

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF WILLIAM JONES COLLEGE PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL

## How Jones is responding to Chicago ICE raids

### Administrators work to protect students under new Trump presidency

Sadie Barash '25

Editor-In-Chief, Print/Web

Holding true to promises made by the new Trump administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids are ramping up across the city, leaving many students fearful for themselves, their families, or their friends. Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and Jones are proactively working to protect and support their students.

“Our security officers have already been briefed with CPS and went to a special meeting last week. We have our procedures down tight, and everybody understands that if someone comes to the building, they need to see me,” said Principal Kerry Dolan. “Unless they have a very clear federal warrant in their hand, they’re not entering the building.”

Equally important in the protection of students is a knowledge of the law, which Dolan hopes to address in partnership with law teachers Emlyn Ricketts and Laura Blackburn.

“The Legal Eagles are planning on doing a Know Your Rights Seminar with some immigration lawyers. I asked whether we could also do something like bystander intervention for staff and students who want to know how they can help support,” said Dolan. “It’ll be a tandem workshop so that students don’t feel like they have to self-identify in order to attend.”

In addition to the physical safety of students, administrators are also working to promote emotional well-being.

“Our students know that we have social-emotional supports in place with our counseling staff as well as our social workers,” said Dolan. “I also understand, though, that students may not want to self-identify. In that case, there are some resources that have been shared, particularly by the principal at Juarez, that we’re trying to disseminate.”

These resources include informative slide decks on administrative versus judicial warrants, general rights if approached by ICE, rights if approached by ICE in different settings, and more. Dolan also notes that there are ways for students to request help without self-identifying.

“If students feel like they need help, they can always come to us and tell us it’s not for them. No one’s going to be making any assumptions. If they don’t want to self-identify, they could still get support.”

Unfortunately, many undocumented students and students with undocumented families continue to feel large amounts of stress that school supports are unequipped to tackle.

“[I feel] more anxiety, sadness, and paranoia. [I am] constantly texting [my] parents to check on their status,” said an anonymous student.

One student from a predominately Mexican-American neighborhood sees visible changes in her community.



Signs in lobby put up by Legal Eagles Club Photo by Sadie Barash

“[My church] had an event planned for Valentine’s Day, and they started talking about having security there. It was just so disheartening to see that they were taking all of these precautions that I’ve never had at church before,” said Emily Ramirez ’25. “Seeing that made it real. I’m very aware of what’s going on, but it just set in.”

Still, nobody has lost hope.

“It’s really nice to see people uplift each other and say ‘us as a community can face it together’. I felt like that was really beautiful. We are empowering each other at the end of the day. We’re going to be okay,” said Ramirez.

For those not directly impacted by the new Trump administration immigration changes, Dolan shares ways to get involved.

“Attend the Legal Eagles Seminar and find out legally what [you] can do as a bystander. Seek out nonprofit organizations that are doing good work in the city and either donate their time or other resources to support the work that they’re doing,” said Dolan. “Beyond that, just be a vocal ally.”

During a time of great uncertainty, Jones administrators hope they can create a stabilizing and secure environment for all.

“I know that we have students and staff, whether they’re directly impacted or whether their close loved ones are impacted, who are fearful. The last thing I want is anybody coming into this building living in fear. Nobody should live in question of the security of their family.”



Picture of President Trump withdrawing from the Paris Agreement Credit: The Washington Post

## Putting Paris in the past

### President Trump’s recent action leaves us questioning his administrative priorities

Reilly Martin '25  
Reporter

Ruby Brothers '25  
Reporter

Wildfires run rampant in California, the world just endured the hottest year on record, and the East Coast struggles to stay afloat as hurricanes tear through cities. Yet, despite these apparent warnings, the new Trump administration does not see climate change as a priority, and would rather revert back to Manifest Destiny, obtaining new land masses. Yeah, we’re as confused as you are.

Recent presidential actions have left the general public with jaws on the floor - in shock and disbelief as all progress towards securing any future for our planet is undone. Upon entering the White House on Jan. 20th, Trump moved to withdraw America from The Paris Climate Agreement for the second time after doing so in his first term. However, the U.S. only remained out of the pact for a four-month period as it took the entirety of his presidency to withdraw, only for us to rejoin once Biden took office in 2021.

The Paris Climate Agreement is a pact between 194 parties that aims to limit global warming below 2 degrees Celsius. A pretty useful agreement if you ask us, considering the 50-degree temperatures this last month. However, some beg to differ and want to prioritize renaming historic bodies of water. With the withdrawal of the U.S., we’re now one of only four countries not in the pact.

Not only are we endangering the climate with this executive action, but we’re also endangering our diplomacy with other nations. In an NPR article, at [npr.org/TrumpParisAgreement](https://www.npr.org/TrumpParisAgreement), the leader of the international climate policy and politics at the World Resources Institute says “leaving the accord could prove damaging, Waskow said, by potentially sidelining the U.S. from some clean energy and green tech markets and reducing leverage with other countries. That could hamper some of Trump’s broader economic goals for the U.S.” Not only does this jeopardize the progress of climate change solutions, but also our diplomacy with other nations. Yikes.

Lower gas prices, cheaper groceries, and mass extinction. Drill baby, drill, as the Trump administration proposes, and all this and more are possible!

While this one action is not going to cause the annihilation of our species, it is a step backward rather than maintaining our previous bystander stance on climate change for the past few years. Our president, so eager to terminate our participation in the accord, couldn’t even wait for his inaugural proceeding to end to sign the order into effect, passing it during the parade. This is a clear indication that the climate crisis is snowballing into something too big for us to handle, despite the potential lack of snow in our future. Now, more than ever, change is needed as the sixth mass extinction is believed to occur on the planet. It’s believed that we have undergone five mass extinctions in the history of the Earth and that we are currently in one now. This extinction differentiates from the rest as the cause of it lies with us. At least 75% of species die out in mass extinctions, so in order to save those that we can, action needs to take place NOW.

## Reproductiverights.gov is gone: where does this leave us?

### An exploration into what the loss of this resource could mean for society and our future

Mira Monar '27

Reporter

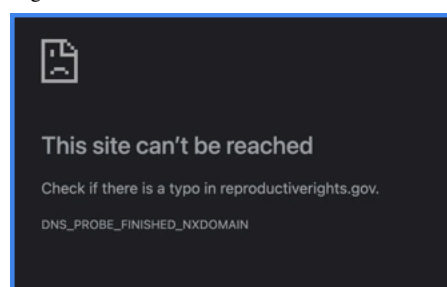
On Jan. 20th, 2025, the first day of the Trump administration, citizens noticed something strange - the website, [reproductiverights.gov](https://reproductiverights.gov), was no longer available. Initially created in 2022 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as part of a broad public awareness campaign, the site held information on topics such as abortion access and reproductive health along with providing Know-Your-Rights resources. It also listed services covered under various insurance plans, including breast and cervical cancer screenings, prenatal care, and HIV screenings.

While this site existed as one of many resources, its loss remains incredibly impactful for a variety of reasons. Firstly, it was a major pillar of support for those still reeling from the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in late June of 2022. The Supreme Court ruling, which ended the constitutional right to abortion nationwide, caused an almost immediate reversal of abortion rights and protection in almost half of the United States. Currently, 19 states have abortion bans in place, though with varying limits, and the fight is still ongoing in others, with Montana and Wyoming having recently blocked bans. [Reproductiverights.gov](https://reproductiverights.gov) acted as a response to these changes by informing and assisting citizens. Other government actions included the formation of the Reproductive Rights Task Force to protect access to life-saving care and supply knowledge of reproductive freedoms.

