRADERS!

THURSDAY, FEB. 27!

Have the opportunity to **take a full-length SAT** in preparation for SAT day on March 25th.

Sign-up with your English teacher!  
First come, first serve.

**Mock SAT Day**

### Black Student Union celebrates Black History Month

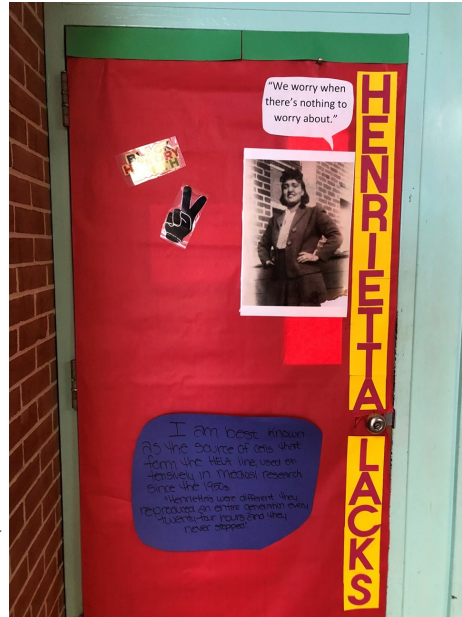
By Chesnie Caster

Over the course of February, Black Student Union members aim to promote awareness of African American history and culture through a series of school events and activities. In the social studies department hallway, students can spot door decorations of famous and historically significant figures. Each door highlights an important historical figure including a resume of each person. Some of these individuals include, Thurgood Marshall, Ida B. Wells, and Kobe Bryant. There has been an increased want amongst many students to learn more about culturally diverse history beyond what is taught in the classroom. BSU members aim to promote awareness in a convenient manner, such as through decorations in a prominently used hallway in Franklin.

There have been discussions in BSU where students have expressed concern about their current awareness on African American history. According to BSU president, Zaria Gabriel "Students should expect a time for celebration of black history" throughout the month of February. The Black Student Union will hold many diverse discussions and conversations surrounding African American history

and current African American culture.

Another major event BSU is planning for the month of February is Movie Night. Last year, BSU showed *The Hate U Give*, and this made a lot of profit for the new club. This year BSU will be showing another culturally relevant movie. BSU members are hoping for a great turnout, so be sure to buy your tickets during all lunch shifts a week before the date of February 28<sup>th</sup>. This will be a great opportunity to spend time with your friends and even meet new people. BSU is looking for student



*The door decorated by BSU to commemorate the life of Henrietta Lacks*

volunteers, so be sure to attend meetings every other Thursday. There will be concessions at the event that include candy, chips, and many more. This event will be the center stone of Black History Month. This event will be held on the final day of the Black History Month Spirit week. The days of the spirit week include BSU T-shirt day, throwback day, HBCU day, profession's day, and then movie day. These days are intended to showcase black excellence and history. Be sure to participate in all upcoming BSU activities designed to educate and promote awareness.

### The Key to the Community

By Justin Magaziner

One of the biggest and most important clubs at Franklin is the Kiwanis sponsored Key Club. Vice President, Vedant Yadav said the club is "about service to our community and letting everyone who wants to join and help participate regardless of sex, race, or grades." Helping the community can be very personal and important to some people including Secretary Chesnie Caster who said she loves community service because it is a family tradition that she feels a responsibility to uphold. Similarly, President Briana DeMarcy said that she does Key Club because it is a way to "give back to the community in any way possible. It is my way of saying thank you to the school, teachers, and community through the kind service that impacts others."

DCON, the biggest activity of the year for Key Club is coming up in mid-march. It is a district convention where all of the Key Clubs in Maryland and Virginia

are invited to a district convention held in downtown Baltimore where they work together in countless workshops and activities to help them learn what it means to be in the club. Additionally, DCON holds the election for the new Regional club president.



Arguably the most important club at Franklin, Key Club offers students the opportunity to stay involved and help their community in countless ways. The club holds meetings every Tuesday in the library which usually includes a short service project until 3 pm. Sometimes, the club organizes parties for holidays, including a Valentine's Party that was just held on Tuesday February 11. For more information see the clubs sponsoring teacher Ms. Doyle in room 6.

### When Social Media is too much, Teens need a Break

By Bari Weinstein

Social Media seems to have good and bad effects for both teenagers and adults. We interviewed 15 people, and they all had different views on social media or phones.

**Savta:** My grandmother believes that social media is “an invasion of people’s privacy. Plenty of things people do over social media, they could do it in person, instead of through a phone, like a simple conversation. We have seen were people can get hurt from using social media, mentally, socially and physically.”

