



Great Vision

Great Coverage

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## Franklin's First Female Wrestler Competes and Wins a Match

By Kierra Richardson



This year Franklin girls are training and competing in wrestling for the first time. Before 2022, there was a barrier of no girl to ever win a wrestling match for Franklin. Freshman Dylan Hurd changed history this year, being the first female to win a wrestling match on varsity. On December 6th Dylan's match was against Pikesville, Dulaney, and she came out on top.

Wrestling is known to be the sport where two competitors attempt to unbalance one another by throwing them or holding them on the ground. "In 1990, there were 112 girls who participated in high school wrestling," Gary Abbott, USA Wrestling's director of communications, explains on the National Wrestling Hall of Fame blog. "For 27 straight years, girls' high school wrestling has grown. In many of those years, the percentage of growth was 10% or more. In the 2016-17 high school year, there were 14,587 girls wrestling in high school."

Wrestling is a male-dominant sport that many girls have started to show interest in. "Wrestling has a long history of being inclusive and accessible, racially and by body type," Steve Dittmore, PHD states. We have

weight classes for a variety of sizes, however, we were excluding half of humanity." To participate in wrestling as a female, you must be strong and have courage because things can be against you as numbers show more boys. "My friends would describe me as energetic and outgoing", said Dylan. Typically sports like football, wrestling, hockey, and boxing are where sexism has contributed a lot because females usually don't have the same equal opportunity as guys or are treated very differently in a negative response. In this case Franklin's wrestling coach doesn't look at genders for treating people differently. "He motivates and treats everyone the same. Even though it's just you on the mat, it's a big team sport. We win together and lose together," Dylan said. With his good coaching it helps structure and helps the team with goals.

So, who is Dylan Hurd? Dylan is a 5'4" tall class of '25 student athlete who was born on August 14th. Unlike other athletes, Dylan just started wrestling this year, so everything is a new experience. "No previous experience, so about four weeks ago, I just woke up and said, 'why not,'" Dylan said. Her strong work ethic of learning and trying new things to be better has helped her succeed in winning matches. Dylan says that the barrier of no girls to ever winning at FHS was more of a barrier for herself and how far she could push herself. Other than wrestling, she enjoys softball, and video games. Playing croquet with her mom is very impactful. Dylan spends her weekends wrestling at 8am, and then she goes home around 10. Education is one of the many things that's important to Dylan because she needs her grades high for



sports and her goals. "If you're failing classes, you can't go to county championships. We have to be very well academically and physically," Dylan said.

Women's empowerment has been on the uprise, and this event has helped push it some more. Showing other girls that sports that are male-dominant are accomplishable. Females were held down by barriers of what they can and cannot do. "After winning it felt very inspiring to keep going and getting better. The experience for me is great. I've made new friends and memories, and I get to get out of the house more often," Dylan said.

### Focusing Tips for Students

By Rudra Rami

I was talking to a friend earlier, when she mentioned that whenever she would attempt to pay attention in class, her mind would go blank, and lose focus. This loss of 'focus' really impacts the outcome of your grades, and I think that everyone needs to 'focus' more attention on this topic.



Here are some beneficial tips that could help you improve your focus. First, I'll start with tips that helped me become more intellectual.

#### 1. When procrastinating, discipline yourself to focus.

I didn't consider myself a huge procrastinator until I started reading more books, but one thing I've put together is that I can force myself to focus when I'm getting off-topic. Discipline is important in general life, not only school. Discipline is used everywhere, so you need to force yourself to pay attention to the task at hand.

#### 2. Ask the teacher to help you.

One thing that I've noticed about myself and among various peers, is that we hesitate to ask the teacher where we need help. We don't call for help during instruction, and I've noticed that this is key to improvement because I've tried it before, and it turned something that I struggled with into a 100% grade. So here's what you're going to do. After the teacher is finished giving instructions, I suggest you raise

your hand, or walk to the teacher, and ask the teacher a question that you need answered. Many teachers have said this, and I'll say it too, it doesn't make you look stupid to ask questions.

#### 3. Use Helpful Notes.

Helpful notes are very beneficial. You've most likely heard this tip before, but not many students use this helpful tip. When you're in a struggling class, I recommend that you pull out a notebook or something to write on, and write down important things that the teacher talks about.

Here are a few of the popular tips I've heard online.

#### 1. Remove Distractions.

You might see this as unnecessary, but I've seen several peers get distracted or not do work, and get on their phones. Removing distractions includes social media, entertainment, and people who do not talk about the task you have at hand.

#### 2. Use positive distractions.

This includes meditation, and stress relieving exercises. Many people see this as boring, but if they were boring and useless, they wouldn't be relevant, so use them as your key to focus.