In the last few weeks, legislation such as H.R.722 has been introduced, this bill potentially threatening the lives of millions of people. If passed, it would constitute all life to start at conception, granting embryos and fetuses the same rights as fully formed people and even making miscarriages considered as ‘manslaughter.’ Furthermore, harmful executive orders have been put in place, such as Executive Order 14168, which, while focusing on illogical rhetoric of “gender ideology extremism,” uses language such as, “person belonging, at conception,” which furthers this ongoing push towards the restriction of reproductive rights. Lack of abortion access has been shown to have extremely negative effects. Nearly 68,000 people die annually of unsafe abortion, and of 42 million yearly that make the decision to have an abortion, nearly 20 million of those are unsafe. With access slowly starting to dwindle, and as the websites that keep us informed and provide information on where to seek care start to disappear, where are we left amongst this?

Shutting down the site represents something larger. Lack of access to information can be detrimental to society - especially since information regarding abortion, reproductive rights, and overall health can be life-saving for many. It has been proven that access to this information reduces teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and overall promotes educated choices relating to general health.

In a time where care is being withheld and the rights to our own bodies are being taken away, keep yourselves educated. The loss of one major resource does not mean the loss of all - see Planned Parenthood and the Center for Reproductive Rights. It simply means that people who were once uninterested must become proactive in staying informed. Continue to pay attention, even if the changes don’t directly affect you, because we are all in this together.



Screenshot showing the past government database Photo Credit to Mira Monar '27

INSTAGRAM: @JONESBLUEPRINT YOUTUBE: JONES BLUEPRINT  
GMAIL: JONESBLUEPRINT@GMAIL.COM TIKTOK: @JCPBLUEPRINT

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## Chronicling my chronic illness

A reflection on my high school experience with a chronic illness

Ruby Brothers '25

Reporter

I'm hooked up to half a dozen monitors, balancing not making eye contact with each person too long and trying not to fall over. The air smells of a generic antiseptic, and the lights flickering overhead are only adding to my anxiety. And just like that, it's over. One, two, three, four, five. One, two, three, four. One, two, three. "Ruby?" One, two. One. I'm told I have POTS: Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome. A wave of relief courses through my body. I'm not faking it or exaggerating; it is not simply my anxiety. Yet, I am only a sophomore in high school. The phrases "there is no cure" and "you may never get better" provoke fear within me. During the car ride home, there is silence; my mother and I are in shock. I claw at the heart monitor that has been placed on me—the adhesive is upsetting my skin. I try to not let myself disassociate; I have homework to do. Why me? What did I do to deserve this? Will I feel like this forever? Wait, what about my future career? Stop. Focus, Ruby; you're in chemistry right now.

Everything in my body, from the blood vessels in my lower legs desperately trying to constrict to the neurons firing off in my brain to create a thought spiral, is screaming at me, "STOP YOU NEED TO STOP." I don't listen for a while; that happens to work out for me, not suffering the consequences of fainting or falling and hitting my head.

Suddenly, a year and a half has passed. I've experimented with treatments, and I agree to add another medication to my already complex routine to give relief to my severe anxiety, unaware of the consequences. I fill my grandma-esque pill case that I have bedazzled to make it feel less depressing with small, yellow pills, hoping to finally be at peace. Again, weeks later, something feels wrong. Feeling faint, I shake my wrist. My Apple Watch illuminates my pulse—the number 34. In a matter of minutes, I'm on the phone with my doctor, and the key medication managing my chronic illness is taken away from my regimen due to its interaction with the anxiety medication.

For over two months, I lay in my bed, mostly confined to it. Staring at my wall, I wait for it to respond and say something. Past the point of exhaustion, each breath laborious, and in pain from being in bed all of the time, it no longer feels as though my life is progressing. I only get a taste of the teenage experience through movies and Instagram stories. I haven't physically lost many people, yet I am intimately familiar with grief. I have grieved my past self, the one who wasn't sick and had no doubt about being able to achieve her dreams. I miss the bubbly, talkative girl who always enjoyed long hikes or walks, going out of her way to bring small gifts to friends, and loved going anywhere at any time. All I want is to get back to school. Most times, when I stand up, I pass out. I'm tired of being tired, but I'm alive and determined.

I changed my interactions with others and they now mostly took place online, leading me to a shocking discovery one day, my chronic illness was TikTok viral. While my sister had diagnosed me with my condition from a short TikTok video weeks before I received an official one, I underestimated just how large the chronically ill community was on the app. For the first time in my life, I could see people talk about experiences that mirrored mine and how they had gone through flare-ups to the same severity as my current one but ultimately got better. This only added to my determination to get out of mine.

Tapering off my anxiety medication in order to retake my old medication is frightening. I experience severe withdrawals and am going through a long period of derealization, but I know that in order to move forward in my life, I must get through it. Once entirely off of it, I am able to start taking the medication that best manages my chronic illness again, and it is as if a light switch has been turned on, and I suddenly begin to feel better. Despite the fact that I previously had been getting upwards of twelve hours of sleep a day, drinking plenty of water, and more, progress was not being made. Relief finally begins to arrive.

Experiencing such a dramatic hit to my routine has completely altered how I live my life and my values. I now know that even the seemingly mundane moments, from walking the train while it's freezing out and my breath ruins my makeup to sitting with friends in the lobby before school complaining and saying we want to go home, are things I should appreciate more and will eventually miss. From friends going out of their way to include, care for, and encourage me when I was not feeling well to my parents spending countless hours helping me communicate with teachers and comforting me as I grieved what my body was formerly capable of, my comeback in spirit, health, and growth are their shared pride.

Despite the challenges, I'm grateful to have a diagnosis for what is often an unrecognized and underdiagnosed condition. My experiences, though uncommon in the general population of teenagers, are unfortunately not that different from what many of those with my condition experience. It could be your friend, your family member, it could be the random person you see on the train, it could even be you one day who ends up going through some form of chronic illness or pain, which is why I feel that living in the present is so important. Blending in the cliché of 'you never know what someone is going through' is especially important to me. Without being lucky to have received a diagnosis, I may still be a scared fifteen-year-old, worried I'm lying to everyone about very real symptoms I'm experiencing.

My progress would not have been possible without it, and it has been crucial to my well-being. Ultimately, I've seen the fruits of my labor, which has been incredibly rewarding.

My eighty-year-old grandmother being in better shape than me, spending a triple-digit number of hours with doctors or doing treatments and learning how to balance coursework while barely able to balance standing up; my experience in high school has most definitely been atypical, but it has taught me things that will serve me for the rest of my life. Lessons of adaptability, tenacity, and compassion now guide my choices, no matter how small, and I am much more empathetic to others and what they may be going through. I am also much more grateful, knowing how hard I have fought to be where I am.

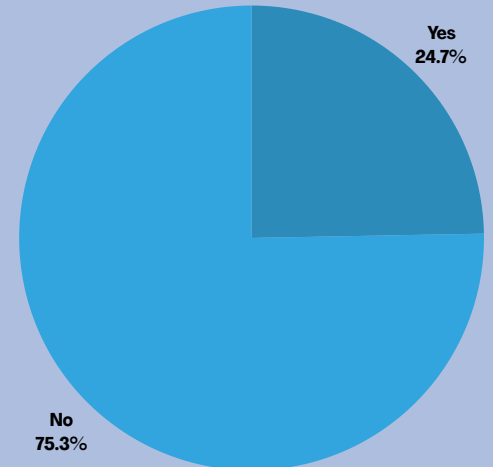
I know not to wear a normal sweatshirt to the doctor, if I want to, it needs to have a zipper so that my arms can be accessed. I know not to cross my legs or speak otherwise my blood pressure will be misread. I know which of my veins are best and which will roll around once a needle punctures my skin, causing them to blow. I know to never forget to take my myriad of medications, or I may pay for it for multiple days. I know the severe heart pain I experience is not a heart attack, despite always feeling catastrophic. I know not to overstretch myself or sit in the same position for too long, or my hypermobile body will react with almost unbearable pain. I know to ignore the stares and scowls I get when I use a wheelchair in the airport and as I pre-board. I know that I need to add some sort of positive ending to statements I make about my suffering to make those around me feel comfortable with what I experience. I know that sometimes I make the people I love scared or uncomfortable and that it can be hard to be around me. I know to not blame myself anymore.