**Pop:** “On my phone I get news; it’s not always accurate. The stock market is wrong. It upsets me when I see people dying, and when I read about the president, and many things he does upsets me. But I get most of my information from newspaper.”

**Mother:** “It helps people stay in touch. It’s useful for jobs. It’s a way to get information.”

**Father:** “It’s easier for them to contact people. Whether they use it for good or for bad. Many people use it for their jobs.”

**7<sup>th</sup> grader Ian:** “To connect with family and

friends. And it’s my calming place as well as a stress relief for me.”

**Senior Kate Lober:** “It does not stress me out because some of it is fake, and you have to look past that.”

**Senior Jordan Osterweil:** “I use Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook and Tiktok, to connect with family and friends.”

**Senior Kayla Harvey:** “I see it as both because it has its disadvantages and advantages.”

**Sophomore Taylor Ford:** “Yes, because of how I get in contact with people.”

**Sophomore Natalie Lista:** “There could be good or bad feedback on certain social media’s, that could hurt people, physically and mentally.”

**Sophomore Ayden Kosmides:** “They put different content on there. They produce different content for all ages.”

**Sophomore Vanessa Williams:** “It depends, social media can cause people to be influenced in both good and bad ways.”

**When students use their phone in class, how does it affect the teacher?**

**Mr. Schrengost:**

“I have no issues with kids on their phones, as long as they can get the directions for class, it’s fine with a me. Well, because I do not like to be that person and take their phone. I do believe that people need phones these days. My kids use social media such as tiktok.”

**Ms. Molfino:**

“Lately I have been telling kids if they do not put their phones away, I will take them away during class. I have a bin, called the “oh well” bin, and it gets put there till the end of class.”

**Mr. Savick:**

“Well, when I teach, the kids believe that they can go on their phones instead of listening to my lesson. And then they do not do as well as they would like to do. But my policy is that after you finish your work, you’re welcome to go on your phone, but my students choose not to do their work and instead use their phone for forty minutes.”

### Getting through the Winter Blues

By Nakira Boyd

Is It Serious?

Winter Blues have affected everyone at least once in their life. The question everyone asks is why or is it serious? According to psychologist Joyce Corsica, “The winter blues are very common, with many of us experiencing a mood shift during the colder, darker days of the winter.” But what are the ways that people handle this? If you have the winter blues, read ahead!

**The Power of the sun!**

Vitamin D is known as the ‘Sunshine Vitamin’ because your mood may improve with as little as 10 minutes of sun exposure. The lower level of natural sunlight we are exposed to in the fall and winter creates less natural light which can alter your sleep patterns and change your mood simply because it is based on how much sunlight you receive. The signs are noticeable by having difficulty sleeping, feeling less social than usual and difficulty taking initiative, according to the statistics of health and wellness from Rush.com

**Eat Better, Feel Better?**

Yes! It is physically possible to boost your mood by the things you eat! Try these 10 food tips to help ease the blues. According to Healthline, we all should eat lean proteins which carry plenty amino acids, which may positively affect your mood and will give you a great boost of that extra energy everyone needs! Berries are a common nutrient that can prevent the release of cortisol, a hormone produced by the adrenal glands. Blueberries, raspberries and everyone’s favorite strawberries can work. Lastly, it is very important to limit your sugar intake because insufficient amounts of omega-3 fatty acids can functionally change your brain and slow it down. But, did you know Dark chocolate can be a self-medication. Timothy J. Legg, PhD, said, “Pick up a bar with the highest cocoa content you can find!”



**Interviews with your peers!**

Teacher Mrs. Brown said, “Winter Blues do affect me as a Math teacher. But it really affects because I am not a morning person. So, I force myself out the bed because I know I have kids at Franklin that depend on me. I’m sure it happens to the best of us, not just teachers.” Statistics from Kaylenwrites.com say, “Winter blues affect approximately 10-20% of the population.” Also, Jaelan Adams said, “I think everyone gets them, but it affected me because I would just want to stay in my bed if I had to work, which is a bad outcome because I would be missing out on money. I mean, everything happens for a reason. There have been times where I did stay in bed. Especially, in this weather!” College student Donavon Wills said, “Since I am a college student, I think it hits more than it did in high school because we had time to chill. Nowadays, I feel like I’m working 4 jobs when I have the winter blues. I overcome them because I always think about my career when I’m done.”

“Think about the possible outcomes you’ll gain. If you just ignore the blues, you’ll be happy.” - Anon.



### ID Cards: A Burden or a Blessing?

By Simone Tillman

The BCPS One-Card Identification System was incorporated into schools for the sole purpose of protection. Their introduction in the spring of 2014 was supposed to deny access to anyone not attending or working on school grounds. During the five to six years these identification cards have been in use, the attitudes of those using them have varied greatly. While some appreciate the response to many safety concerns, others are questioning their practicality.