#### 3. Forget about other tasks.

Other tasks include multitasking, and stressing about multiple tasks or assignments when you can target the first priority task, and work your way up the chain. Multitasking can also lead to memory problems, stress, and anxiety.

I've also asked a teacher, and other peers what helps them focus. Here's what they said:

"Learn, write, read. Focus on those three things, and you'll get somewhere in life," freshman Demir Barrett said.

"First off, you need to delete all the distractions in your life, delete social media, and focus on yourself," freshman Avery Ray said.



"Make a triangle post with your fingers, it helps-it helps me think," another student who requested to remain anonymous said.

I also asked Mr. Snoddrely, an AVID teacher, who has plenty of experience dealing with students with focusing problems, and he said: "I think a huge tip for students to focus in class is to be honest with themselves. By being honest about what distracts a person is a huge step into figuring out what type of learner you are. For example, I am working on some grad school assignments myself. I can not sit still for more than 15 minutes, never could and probably never will. But because I know this about myself, I set an alarm every twenty minutes. This way, I work for 15 minutes and have 5 minutes to let me wander around the house," Mr. Snodderly said.

He also mentioned how consistency is also very important and persistence is equally essential. I hope this article helps you in the future as you figure out the puzzle of focus. It may help you achieve higher grades and general focus in life, as many doctors, experts, and psychological experts have recommended and used themselves.

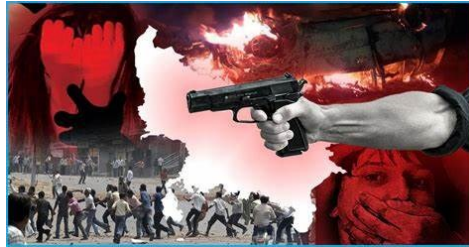
### Do Rappers Influence Violence?

By Rudra Rami

The Rap industry has been popular since the 1900s. It seems that whenever most people talk about the start of the rap industry, it always starts with rap legends like Tupac, Snoop Dogg, Dr Dre, Eminem, Nas, etc. The start of the rap industry began with raps about gangs, gangster lives, and mostly reality. The rap community and artists' popularity started taking off especially in the late 1900s, with the same rappers mentioned above, gaining more popularity, and building the industry with their rap, melodies, and lyrics. But as more rappers joined the community, people started noticing more violent lyrics. The lyrics weren't only influencing gang popularity, but making the rappers all about it. Rappers started representing gangsters, and poor urban communities. They had opinions to make, and they used rap as a way to express their opinions. Many argue that modern rappers mostly do rap just for the money, and use the already popular subject of violence as a topic to rap about.



Rappers tend to flex their wealth often, this is one instance where rappers have influenced something that they're known for, but also violence, drugs, smoking, and drinking. There are still popular songs that influence violence, songs like 'Murder on my Mind' by YNW Melly, 'Murder for Fun' by Gucci Mane, and 'Dead Body Disposal' by Necro. There are hundreds of songs relating to topics like these, and I do not



recommend listening to these, especially if you're sensitive to murder-related stories. Most of the lyrics from these songs are about killing brutally, and the violent nature of these songs may influence listeners to commit violent crimes. Some crimes may have to do with murder for no reason, or hate murder, or crimes like robbery, which are also influenced. These songs are also leading to various crimes. Over the course of popular rap eras, I've learned that the influence of these murder songs come to a lot of places, one of those prominent places leads the influence back to the place where they started. Recently, Rapper Takeoff was shot dead as well as rappers like XXXTentacion, Pop Smoke, Tupac, King Von, YNW Melly, The Notorious BIG, Drakeo the Ruler, and more.

I also want to bring up that not all rappers rap about violent crimes, drugs, robberies, and drinking. A lot of rappers rap about their opinions on problems, and just reality. Personally, I listen to rap everyday, and even though these rappers talk about murder often, it never influences me on my decisions in life. Many argue that no one really takes it seriously, so I went out and asked Franklin High School students that one question that's been on my mind, "do rappers influence violence?"

"I have to say yes because there are some lyrics that make it sound like they kill people for a living," freshman Erving Jimenez said.

"Sometimes the lyrics can have stuff, like

killing someone, and they are just so bad like-they speak about rape and so much bad crap, and there are people who listen to lyrics [who] maybe aren't in the right mindset," freshman Elijah Escobar said.