People say that my illness made me stronger, but that's not true. I have not become stronger because of it; I became stronger because of myself. I put in the effort, pushed through the symptoms, and chose to grow from my experiences. My illness is not the reason for my learned resilience; I am.



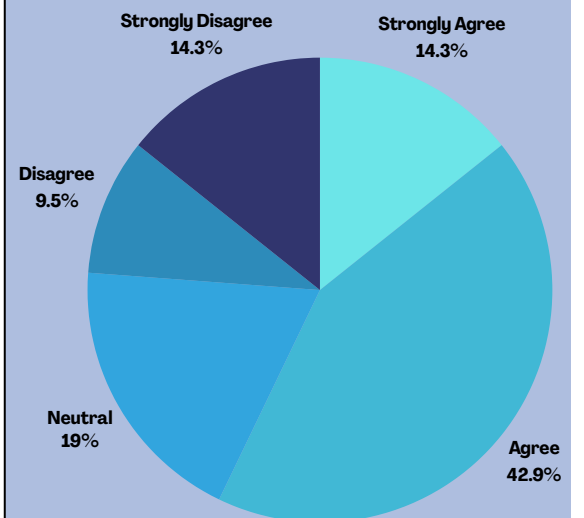
## Of 85 Jones Students...

DO YOU EXPERIENCE A CHRONIC CONDITION OR CHRONIC PAIN?

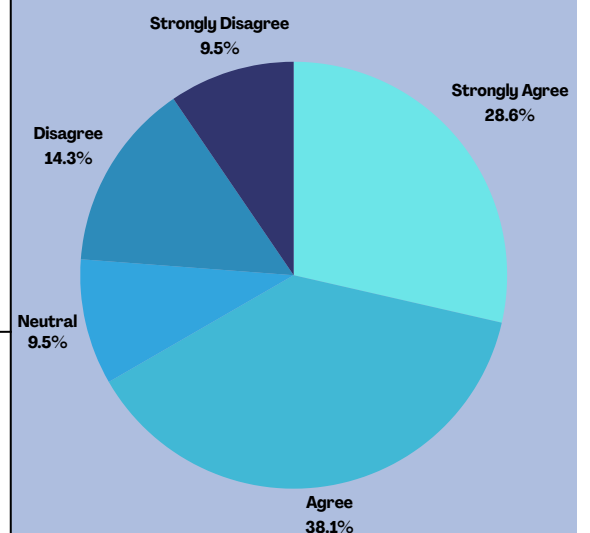


## Of 21 students experiencing chronic pain or illness...

MY SYMPTOMS ARE SEVERE ON A DAILY BASIS (AT BASELINE).

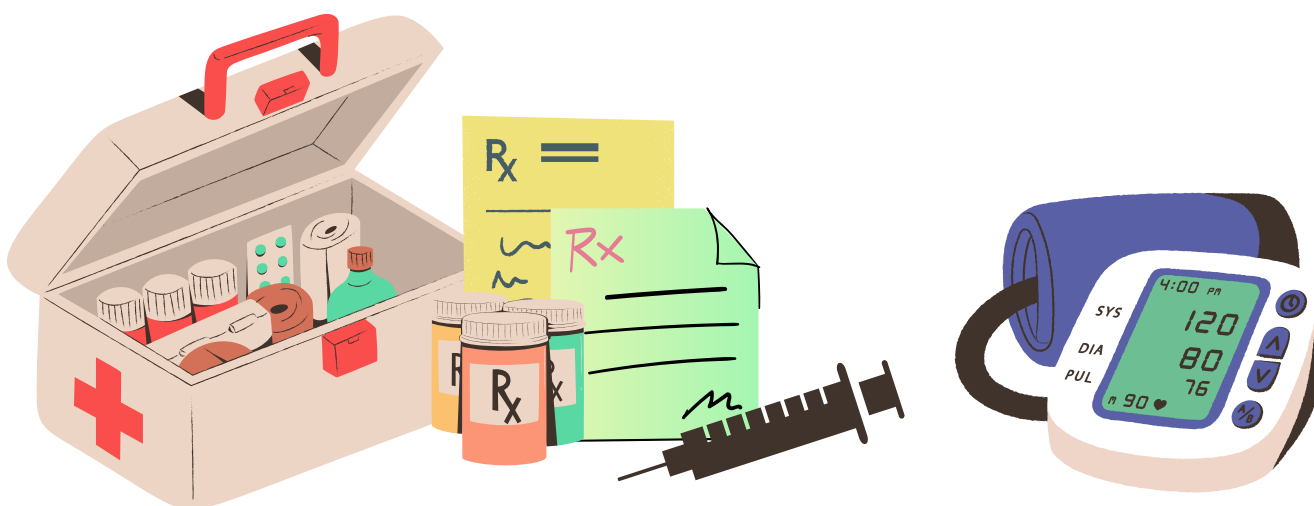


MY CONDITION SEVERELY IMPACTS MY HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE.



"WHILE FOR THE MOST PART IT DOESN'T IMPACT OUR RELATIONSHIP, IT CAN BE SCARY WHEN IT HAS A SEVERE IMPACT ON THEM, OR FRUSTRATING WHEN THEY IGNORE THEIR PHYSICAL ISSUES."

QUOTE FROM A STUDENT CLOSE TO SOMEONE WITH A CHRONIC ILLNESS



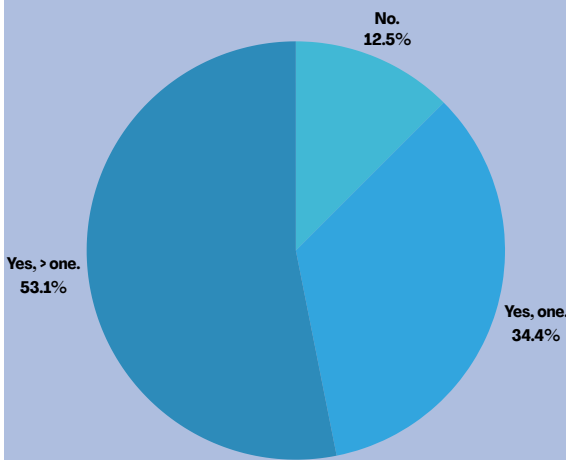
"LIVING WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS IS LIKE A FULL TIME JOB. MAINTAINING MY HEALTH AND TRYING TO HAVE GOOD GRADES AND A SOCIAL LIFE IS A LOT TO JUGGLE."