Franklin High School, one of the many schools in Baltimore County that have introduced identification cards into their customs, has many differing opinions on the big question: are ID cards a blessing, or a burden? Sophomore Kiersten Jones declares the ID cards a sort of blessing with flaws. "They're good in terms of being able to get into the school without knocking and making sure others can't get in that aren't supposed to. But they're bad because they can be hard to carry around, so people don't bring them anyway." While the identification cards help guard the entrances and exits, they seem to lack usability.

But what happens once school hours are over? Sophomore Noveen Awan explains the irrationality of the identification cards when it comes to afterschool activities. "You can't get in after 2:30 which is dumb because all school clubs start at

2:30. It's useless because when I need my tennis bag after practice, I can't even get in." All of those who participate in the numerous after-school cubs, sports, and activities can no longer enter the building with ease due to the cards being denied after school hours. While the cards may be a good protector during the day, the diligent protection of student access could become troublesome depending on the hour.



Photo credited from Gridjumper's Blog.

There are many opinions on the cards' convenience, but one thing that students and faculty can't seem to agree on is if the cards are serving their initial purpose. The cards were implement-

ed in 2014 to keep strangers and intruders out of the school building. But the identification process quickly popularized in 2018 after the Parkland Shooting occurred. The grim event put all schools on high alert. The identification system would ensure that anyone coming in or out of the buildings was an owner of an identification card provided by the very school they attend. But sophomore Oliva Turner is skeptical of the ID cards' ability to produce such a security. "It's not going to stop any mass shootings because everyone lets in everybody no matter what. Someone knocks, someone answers," Turner said. During the transitional periods of the school day, students are given five minutes to go to each class. This doesn't allot much time to wait. As a remedy, students allow each other in without hesitation.

The identification card system was a good effort to try and combat the growing problem of school threats, but it's still to be debated how well the cards manage to live up to their purpose. While they pose hassles such as remembering to take them in-between classes and deactivating after school hours, they do help form a sense of security and comfort in the schooling environment. Perhaps only with time will it be clear, whether the ID cards are truly a blessing or a burden.

### Sleeping and Learning. How Closely Related Are They?

By Christina Okoli

Sleep. Something we find so insignificant but has a massive effect on people physically as well as mentally. The real question is how much does it affect students? Students were asked about their sleeping habits and how it affects their learning.

Most of the students questioned sleep three to six hours each night. The reasons varied from social media, homework, families, T.V. shows, and after school activities. This is not shocking, even though the recommended amount of sleep for adults is seven hours while teenagers need nine to nine and a half hours of sleep, according to Amy Wolfson, a professor of psychology at the College of the Holy Cross. She explained that students getting the right amount of sleep is difficult because of the circadian phase delay, a reaction to the normal shift in the internal clock. "The time they go to bed hovers around 11 p.m., so that means it's difficult to start school before 8:30 or 9 a.m."

Students gave mixed views on how their education is affected by sleep. Senior Benjamin Raras said, "Yes, [it's affected,] but minimally because the work is easy. I do get a little distracted."

Other students say otherwise, like Ayden Kosmides. "No, not at all, I'm more awake when I get less sleep. When I get more sleep, I wake up more tired, and I like doze off in my morning classes."

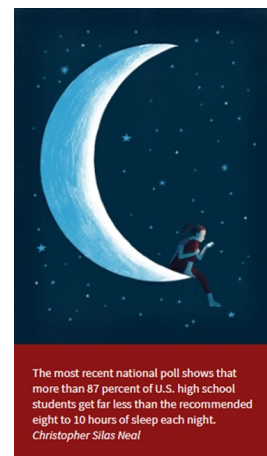
What are the real consequences of poor sleeping for teens? According to NationwideChildren's.org, mood, behavior, cognitive ability, academic performance, and drowsy driving are all consequences of a lack of sleep. Medstandford.ed adds that sleep deprivation in teens can cause anxiety depression, thoughts of suicide, and possible suicide attempts.

Could school opening later help with this dire situation? Sophomore Aria Baker explained, "I think it would be better because people could get more sleep and that will help us do better in our classes because we have more sleep. So, we're more mentally awake." But there is no official research of the pros and cons. According to SleepFoundation.org, there was a bill that was created in 2014 to "introduce legislation that addresses the relationship between

school start times and adolescent health, wellbeing and performance." For a project as big as this, there will need to be cooperation between parents, teachers, students, principals, school

boards, superintendents, counselors and healthcare professionals, to make a change.

Overall, good sleep is more than just leisure time. Helene Emsellem, a neurologist, says that an important thing to remember is "This idea of sacrificing sleep for academics is an oxymoron. We learn during sleep, so we need to sleep to learn."