My inspiration for this article was Frank Micheal Smith's recent video on his Youtube Channel 'Frank Micheal Smith' 2 weeks ago, [youtube.com/shorts/SdkR2Dtt1Jo](https://www.youtube.com/shorts/SdkR2Dtt1Jo)

Smith talked about how rappers and fans were mourning the loss of the rapper Takeoff from the Migos, and how even after the sorrowful loss, they continue to make songs influencing murder. "I'm all for respecting artistic expression, and I don't think they should be banned or censored. But artists need to step up and take action if they really mean "this has to end"....It's no secret that rappers largely dictate American culture through their music. Their voices are powerful."



I thought this was an important issue that we should talk about in the Gazette. I also want to bring into attention that rappers aren't the only ones glorifying murder in music. Singers do the same thing, it may not be the most popular topic in the music industry, but it is still relevant. And now, the *Gazette* wants to know what you think about this. Are rappers influencing violence?



### What Franklin Graduates Think about the Future of Franklin

By Rudra Rami

Franklin High School, a bicentennial school, a place that put together two words for thousands of students for 200 years, 'My School'. Franklin is all about history. There's history written all over the familiar hallways that you walk across. Each year, many wonderful students will walk through these hallways for their last time. Here are some notable alumni, graduates of Franklin High, who went on to accomplish notable achievements.

Moose Haas, former professional baseball player, who pitched in the Major Leagues (1976-1987)

Thomas Rowe Price Jr. - Founder of T. Rowe Price, a global investment management firm

Jean Worthley, a naturalist and former host of "Hodgepodge Lodge" and "On Nature's Trail" on Maryland Public Broadcasting

Amit Mehta, first Asian American to serve as a US Federal Judge, who was born in Gujarat, India, the same Indian state I was born in, and he attended Franklin High as a teenager, and went on to serve in a District court

Rudra Rami, that's me, a VERY notable soon-to-be-alumni, Class of 2026

I'm sure the class of 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, and beyond...will share wonderful accomplishments, and make Franklin proud. We have names of students written down in our history, and Franklin isn't the only one proud, the students are as well. Students have been the past, present, and future of the school and have achieved an endless list of accomplishments not only after graduating, but also as Franklin students.

This is only my first year of being at Franklin, but I'm glad to say that this school is wonderful. There are hard-working teachers who work all week to mold the future, and I see students working hard as well, to mold their own future. If Franklin is known for anything, it's known for its history. You can look up

pictures of the school, and find spots that you yourself have stood on! Franklin had originally started as a private school, but later converted into a public school. The school even once changed its name to the Reisterstown High School, but changed back to its earlier name, Franklin High School. Soon enough, a new building was made for Franklin High in 1826, 6 years after its creation. Franklin High School was originally settled in modern-day Franklin Middle School, but they soon moved the building to where we are now. Throughout our history, we've expanded and crowded. Franklin High School even became one of the most crowded schools in BCPS, and definitely one of the most outstanding schools. Franklin has expanded, gaining more buildings for the large amount of courses that are taught here.

Students are coming in and out of Franklin each year, the future is changing, and the area is crowding with people. Franklin is growing, even after 200 years, we still have hundreds of years to go. The future is important; it's a direct reflection of what we teach and how we influence our next generation. The generation most of us students are in is Gen Z, but soon, when Gen Z becomes parents, we'll get another generation. That generation is the future. Why is the future important? Because the past affects the present, and the present affects the future. The future will be something humanity depends on.

Franklin is just one school, why is it so important? We have thousands of people coming out of Franklin, thousands among hundreds of millions of our generation's minds. Even though one thousand is nothing compared to hundreds of millions, the thousand will interact and spread among the millions like putting salt in snow. We will fortify our generation with our thoughts, and that's why one thousand can affect one hundred million. And those hundreds of millions will affect humanity's future.

So what do the graduates of Franklin High think about the future of Franklin High? Well I could only grab a few students that graduated from Franklin last year, class of 2021.

"I believe that the future is bright for FHS. Teachers are good and caring about their students. [There are] a lot of fun activities and opportunities to connect with teachers and get to know them outside of class," graduate Kush Patel said.

"I think the future of Franklin High will be very diverse. A future that has a lot of opportunities for all students and faculty," graduate Shivam Rami said.

"I think Franklin High is a place for people to connect, and it's been an unforgettable part of my life," a graduate who requested to be anonymous said.

These students have just graduated from Franklin High last year, but there are so many students with different takes on Franklin, some good, some bad. Schools aren't all made for everyone's visions, but Franklin is the house for history. So for all who read this article, I request you to take a moment to think about your Franklin journey, and people you've met among all of your years, regardless of the amount of time you've spent in this school.

What do you think about Franklin High School?

Whether your journey has been great or not, it's going to last, whether positive or not, whether fun or boring, whether big or small, whether complicated or simple, the possibilities are endless...for Franklin to be great.

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