QUOTES FROM STUDENTS WITH CHRONIC ILLNESSES

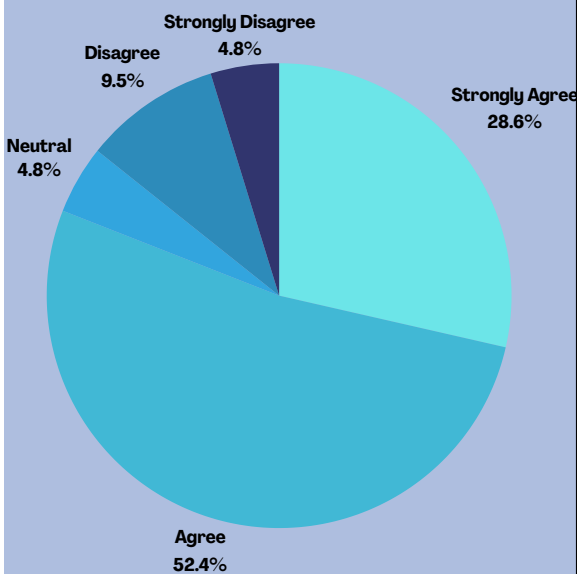
"I WOULD NEVER WISH THAT PAIN ON MY WORST ENEMY."

## Of 64 students not experiencing chronic pain or illness...

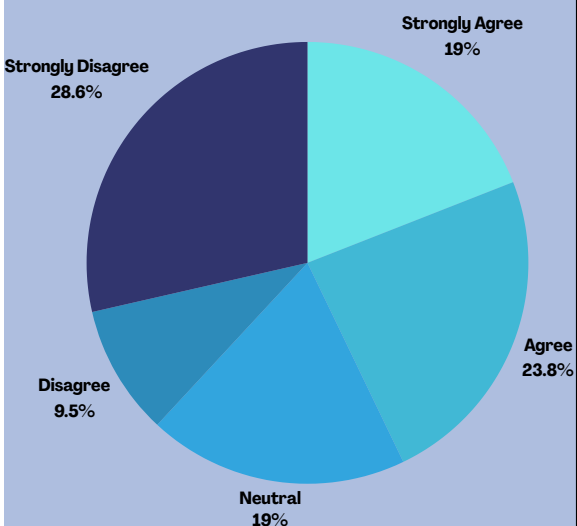
DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO DEALS WITH CHRONIC PAIN OR CHRONIC ILLNESS?



MY CONDITION SEVERELY IMPACTS MY DAILY ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL



MY CONDITION SEVERELY IMPACTS MY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.



## Set up to struggle

How Jones students with chronic illness or pain see the school

Reilly Martin '25

Reporter

Forest Pillman '25

Reporter

Jones Blueprint reporter Ruby Brothers initiated a survey intended to highlight the internal battles of Jones students with chronic illnesses. Chronic illnesses such as asthma, POTS (Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome) and scoliosis appeared in the survey.

The survey aimed to identify how these illnesses impacted the students' everyday life and academic presence. Along with rating questions about how much a statement pertained to them, participants answered a free-response section that allowed them to express any other details regarding their chronic illness within an academic setting. For the purpose of this news article, all participants wished to remain anonymous with the use of aliases.

Attendance came up as a main concern for students completing the survey. For Morgan Brooks, symptoms often lead to missing school, and "the amount of work missed and lack of support makes it incredibly difficult to retain decent grades." Even at school, Brook's fatigue "makes it incredibly difficult to be fully present."

Symptoms differ from day to day, especially depending on the illness. "While I only experience symptoms during a flare-up of my condition, "this happens a lot and is often debilitating," says Brooks.

Everyone experiences different severity, an important distinction to highlight. Yet, despite the differences of the illness as it is, unpredictable factors in a student's surroundings can inflict surges. For example, the elevators.

"I really have a hard time climbing the stairs, causing me to be frequently late to certain classes, which affects my attendance," said Sawyer Reed.

Based on the variety of difficulties the students' experience, many hope others give more grace to their unique experiences. Despite this, many worry their attempts to find empathy fall flat.

"It's difficult to get friends and teachers to understand, I spend a lot of my time trying to self advocate," says Finley Carter. "Jones should understand that there's more to accessibility than IEPs and elevator passes."

The close friends or family of some students with chronic illnesses also experience impacts due to the difficulties presented. Many loved ones spend ample time supporting their students to provide a sense of normalcy and the best chance to succeed. Charline Monroe, who knows someone with an illness, offered insight.

"I have to be careful with what I offer them and more time is spent ensuring they are okay and taking care of them than truly doing an activity," said Monroe.

Outside of school, students' illnesses greatly impact their broader lives. "It definitely causes for my high school experience to be different from everyone else's, and has detrimentally affected my self-esteem" says Dakota Ellis.

Although the difficulties of this small population may fade into the background, the current lack of support systems at Jones leads many with chronic pain or illnesses to feel abandoned by their school. As Brooks said, "having a chronic illness at this school makes you pretty much set up to struggle."

## The invisible ill

An exploration of how chronic illness both destroys and creates

Mira Monar '27

Reporter

I have existed in the space between presence and oblivion more times than worth mentioning; the disturbed stupor my flare-ups send me into, a clouded haze of mental fog and sharp, aching pain. The time between them ranges from days to months, every break a blessed reprieve that is enough to forget the reality of my condition. However, I cannot escape the inevitable - no matter how many times I gaslight myself into believing that I am completely fine, it always returns—every dull stiffness of a joint acting as the harbinger of a stretch of weeks stolen from my life.

When I was 7 years old, I was diagnosed with CRMO, Chronic Recurrent Multifocal Osteomyelitis, after one unnecessary bone biopsy, multiple spinal taps, countless blood tests, and a two-week hospital stay. Essentially, this means that the parts of my body that protect the bones attack joints, causing inflammation, which then leads to the deterioration of the targeted bones (in my case, my ankles and knees, and later my collarbone, shoulder, and back). It initially started after a sprained ankle in my ballet class, which never seemed to heal; instead, after nearly a month, my pain had not abated but worsened.

The catalyst was when I went to pick up my younger sister from preschool one day with my mother. On the way back to the car, I could not put any weight on my ankle, hopping from the door to the parking lot. My mom, despite my obvious protest, rushed me to the ER, where we waited for hours into the night. A doctor finally saw me around midnight. We went X-ray to X-ray—all inconclusive—until they decided to administer a blood test and kept me in the hospital overnight.

The next day, my surgeon woke me up with words I will never forget.

"We think it could be a bone infection, or potentially leukemia."

I was rushed into surgery that same day, terrified as I watched the world fade into black as the anesthesia kicked in.

The next day came with grogginess and a lack of revelation- the bone biopsy and spinal taps administered during my surgery came back inconclusive, clean of both infection and cancer. I am seemingly all clear, but the pain continued, followed with intense fatigue, dizziness, constant fainting and fever.

The aftermath consisted of a swirl of questions, endless confusion. Neither internet searches nor my medical team seemed to yield any results, though my mom had begun to push for investigating a possible rheumatological (bone and joint) issue. Eventually, after nearly two weeks of my mom constantly advocating for me, my medical team finally brought someone to see me—a rheumatology specialist who diagnosed me with CRMO on that same day. From there, the 'treatment' journey began.

With CRMO, inflammation is treated with heavy doses of anti-inflammatory medications and painkillers, things that I learned to hate early on due to the intense side effects I experience while on them. I knew as soon as I started the regular cocktail of medication that it would not be sustainable. While the medication helped my pain during flares, it numbed me emotionally and left me constantly exhausted, barely functioning and floating through middle school with abysmal grades.

I spent the following years after my diagnoses trying everything to avoid flare-ups and the destruction they caused, mentally and physically. I dieted endlessly, not even touching sugar or gluten until I was 13 due to the inflammation they caused in my body. I quit sports because of the stress they caused on my joints, leading to more flare-ups. I gott blood panels every month, an MRI every year. I waited. And waited. I waited for the end, to either "grow out of it" as the doctors said is a chance or reach the point where my joints would be too unstable to function properly.