The most recent national poll shows that more than 87 percent of U.S. high school students get far less than the recommended eight to 10 hours of sleep each night. Christopher Silas Neal

Image from Stanford Medicine News Center

### Be Our Guest! Franklin High School Presents Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* this March

By Jacob Sands



This year's spring musical is *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*. There are many factors that make this production very special and unique from any other show that has been done at Franklin. One of the most notable factors is that teachers and staff are in the production this year. That's right, many of your favorite adults from all around the school are performing in the show!

Now, how did these staff members get approached to be a part of the production you might ask? According to Mrs. Spivak, "Mrs. Sala (the director of the production) told the teachers

and staff members about the musical at faculty meetings, emailed them, and put it on the faculty bulletin." Therefore, there were many apparent ways for teachers to join the cast.

These staff members will be in some of the most notable musical numbers of the production, such as the songs "Belle", "Gaston", "Be Our Guest", and many more, and let me tell you, they are having tons of fun rehearsing! Ms. Spivak said, "I absolutely love the rehearsals. I have so much fun participating, and I'm so happy that teachers are being included in the performance!" Ms. Scannell said that her favorite part of being in the cast is "getting to interact with the students since they are all so passionate about it. It's cool to be a part of your world."

Yet another amazing aspect of this production is that the teachers get to witness the cast of students do what they love to do the most: performing. Ms. Scannell said, "It is really awesome to see how involved and excited you guys are. It gets me excited. I enjoy seeing Ms. Larri-more (Vocal Director) and Mrs. Sala (Director) in action."

This experience is truly unlike any other. It is purely wonderful to see the students and staff members work together to create such a beautiful masterpiece. Mrs. Spivak said, "My favorite part would be interacting with students outside of the classroom. It's a different environment, so I get to see a different side of my students. I also get to meet and talk to new students, which I really enjoy as well." As you can see, this experience is bringing a ton of people together who all share one specific goal, putting on the best performance possible.

*Disney's Beauty and the Beast* will run at Franklin High School promptly on March 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm, and March 28<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm.



### Rhythm and Remembrance; Grammys Pay Tribute to Kobe Bryant as Rising Stars Sweep Coveted Awards

By Sydnee Hart

On January 26, CBS held the 62<sup>nd</sup> annual Grammy Awards. The ceremony was hosted by multi -Grammy award winner Alicia Keys, well known for her songs "No One" and "Girl on Fire." Many artists hit the red carpet with their luxurious outfits by well named designers. This kept viewers at home talking, as well as fashion critics. Senior Alexis Campbell spoke on her favorite outfit of the night. "Ariana Grande by far had my favorite outfit of the night because it was simple but supplementary. She looked like a princess and was absolutely stunning."

Though this was an exciting night, this also happened to be the day of Kobe and Gianna Bryant and the other passengers passing due to a helicopter crash that occurred earlier that morning. Before the audience was anxious to see the list of awards, Keys made a speech about Kobe and Gianna's death. Keys and Boys II Men performed "Hard to Say Good-bye" to recognize their lives and Kobe's legacy. Senior Lilah Henderson spoke on her thoughts

of the memorial. "I think the memorial was a beautiful way for his closest fans, family, and other sports lovers to celebrate his life in a peaceful yet sentimental way. May him and his younger daughter rest in peace and everyone else on board of the helicopter."

Afterwards, there were many performances by the nominees including Tyler the Creator, Lil Nas X/ Billy Ray Cyrus, and Demi Lovato. Lovato performed her song "Anyone" which explained her struggles with addiction and her cry out for help. This was Lovato's first performance since her overdose this past July. Senior Eric Akordor said, "Demi Lovato was one of my favorite performances because it broke my heart and brought tears to my eyes. She was close to meeting death this past summer, and now she is taking her life back by slaying the stage. Period!" Akordor further on explained his thoughts on Billie Eilish's performance. "Her song was so adorable, and her winning 5 Grammys out of six nominations is incredible." Eilish has taken the world by storm

with her music. She swept the Grammys floor with five wins including Record and Artist of the Year, as well as being the youngest person to do so. At the age of eighteen, Eilish has come to be one of the most successful women of our generation!

Though the show opened with an upsetting start, the Grammys was overall very tasteful when remembering Kobe as well as reminding the audience and viewers at home that music is what brings us together.