Freshman year, my symptoms reached their peak, flare-up after flare-up crushing me under the weight of coursework and constant testing and complete newness. I learnt to mask my symptoms as well as I could, never complain about the pain, and laugh off the daily tardies as disorganization rather than physically struggling to get out of bed. The mental fog followed me like a ruinous specter, extreme fatigue leading me to go to sleep right after school rather than complete homework. I began to live within books, within my poetry, as a desperate effort to escape. I missed nearly 10% of the school year.

It was only recently in my sophomore year when my outlook started to change. The number of my flare-ups have lessened as I have learned to take care of myself and avoid the things that trigger them; I have sacrificed so much in this lengthy process of trial and error, but at the same time started to understand more than I ever have before.

Swinging between 'normalcy' and the depths of a flare has deeply affected my high school experience in many ways, neither totally negative nor positive. I learned how to advocate for myself through the recurring lack of support. I learned resiliency, how to push myself to do what I am capable of rather than what I am comfortable with. I've lost friends who couldn't stick with me through the days of numbness and gained those who care enough to sit in silent togetherness. I learned to appreciate how lucky I am to be able to live at times without any pain whatsoever, at full physical capacity, which so many other people with chronic illness are unable to do.

To believe that I could die so young was a feeling I will never forget. The possibility for a future that before then had stretched out before me, never-ending, to be snuffed out in a single sentence is something that shaped the way I view life itself. I know joy because I have known pain; the feeling of finally running or dancing after being bedridden for days is something unmatched, something that I am deeply grateful for having experienced. There may be a day in the future where I am unable to walk—so in the meantime, all I can do is continue taking steps forward.



## Lyricism and literature

How music revolutionizes romantic poetry  
*Harper Rzepczynski '25*  
*Multimedia Editor*

Everybody knows the most basic mediums of literature: novels, poetry, short stories, essays, even visual art; however, one of the most powerful forms of writing falls under the radar time and time again: lyricism. Songs began including words, written in verse similar to poetry, around the Renaissance era in Europe. I would like to argue that lyricism is the superior form of literature, as it entrancingly expresses love, pain, identity, and toxicity. Let's be honest: as teenagers navigating romance for the first time, music is much easier to relate to than Shakespearean sonnets. Whether it is coupled with dramatic or mellow instrumentation, lyrics within a song oftentimes evoke strong emotion in the libretto.

There is no argument regarding love's immense influence on music, as it is a central theme in hundreds of thousands of songs. Some of the most powerful and emotionally captivating poetry comes from love songs, an example being from Chicago-native band Your Arms are my Cocoon's masterpiece *Metamorphosis*. Tyler Odom bellows "If I could be a river, I'd sweep you away/Deposit all my creatures at the grave where you lay/So I could sleep with you again." *Metamorphosis* describes a melancholy veneration, a yearning for someone who has left. Yet I would not call this a breakup song, as even in a heartbroken state the singer is still very much in love with this person, longing in every word. To extend my argument, it is unfair to talk about love songs without even mentioning the Beatles. In this case, we are looking at Michelle, and the lyrics are as follows, "I want you, I want you, I want you/I think you know by now/I'll get to you somehow/Until I do, I'm telling you so you'll understand/Michelle, ma belle." The lyrics compliment the dramatic delivery from Paul McCartney, demonstrating a need for this woman, a willingness to put anything on the line for her. If neither of these songs express infatuation in its truest sense, I am not sure what does; powerful lyricism is a form of pure expression, and in this case the sentiment is undoubtedly love that no book nor traditional sonnet could compete with.

Of course with so many love songs, there's bound to be the opposition: musical heartbreak. Modern Baseball, dubbed "midwest emo" geniuses, sing in *The Old Gospel Chair*, "Can we act like we never broke each other's hearts?/At least mine, I don't know how you felt from the start." These lyrics express animosity in the midst of a breakup, while simultaneously half-hidden pining and an unrequitedness. The rhyme scheme also subtly reminds the listener that this is poetry, however the delivery from the singer makes a song like this more intense than traditional poems. Moving on, theatrical post-punk band Black Country, New Road also confronts abandonment, with Isaac Wood passionately singing on *The Place Where He Inserted the Blade*, "Darling, I'll spoil it myself/Thanks, you're leaving/Well, I tried just to stroke your dreams better/But, darling, I see that you're not really sleeping." The singer feels deserted after a relationship ends, thinking that he did not do enough while he and his "darling" were together, blaming himself for their downfall and the pain hereafter. Aforementioned theatrical elements are included through brass and percussion instrumentals, dramatizing the whole situation and making this carry more weight than any poem on paper.

The past two paragraphs discussed yearning whether in or outside of a relationship, but love cannot be talked about without acknowledging toxicity. Music successfully expresses this topic just as effectively, blending with previously mentioned desire while recognizing issues in romantic involvement. Beloved punk-rock band Title Fight's song *You Can't Say Kingston Doesn't Love You* shouts, "I'm dirt beneath your feet/Step all over me/I don't see anybody else/And I don't need anybody else/Oh, use me." This quote demonstrates an obviously abusive relationship, the man letting his partner use him as a doormat yet not caring because his desire for her transcends anything else, letting her "use him." The man obviously loves his partner, and in this state he can excuse instances where she hurts him. Next, in *Car Seat Headrest's* twelve-minute-long magnum opus

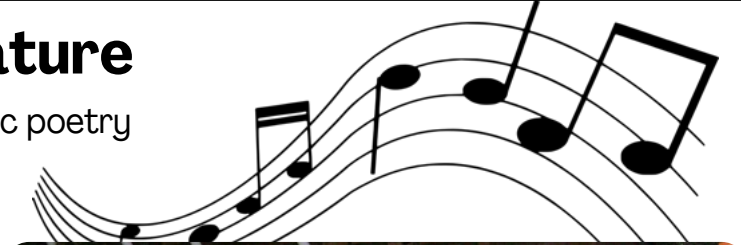


Photo Credit to Harper Rzepczynski '25

Beach Life-In-Death, lead singer Will Toledo soberly sings, "A book of Aubrey Beardsley art corrupted me in youth/And now I'm trapped inside my youth/And you're in love with late-stage youth." English author Aubrey Beardsley often challenged Victorian standards regarding sexuality, explaining the part about corruption of youth, with the bigger picture being that the song's protagonist is carrying childhood trauma into their relationship, though his partner is in love with his flaws. It may sound romantic, but it is more of a commentary on the toxicity of their union. The final song I would like to analyze is by west coast folk-punk group Pigeon Pit, titled *Nights Like These* with lyrics as follows, "And I stayed up, chain smoking in the kitchen/Until you got home, and the curtains were on fire/F—, I'm sorry you feel all alone." This is yet another example of toxicity in partnerships, as the relationship described is codependent, which in the end leaves the two isolated from the world outside of each other and stifling human connection wrapped up in an unhealthy romance. The way these three songs describe problematic unions transcends written poetry, as they are dependent on dramatic delivery from vocalists as well as unique instrumentals.

Music's ability to wrap a message either straightforward or hidden in lyricism coupled with background melodies makes it the most powerful medium of romantic literature.



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- |                           |                        |
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# 2024-2025

## SATIRE

### Blueprint Recommends: Norovirus

Move out of the way, Ozempic!

*Calvin Beckert '26*

*Opinion Editor*

Ozempic has been the talk of the town in Hollywood as a quick and painless method of weight loss. The drug, typically prescribed for diabetes patients, can help its users shed their weight quickly and effectively. But, the drug is expensive, and some have raised concerns about its long term effects and limited availability for those who really need it. That's why the Blueprint Recommendations Board is offering a new solution for those worried about the downsides of Ozempic: Norovirus! The highly infectious fecal-oral virus has been spreading like wildfire among "health nuts" interested in shedding a few pounds!

The Blueprint Recommends Board visited my sick cousin, James, who had the Norwalk virus. We caught his viral case of the viral sensation to get a trial of this new weight loss method, and wow did it work! After only 22 hours of violent projectile diarrhea and vomiting, often both at the same time, I lost 20 pounds easily! I missed my grandmother's birthday party because I didn't have enough strength to turn the key in my ignition of my 2005 Mazda 3, but wow, my waist is absolutely "snatched," as the kids would say!

The other members of the Recommendation Board had differing effects, but all of us lost weight! This is where we unfortunately have to commemorate the passing of Recommendation Reporter Mark Sandstra, '25, who passed away after 28 hours against the virus. But wow, did he look amazing in that casket. Norovirus works, even after it kills you! It really makes us ask, why even bother with Ozempic? Norovirus does what Ozempic does overnight! You'll be awake for all hours of that night and then some, but at least you can watch your transformation!

And don't get me started on the fever dreams. They're to die for! (Unfortunately true for Mark Sandstra, '25, 2006-2025). I dreamt that I was a player for the Illinois Men's Basketball team, and had to help Homer Simpson bring the team to a national championship title. Shortly after I hoisted the championship trophy above my head, Peter Griffin came and congratulated me, and took me out to a steak dinner. Turns out that the "steak" was actually an IV line, and Peter Griffin was actually my nurse trying to find a vein. I guess that's why the steak was so juicy. Eek!

My biggest complaint about the virus, other than the overall sluggishness, inability to walk or function, hours of violent puking and diarrhea, and as mentioned, often at the same time, and some other mild symptoms of discomfort, is that I can't catch it again! I gained all that pesky weight back shortly after the virus, and I'd love to take a trip down memory lane once again.

Overall, the Blueprint soundly recommends catching this viral sensation. It worked for us, killed one of us (R.I.P. Mark Sandstra, '25, 2006-2025), and the transformation was amazing! Our summer bodies are ready! Ozempic may have some real competition coming for it. Watch out Hollywood! This is the next big thing!



Photo Credit to Calvin Beckert '26



## Bye bye bowling

Jones girls bowling team celebrates senior night.

*Eliza Beresh '25*

*News Editor*

*Lenna Vehovc '25*

*Reporter*

On Monday, Jan. 27th, the Jones College Prep Girls Bowling Team found much to celebrate as they secured a crushing win against Mathers high school and celebrated their departing seniors.

With festivities beginning before the bus even arrived at Waveland Bowl, the team's soon-to-be graduates felt dearly beloved.

"Our coach, Melissa Flisk, gave the team cookies in the shape of a bowling ball while on the bus," said co-captain Kaelyn Perez '25. "It was nice to feel honored from the very beginning of the night."

Once the team had gotten settled at Waveland and felt prepared for the upcoming match, the seniors were presented posters celebrating their time on the team and performance throughout their high school bowling career.

"The posters were so cute and such a nice touch to the night," said co-captain Zuri Belcore '25. "I could tell that the coaches and the rest of the team had worked on them and I felt genuinely appreciated."

The match officially began after the posters were brought out and with high spirits, many JCP bowlers gave their best performances of the season.

"That was truly one of my best bowling matches," said Perez. "It felt good to go out on such a high note."

The atmosphere remained lively following the victory as the team rallied together to give their thanks and sincere farewells to the seniors.

"I was happy to see that everyone did not immediately leave after their matches finished up," said Belcore. "A lot of my teammates stayed behind to thank me and congratulate me."

As the night came to a close and the team dispersed, certificates were awarded to the bowlers in the graduating class; a final, tangible keepsake for them to remember their time on the team.



"I have a lot of great memories from being a bowler, but I'm excited to have something I can actually feel and put up on my wall when I get home," said Perez.

But all good things must come to an end, and as the night progressed and many bowlers began to exit the alleyway, the seniors were left with their thoughts.

"I stayed behind after a lot of the younger members had left and it really began to hit me that I would not bowl for Jones ever again," said Perez. "It was sad to realize that while I would stay friends with the people on the team, I would never experience another match with them."

Many seniors felt the same sense of friendship as they shared this special moment with their teammates.

"As a first year bowler I felt immediately welcomed by the team and was sad to see this feeling go," said Leah Malloy '25.

Although their time on the team may have come to a close, the graduating lady eagle bowlers expressed gratitude for the time they spent at the lanes.

"I'm going to miss this team and this sport a lot. Everyone was so supportive and the matches were truly so much fun to be at," said Belcore.

## Rowing into the Ether

*Allen Carey '25*

*Reporter*

Ether Schwan, or Ether Schwan-Crew as known on Instagram, recounts his journey of beginning his rowing career to making a commitment to an ivy league school.

"A family friend of mine took up rowing a couple years ago so I decided to try it out for a summer, and stuck with it ever since," said Schwan.

Ether immersed himself into crew, keeping his sport a priority all throughout high school.

"The recruiting process for rowing typically starts at the end of your sophomore year. I had this mindset that I wanted to row in college since my freshman year. I was like this is my goal, I'm going to get this," said Schwan.

Ether made it a goal to reach collegiate levels. As a high schooler, it takes a lot of responsibility and communication to get a rowing offer from a school.

"At the end of my sophomore year I reached out to a whole bunch of schools, some that were heavyweight, some that were lightweight, some that were D1 or D3," said Schwan.

Ether continued to grow his love and ability for the sport, training with a local rowing foundation in the Chicagoland area.

"One way the Chicago Rowing Foundation has prepared me is through the amount of work we do. It's just insane, upwards of two hours a day every day of the week, throwing in multiple sessions in the morning and in the afternoon," said Schwan.

Despite a rigorous schedule, Ether's hard work began to pay off.

"That kind of the level of training that you expect at the collegiate level, so it's nice that I'm getting access to that now in high school," said Schwan.

Ether not only advanced in athletics, but also maintained a focus on academics.

"Then throughout junior year I continued to get faster and fitter as an athlete. While continuing to send out updates, I narrowed down my list. I had to decide where I wanted to be," said Schwan.

Ether had to make a choice. Which school would he take interest in?

"I got my list down to around eight schools by the end of my junior year as I continued to get faster," said Schwan.

Ultimately, Ether decided to commit to Yale University.

"The Chicago Rowing Foundation has sent multiple athletes in the past to Yale, and specifically to their lightweight crew team," said Schwan. "I feel like I'm going to have people that I've rowed with in the past on the team coming in, and they're all doing very well there. It's clear that this is a good transition."

As Ether wraps up his senior year, he reflects on what it will be like to row in Connecticut next year.

"I'm going to be very sad to leave behind the coaches, teammates, and support systems and friends that I have here in Chicago. I'm not afraid to say I'm a little nervous to jump into this new environment," said Schwan.

Needless to say, Ether is still very excited for the upcoming season.

"I'm super stoked to be able to continue doing this passion of mine. I was not ready to be done with rowing after this year, so I'm very excited to be able to do my favorite thing in college," said Schwan.

"To finally have this done and to say that I've come out on the other side and accomplished this dream of mine and have it all be official, it's the best feeling I've had in my entire life."

## Jones runs on dunkin'

Jones girls basketball team faces Amundsen during Senior Night

*Charlotte Quinn '25*

*Copy Editor*

*Yarah Coronejo-Jimenez '25*

*Sports Reporter*

On January 24, 2025, the Jones Girls Basketball team hosted their annual senior night game. Moving towards the end of their season, the team celebrated its seniors in a close game against Amundsen.

The senior night game caught a lot of traction from Jones students and the players' families, raising the stakes of the game.