### Franklin's View: Are Esports Considered Sports?

By Yaroslav Shalak

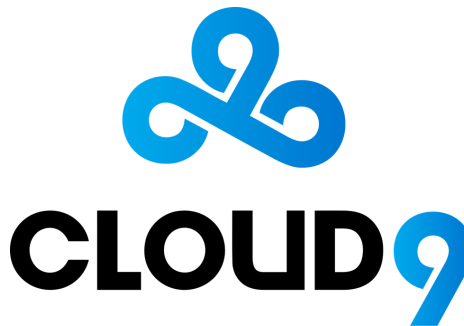


*Dota 2 is one of the most watched esports in the world. It also has the largest prize pool ever in esports, being \$34 million. Source: CNN*

Esports and competitive video game tournaments have been incredibly popular in recent years, with many major companies and athletes investing into the booming industry. However, many still don't consider esports to be actual sports for a variety of reasons. The term sport is vague and subjective, and, as such, many people have many different definitions of what a sport really is.

For some background, esports is the playing of video games professionally for rewards, money, and other accolades. They can be played online or with a local area network (LAN). Some of the biggest esports tournaments have tens of millions of people watching, mostly online. Some of the biggest games for

esports include: League of Legends, Fortnite, Dota 2, and many others. Esports is the biggest it has ever been, considering the activity is still very young when compared to other traditional sports. This sport is also growing at a very rapid rate. When asking the students around Franklin about whether or not they have heard of esports, the overwhelming majority say they have, even if they don't watch them at all.



*Cloud9 is an American esports team and one of the most famous in the world. It is most famous for Counter Strike : Global Offensive and League of Legends. Source: Wikipedia*

The definition of a sport, according to Dictionary.com, is "an activity involving physi-

cal exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against another or others for entertainment." The vague definition leads many to speculate what exactly "physical exertion" and "skill" are. When asking Senior Mark Henderson if esports are considered sports and why, he said, "No, there is no physical athleticism in playing video games other than palm sweat." Junior Vaughn Everette said, "Yes, because it falls under college sports, and you can get paid for playing it." Senior Rares Socaciou sees playing video games professionally as sports. "Video games require attention, focus, and very fast reflexes in most cases. Even though it's not a physical activity, and electronic game requires a lot of energy to play." He compares esports to other non-athletic sports like poker and fishing. For Socaciou, if it takes mental and/or physical energy to win, then it is a sport.

How we define sports is purely a matter of personal opinion. Strategy, teamwork, energy, enthusiasm, and hard work are all necessary to win in an esports competition. For some, that's enough to categorize it as a sport. Many others just see it as a fad that will die out in 10 years' time. Many sports have faced that same problem. Keeping loyal fans is easy, but attracting new ones is not easy. Of course, only time can tell what impact esports will have on how we see sports.

### "You gotta fight for your right to Lombardi"

By Gabe Kinstlinger



*Chiefs' quarterback Patrick Mahomes*

Every year, the Super Bowl is the biggest sporting event of the year, with millions around the world tuning in for the game. This year, the Super Bowl pitted the San Francisco 49ers, who were in last place in 2018, against the Kansas City Chiefs, who suffered heartbreak in last year's conference championship and who haven't won a title since 1970.

One major talking point prior to this year's game was Chiefs Head Coach, Andy Reid. Reid's teams have continuously choked in the playoffs, and entering the game, he was the winningest coach in NFL history without a ring. Freshman Bradley Flam says, "I wanted the Chiefs to win, because I wanted Reid to get a Super Bowl."

When the game got underway, the Niners defense held the strong Kansas City offense to 10 points, while building a 20-10 lead. Senior Justin Magaziner said, "I thought the 49ers were going to win when the score was 20-10, but then I realized that their head coach was Kyle Shanahan, and that the Chiefs had Patrick Mahomes." Kyle Shanahan was the offensive coordinator of the Atlanta Falcons when they infamously blew a 28-3 lead to the Patriots in the Super Bowl.

But late in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, the Chiefs offense came to life. They scored 21 unanswered points to finish the game and finished with a 31-20 victory. Senior Vedant Yadav said, "With comebacks in all three playoff games while down by at least 10 points, Patrick Mahomes is one of the best clutch performers in the NFL."

Overall, many people were happy with the result, which Flam said, "I think it was good that it came down to the last quarter, which made it more exciting." Another reason to be happy is that Andy Reid finally won his ring."

The Chiefs were the sentimental pick to win, and Magaziner said, "I think that it is good for the entire NFL community that Andy Reid won a super bowl, because he is one of the most well-liked coaches in the game today." This was a Super Bowl that many people will remember for a long time.

### HEADLINES FROM AROUND THE TELEVISION NEWS INDUSTRY

By Logan Dubel



President Trump delivers his 2020 State of the Union Address, with Vice President Pence and Speaker Pelosi seated behind him. Image by Getty Images.



CBS Anchor Gayle King, the late Basketball Star Kobe Bryant, and former WNBA Star Lisa Leslie. Image by Getty Images.