"I went to the game to support some of my friends on the team and it was really fun. There was a lot of school spirit and a lot of people came," said audience member Audrey Young '25.

Being seniors, the importance of winning their senior night game placed more pressure than ever before.

"It's something we've watched other seniors have for years and years, it was really important for us to win," said varsity player Rosie Condron '25.

The Jones team previously played against Amundsen earlier in the season. However, the senior night game came as a shocking challenge.

"Early in the season we beat them by a bit more than this time, I think this time they came more prepared than they did last time. They came with a lot more aggression than we were anticipating," said Condron.

After the end of the first half, Jones scored 25 points while the Amundsen team stood at a worrisome 29 points.

"We did a lot of good communication and we were running our plays and we were also locked in on defense," said varsity player Tory Smith '25. "We were losing at half-time so we had to come back."

With only a minute and three seconds left, the Jones team was at 43 points, a point less than the Amundsen team.

"It was a really close game, the entire game and it all came down to the last second," said Smith.

Despite a constant back and forth between both teams, the Jones girls varsity team secured a win for their senior night game scoring 46 points to Amundsen's 44.



"We played with a lot of energy and I think we worked well together as a team. It was a close game and I think the energy really helped us pull it off," said Condron.

Friends of the team were excited to see the player's growth over the years.

"They put so much work into senior night, all of them have been on the team since freshman year so seeing their hard work pay off was really awesome," said Young.

The team links their success to both of their coaches, Maryah and Katris, who have driven the team's success.

"They both started coaching us last year, having all girls is a lot better and really empowering," said Smith.

The team's seniors faced nostalgia during their last season on the team, but appreciated the support from their peers.

"I've been playing basketball for so long so it's kind of sad to see it come to an end, but it was really nice to be celebrated and see such a big crowd and see everyone coming to support," said Smith.

The team hopes for the best during the last games of their season.

"It's been a challenging season but I think we'll finish strong and end it on a good note," said Condron.





## Wash those hands

Students infected with norovirus speak out about their experience

Brandon Barroso '27  
Reporter

As norovirus cases continue to rise across the country, it's starting to progressively become more of a concern around Jones.

"I'm always hearing about another person I know that has gotten sick," said Alec Young '27.

The virus, known for causing severe stomach issues, has been spreading rapidly among students.

It started with about a six-hour-long stomach ache that was really weird," said Young. "But it only got worse. Then I got this terrible headache and before I knew it, I was just throwing up everything.

The symptoms tend to be overwhelming, often forcing infectees to stay home resting for several days.

"I hear it lasts about three days," said Young, "which makes sense, because I had to miss three whole days of school."

Norovirus, often called the "stomach flu," is a highly contagious illness that spreads through contact with infected surfaces, food, or people.

"If I knew how easy it was to catch, I would've been much more careful with staying clean and being mindful of what I touch," said Everett Sporrang '27, another student who caught norovirus recently.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, symptoms typically develop within 12 to 48 hours of exposure.

"It started so quickly. The stomach ache wasted no time, and before I knew it I was throwing up all over the place," said Sporrang.

Sporrang caught the virus over the weekend but recalled how unexpected the effects were.

"It hit me out of nowhere. At first, I thought I was just worn out from the school week, but then it got worse," said Sporrang.

Vomiting, diarrhea, nausea, and stomach cramps are the most common symptoms upon infection.

"The worst part was definitely the vomiting. I don't think I've ever felt that sick before," said Young.

The feeling of utter exhaustion that pairs with the constant vomiting doesn't make the sickness any easier, either.

"It makes you throw up even when there's nothing in your stomach to throw up. It resorts to your own stomach acid, it's really nasty," said Young.



Hand sanitizing station located inside Jones

The virus is known for its resilience, lingering on surfaces and resisting common hand sanitizers.

"I always wash my hands, but I still got sick. Maybe I just wasn't careful enough," said Morgan Thielke '27, another student who recently fought a norovirus infection.

Thielke struggled with the impact of missing multiple days of school, even though she had no other choice.

"It was really hard missing school. Classes that I'm in like math and chemistry, there aren't days that you can just skip," said Thielke.

Many students have found it difficult to catch up on work while recovering from the illness.

"I had a huge amount of work to catch up on, and it was already hard enough to focus," said Thielke.

Some adults at Jones are making an effort to raise awareness about the sickness, urging students to practice proper hygiene.

"I've heard a couple of my teachers announcing to my classmates the importance of washing our hands, especially during this time of year," said Thielke.

Some health officials stress that hand sanitizer alone may not be enough to keep you safe from the virus.

"It's easy to forget the importance of something so small, like washing your hands, but it really does make a difference," says Young.

## Tick-Tock, Tik-Tok...

TikTok "ban" creates mixed emotions among users

Annette Walker '26  
Sports Editor

On Saturday, Jan. 18, social media platform TikTok shut down in the United States, generating mixed emotions among users.

The app was expected to cease activity at midnight on the 19th, yet became inactive significantly early.

"It was like 9:30 pm, and the app stopped working, and I got really confused," said June Hartman '26. "I refreshed it, and it gave me a message that TikTok had been banned, and I was really upset."

Users prepared for the ban by reminiscing on old videos and trends.

"I had 1000 favorited videos that I wanted to sort through," said Hartman. "I spent time clearing out my folder so that I could still look at those videos after the ban."

The app shut down following the Supreme Court upholding of Congress' bill on the TikTok ban, yet returned shortly after on account of an executive order by President Trump extending the ban.

"It shut down late Saturday night," said Zohar Gafni-Kane '26. "But then by midday on Sunday, it was already back for most people."

Despite the return of the app, those who deleted TikTok prior to the ban cannot re-download it due to its removal from the app store.

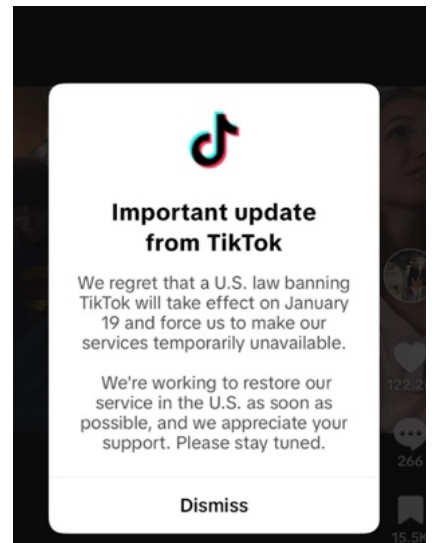
"My app stopped working, and I was really upset. I decided to delete it," said Gafni-Kane. "Three hours later, everyone was talking about how it started working again. But since it wasn't on the app store, I couldn't re-download it. I've been trying, but every time I try it says that the app is not available in my region."

Many felt strong emotions at the time of the ban, as TikTok remained a popular app in the everyday lives of users for many years.

"I think I've had the app for seven years, since 2018," said Devin Deignan '25. "I definitely like the app a lot, and I spent a lot of time on it."

When the app became available once more, many users felt relief and excitement.

"I opened the app because someone told me it was back, and I didn't believe them," said Hartman. "But then I got the message that explained how it was back. I was really excited."



Message sent to TikTok users regarding the ban. Credit: Annette Walker

## Lighting the candles for the musical

The theatre department announces the spring musical for 2025

Meghan Zandstra '27  
Reporter

On January 15, the drama department announced the highly anticipated 2025 Jones College Prep musical to be *Company*.

"I'm really excited. I had heard of [*Company*] before, and now I've seen some videos and listened to it and I think the music is really amazing," said Natasha Friedman '25.