The late PBS Anchor Jim Lehrer. Image by Carol Guzy of The Washington Post.

#### STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS & DEMOCRATIC RESPONSE BRINGS IN LARGE, BUT DECLINING AUDIENCE

On February 4<sup>th</sup>, President Trump delivered his annual State of the Union Address to a room filled with both supporters and members of the opposition, while millions of eyes were glued to their television screens across the nation. 37.2 million viewers tuned in across the major broadcast and cable networks. However, this is a significant decline from last year's address. 46.8 million viewers watched the State of the Union in 2019. Fox News Channel topped both broadcast and cable with 11.5 million viewers. NBC, ABC, and CBS were all far behind with around 4 million viewers each. Fox Broadcast trailed with 3.5 million viewers, while CNN and MSNBC each averaged around 2 million viewers. Following the speech, Governor Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan delivered the democratic response. Ratings decreased for Fox News Channel but increased for CNN and MSNBC during Whitmer's speech. However, FNC remained on top, averaging around 8 million viewers, while CNN and MSNBC averaged near 3 million viewers each. The networks have been busy covering major political events, including the 2020 primary election season and the impeachment/acquittal of President Trump.

#### "BACK OFF, BEFORE WE COME FOR YOU": SNOOP DOGG ATTACKS CBS ANCHOR GAYLE KING AFTER CONTROVERSIAL KOBE BRYANT QUESTION

Gayle King, co-anchor of *CBS This Morning* is facing significant backlash after an interview with former WNBA star and friend of the late Kobe Bryant, Lisa Leslie. King conducted a wide-ranging interview with the WNBA star, but her question about Bryant's 2003 sexual assault allegation sparked outrage on social media. King asked, "It's been said that his legacy is complicated because of a sexual assault charge that was dismissed in 2003, 2004. Is it complicated for you, as a woman, as a WNBA player?" Leslie then replied, "I just never see — have ever seen him being the kind of person that would be

— do something to violate a woman or be aggressive in that way. That's just not the person that I know." King responded, "Lisa, you wouldn't see it, though. As his friend, you wouldn't see it." This is a situation that Gayle is all too familiar with. She was blindsided when her co-anchor, Charlie Rose, was fired from CBS News in November 2017 after several sexual harassment allegations.

King's interview first aired on Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>. The interview was well-received. However, on Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, CBS posted that specific exchange on twitter, without King's consent. Snoop Dogg posted an expletive-filled video that attacked King, which prompted further backlash against her. She posted a lengthy video addressing the controversy before her broadcast on February 6<sup>th</sup>. King said, "I know that if I had only seen the clip that you saw, I would be very angry with me too." King did not appear on *CBS This Morning* on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Oprah Winfrey, who is King's best friend, appeared on *Hoda & Jenna* and stated that King was "not doing well". King has received death threats. CBS News President Susan Zirinsky opened up on February 9<sup>th</sup> and stated, "We fully support Gayle King and her integrity as a journalist... We find the threats against her or any journalist doing their job reprehensible." Like all controversies, this will soon blow over. However, King's reputation has surely been damaged. King was back on-air February 10<sup>th</sup>, and no mention of the controversy was made. #IStandWithGayle was trending on twitter. While King appears to have moved on, social media has not.

#### REMEMBERING A LEGEND: FORMER PBS NEWS ANCHOR JIM LEHRER DIES AT 85

Jim Lehrer, the former anchor of *PBS Newshour*, passed away on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. He anchored his nightly broadcast on PBS from 1975 to 2011, and always reported from the center. He began his career at PBS by covering President Nixon and the Watergate scandal. The announcement of his death came in the midst of PBS's coverage of the impeachment trial of President Trump. He was also known as a moderator of presidential debates. He moderated twelve debates between 1988 and 2012. Lehrer's col-

leagues remembered him fondly. Current anchor of *PBS Newshour*, Judy Woodruff stated, "I'm heartbroken at the loss of someone who was central to my professional life, a mentor to me and someone whose friendship I've cherished for decades, I've looked up to him as the standard for fair, probing and thoughtful journalism and I know countless others who feel the same way." *PBS Newshour* airs at 6PM on Maryland Public Television (MPT).

#### CHANGES IN YOUR BACKYARD: BALTIMORE LOCAL NEWS HIRES/LINEUP CHANGES

- WJZ has hired Amy Kawata as a general assignment reporter. Amy will appear on air weekday mornings. She comes to Baltimore from WMBF in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.
- WJZ has named current general assignment reporter Sean Streicher co-anchor of the Saturday morning newscast. He will work alongside Meteorologist Meg McNamara.
- WJZ has named current general assignment reporter and former Saturday morning co-anchor Rachael Cardin co-anchor of the Sunday evening newscasts alongside Max McGee and Meteorologist Chelsea Ingram.
- WMAR has hired Ray Strickland as a reporter for the 11:00 weeknight newscast. He comes to Baltimore from WKYC in Cleveland, Ohio.



WJZ logo. Image by WJZ from wjz.com  
WMAR logo. Image by WMAR from wmar2news.com





### HEADLINES FROM AROUND THE TELEVISION NEWS INDUSTRY

By Logan Dubel



CBSN Philly logo. Image by CBSN Philly from Newscastudio.com



Hoda Kotb and Jenna Bush Hager on set. Image by Today.



Oscar Awards. Image by Christopher Polk from Getty Images.

#### CBSN PHILADELPHIA LAUNCHES AS OTHER CBS STATIONS READY FOR A NEW DIGITAL CHALLENGE

KYW (CBS 3) in Philadelphia has debuted its digital streaming service, CBSN Philadelphia. This move follows the debut of digital streaming services in New York, Los Angeles, Boston, San Francisco, and Minnesota. CBSN Pittsburgh is expected to debut later this month, while CBSN Baltimore is expected to launch later this year. WJZ, the CBS affiliate in Baltimore, has not commented publicly on the matter. Peter Dunn, the president of CBS Television Studios said "It is very exciting to reach the midpoint of the rollout for our CBSN Local services with the launch of CBSN Philly. We have learned so much during our five previous launches and now have the structure in place to accelerate our rollout plan and go live in all of our markets within the next few months." CBSN first debuted as a national streaming service from CBS News in 2014. Now, the brand is being used to bolster the online presence of CBS owned and operated television stations.

#### HODA & JENNA & FRIENDS: REVAMPED 4<sup>TH</sup> HOUR OF TODAY DEBUTS

On February 6<sup>th</sup>, *Hoda & Jenna & Friends* debuted on NBC as part of the *Today* franchise. Co-hosts Hoda Kotb and Jenna Bush Hager will now be joined by a studio audience each Thursday and Friday. This is all made possible by NBC's studio 6A, the former home of *Megyn Kelly Today*. This is just another change for the fourth hour of NBC's *Today*. Back in April, co-host Kathie Lee Gifford retired, while Kotb and Hager relaunched the program. Kotb and Hager are now joined by a DJ to excite the audience during each show. For tickets, you can visit <https://1iota.com/show/1062/hoda-jenna>

#### OSCARS & GRAMMYS FACE SHRINKING AUDIENCE

The Academy Awards (Oscars) were viewed by millions on February 9<sup>th</sup>, but this audience This downward trend is certainly not a new one. The Grammy awards brought in 18.7 million viewers, which was a 6% decline from 2019. While both awards shows have turned political in recent years, the Oscars have dealt with another dilemma. The Oscars have gone without a host for the past two years after a controversy with Kevin Hart in 2019. The Academy also decided to go without a host in 2020. The Grammys have been hosted by Alicia Keys for the past two years, and she has received plenty of praise. While enough viewers still watch these awards shows for them to be broadcast on television, that was not the case for the Daytime Emmy Awards. Over the last decade, the Daytime Emmys have shifted from broadcast, to cable, and now, to simply online. The Oscars and Grammys will likely remain on television for years to come, but television experts will continue to monitor their waning popularity. Entertainment news outlets such as *Entertainment Tonight*, *Access*, and *Extra* would surely suffer without these massive events to report on.

#### BLACK NEWS CHANNEL (BNC) DEBUTS IN SELECT MARKETS

A new news outlet based in Tallahassee, Black News Channel (BNC) debuted on February 10<sup>th</sup> in select markets, including in Los Angeles and Atlanta. Spectrum and Xfinity X-1 customers can access the channel now, while those who subscribe to Sling and Roku will be able to view content from the channel at a later time. J.C. Watts, a former congressman and football player is credited with the launch. Along with programming on HBCUs, BNC will offer talk shows, a morning newscast, and an evening news newscast. Among the on-air personalities are Lauren McCoy, Rarione Maniece, Meteorologist Kevan Smith, Dr. Kelly Wright, Larry Elder, Fred Hickman, Laverne McGee, and Anthony Amey.

#### TINY STUDIO: ABC NEWS DEBUTS SMALL TEMPORARY SET DURING MAJOR RENOVATIONS

ABC News programs *World News Tonight* and *World News Now* have officially moved to a temporary set, that was originally supposed to be used specifically for the streaming service, ABC News Live. Anchors Kenneth Moton and Elizabeth Hur poked fun at their temporary digs on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, saying that their news desk is "so small!" and feels like local news. ABC's main broadcast hub, Studio TV3 is supposedly getting a major upgrade. ABC's Sunday morning show *This Week* has also been moved to Times Square due to the construction. The renovations are set to be complete by March.



ABC News Temporary Set. Image by ABC News from Newscastudio.com



Black News Channel (BNC) Studio. Image by BNC from Newscastudio.com



### Baseball Hall of Fame

By Jacob McCarthy

The 2020 ballot has been released for the MLB hall of fame, and there are many surprises. Bobby Abreu, Jason Giambi, Derek Jeter and Cliff Lee are among several players who will make their BBWAA Hall of Fame ballot debut in 2020. Also debuting this year are Josh Beckett, Heath Bell, Eric Chávez, Adam Dunn, Chone Figgins, Rafael Furcal, Raúl Ibañez, Paul Konerko, Carlos Peña, Brad Penny, J.J. Putz, Brian Roberts, Alfonso Soriano and José Valverde. From the 2020 ballot, only four were inducted. Cardinals Catcher Ted Simmons, Founder of the MLBPA Marvin Miller, Rockies Outfielder Larry Walker, and Yankee Shortstop Derek Jeter.



Larry Walker and Derek Jeter at baseball hall of fame presentation.

Great all-time players such as Barry Bonds and Pete Rose were still not inducted into the hall, due to the very strict voters. Many have argued that both gentlemen should be inducted after the

recent incident with the cheating Houston Astros. Their title was not stripped from them after clear evidence that they used cameras in center field, and baseball fans across the world feel that Pete Rose should definitely be in after how the league addressed the Astros' hidden camera cheating scandal.

Senior Spencer Wachs believes that former Cincinnati Reds legend Pete Rose should be in, stating "He's one of the greats. He bet on himself and his punishment of not going into the hall doesn't seem right." Junior Zach Shaefer said, "It's very shocking Jeter wasn't unanimous. He was a global superstar."

### Kobe Bryant's Legacy

By Douglas Ditto

Kobe Bryant was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1978. He grew up around professional basketball, as his father was Philadelphia 76ers forward Joe "Jellybean" Bryant. When his NBA days concluded, Bryant continued his playing career overseas, playing numerous seasons in Italy, where a young Kobe Bryant would learn to play as well as become bilingual. Kobe played his high school basketball at Lower Merion High School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. After becoming a superstar in high school, Bryant saw fellow high school star Kevin Garnett go straight to the NBA and skip college with success. This led Bryant to do the same, being drafted by the Charlotte Hornets at age 17 and his rights being traded to Los Angeles on draft day. Lakers legend and General Manager Jerry West made the risky selection, taking a kid who was too young to even sign his own contract (Kobe's parents had to sign his rookie deal, as he was not yet 18).

Once in Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant spent his first season mostly coming off the bench. However, even a young Kobe showed signs of stardom, winning the 1997 Slam Dunk Contest as well as being named to the All-Rookie Second Team.

His ascension to stardom had begun, as the then youngest player to ever play in the NBA more than doubled his scoring output in year two. This improvement marked the beginning of the legend of Kobe Bryant, as he became an all-star.



Kobe Bryant celebrating his NBA championship win

Legendary coach Phil Jackson took over the Lakers in 1999 and thrust Kobe Bryant into the starting lineup, where Kobe would excel and alongside Shaquille O'Neal, and would lead the Lakers to 3 straight NBA Championships from 1999-2002. Shaq and Kobe had become one of the most dominant duos in NBA history, however their relationship off the court often had its rough patches. The Lakers were defeated in the NBA Finals by the Detroit Pistons in 2004, and this signaled the end of an era for the dynasty. Coach Phil Jackson was not brought back and Shaq was traded to Miami, officially making the LA Lakers Kobe Bryant's team.

A few years passed before Kobe would make it to the top of the mountain again, as the Lakers were riddled by early playoff exits despite Kobe becoming a perennial Most Valuable Player candidate. The Lakers made a huge trade for Spaniard Pau Gasol in 2008, and this move allowed Kobe and the Lakers to make the Finals in 2008. They then proceeded to win back to back championships in 2009 and 2010. This gave him 5 championships, solidifying his status as an all-time great. The basketball world got to see Kobe Bryant grow from a 17-year-old kid into the greatest basketball player in the world and one of the greatest to ever play.

His post playing days were looking just as successful as his basketball career, as he won an Oscar for his animated short Dear Basketball. He also had started a basketball facility called Mamba Academy, where he gave instruction to aspiring boys and girls as well as NBA players with promising futures.

Kobe Bryant's legacy lives on in the generation of athletes he inspired. Junior Caleb Kidane said "Kobe was our generation's Michael Jordan. He

constantly strived to be the best and helped instill that attitude into many young athletes and fans."

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