With the announcement of this year's musical, students compare it to past productions, including Ellery Kohn '27 who participated in her freshman year.

"This musical is more technical, and it has songs that stand out more to the audience," said Kohn.

In terms of the story itself, the director of the show, Brennan Roach, believes that students will be able to connect their own lives to it and relate to the characters.

"*Company* is a story that centers around one individual who just has one foot out on a lot of their connections with their friends and holds back. There's this sense of protection and not wanting to get too vulnerable," said Roach.

Roach compares the narrative of the script to experiences many share at Jones.

"That risk we often feel in a space like Jones, where there's so much perceived expectation," said Roach.

While many students are enthusiastic, there are certain drawbacks.

"Last year there were 40 positions to be in, and this year there are 14 roles. So it's a big change and some people won't be happy," said Kohn.

Past productions of *Company* have changed details about certain characters, which influenced decisions made for the roles at Jones.



Company poster, JCP Performing Arts website

"There was a 2021 revival of the show in which they gender-swapped a lot of the cast. And it's going to be interesting to see which roles we keep gender soft, and which ones will go back to the original," said Friedman.

These alterations not only modernized the show, but also introduced a fresh perspective on the characters.

"*Company* originally came out in the 70s, and if you look at the original script there's things that feel that way in it. One of the really cool things they did in the revival is they kept the text and flipped the names of the husbands and wives," said Roach.

The actors, director, and rest of the crew prepare to overcome the typical challenges that come with large productions.

"We are short on time, and I think it's going to be a lot of having to work as hard as we possibly can for the next few months so we can get this thing on its feet," said Friedman.

Despite the quick turnaround from auditions to opening night, all of the students who participate in the musical make it a priority for their time at Jones.

"I've done every musical here, and it's definitely where I found my people and where I found what I want to do in my free time after school," said Friedman.

As the show becomes a principal part of students' lives, the community built during production is a huge component of the musical.

"The most rewarding part is the people I've met. I've had some close relationships with people because of the musical and that's really exciting," said Kohn.

In the end, it's the performers and technicians that make the show memorable, and their collaboration and shared passion that brings it to life.

"There's a vibe, like a chemistry that appears that you couldn't even have imagined, because maybe these people have never even met each other before, but something happens and everything falls into place," said Roach.

This show in particular has been predicted to help strengthen these bonds and create new ones as well.

"The reason I do theater is because with each show, it lets us gain empathy for other people's perspectives and expand our worldview. And this show especially is all about the complex lives of other people, lives that we get to just take a sneak peek into," said Friedman.

Graphic credit to Canva



## Room 201 to Capitol Hill

The success story of Blueprint alum Ava Thompson

*Sadie Barash '25*

*Editor-In-Chief, Print/Web*

Just four years after her high school graduation, Jones alum Ava Thompson '21 is making waves in the journalism community - setting an example for all Jones students looking to pursue a career in the media.

From researching for Lori Lightfoot to interning on Capitol Hill for NBC, Thompson fronts an impressive resume. However, her journalism experience dates back to 2018, when she first joined the Jones Blueprint.

"I was one out of maybe four sophomores [on the Blueprint]. I had no idea how to write a story. It took me five hours to write a little 250-word article," said Thompson.

It wasn't until December that Thompson finally experienced a breakthrough in her writing.

"I started writing a story about a girl who would dance in the courtyard every morning. I'd see people watching her and be like 'Hey, honestly, what do you think about her'," said Thompson. "I did the story, and it was really good."

Thompson's skill continued to improve after her courtyard close-up, earning her an invite to the McCormick Foundation High School Media Awards alongside her older peers.

"I was the only [Jones] sophomore to go to the competition that year for cities, and then we won," said Thompson.

Coming off the heels of a successful first year, Thompson felt empowered to attack her biggest story yet.

"This opportunity came up to interview Lori Lightfoot right when she was winning. I kept pushing it for two months, and I was so nervous it was going to fall through," said Thompson. "We ended up getting the story, and I got promoted to School Editor because of it."

Despite her evident talent, Thompson remained unsure of journalism's role in her future. That changed when she picked up a story on the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) strike.

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Despite her evident talent, Thompson remained unsure of journalism's role in her future. That changed when she picked up a story on the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) strike.

"That story was interesting because we also interviewed people outside of Jones. We went out in the streets and started talking to random teachers about what they feel is important," said Thompson. "After that, I was like, 'I want to go to journalism school. I actually think I can do this, and I really like it.'"

The COVID-19 pandemic unfortunately disrupted the later part of Thompson's junior year and the entirety of her senior year. Still, as the newly appointed Editor-In-Chief, she drove the Blueprint to become a voice of advocacy for the school community.

"Kids were going through a lot during that time [COVID]. I don't think mental health was as talked about within classes. I thought the Blueprint was that voice to be like, 'This is what students are feeling. This is what students are thinking during this time,'" said Thompson.

After leaving a lasting impact on the Jones Blueprint and community, Thompson headed to the University of Maryland to study Journalism. Although she entered with mainly print experience, Maryland helped her discover her love for broadcasting and guided her toward her first internship.



With legitimate experience under her belt, Thompson headed to Capitol Hill next. "I ended up interning at NBC Capitol Hill Unit. That was my favorite thing I've ever done. It just like felt so fulfilling that I've been doing this since I was 15 and now I'm interning for a major network," said Thompson.

As she finishes her final semester at Maryland, Thompson looks ahead with ambition.

"I hope to get back to the network as an entry-level position, or I would be a producer or reporter in a lower-level market, probably in the South."

Thompson leaves hopeful Jones writers with one final piece of advice, rooted in the spirit of what it means to be a journalist.

"Always be open to talk to people," said Thompson. "You might learn something from them. 'I started working at NewsNation as a show intern. Our DC bureaus were working in tiny little offices, but I loved it. [We] had such a diverse group of people,'" said Thompson. "We were covering everything in national politics."

## From computer to kickoff

Jones alumni returns to computer science classes

*Isabella Guzman '25*

*Deputy Editor-in-Chief*

As Jones alumnus Andy Niser '21 continues his senior year at Vanderbilt, he returned to Computer Science Classes to speak with students about career opportunities and the practical applications of their studies.

Niser launched his own consulting practice at the intersection of his passion for soccer and data analysis.

"I run my own consulting practice called Data Core Strategy," Niser said. "I primarily work with teams in a pro league called the USL (United Soccer League), which is just below the MLS (Major League Soccer)."

During his talk, Niser discussed how the programming concepts students learn in classes such as Computer Science Principles and Data Structures can be applied in the workforce.

"I work with CRM platforms like Salesforce, which is essentially a customer relationship management system," said Niser. "For example, if you're a sales rep and you're calling your season ticket holders, you have all their information stored, with attributes tied to each individual. The programming concepts students are learning—like working with variables—are directly applicable to this kind of work."

Beyond analytics, Niser also supports sports teams in business strategy, data science infrastructure, and player valuation.

"On the sporting side, I work with coaches and sporting directors to analyze and quantify player values—essentially determining how much a player is worth," said Niser.

Reflecting on his journey, Niser shared his motivation for returning to Jones, emphasizing persistence and positioning oneself for success in any industry is possible no matter the challenges.

"Part of the reason I came back today is to share my story and show that there are so many opportunities out there," said Niser. "People told me I could never be a



*Andy Niser '21 - Vanderbilt student and Founder of Data Core Strategy - Photo Credits Andy Niser*

general manager or work in sports analytics, but it's definitely possible. If you put yourself in the right places and let your work speak for itself, you can make things happen."

Additionally, he expressed gratitude for his computer science education at Jones, noting how it provided a foundation for his career—even though he isn't a software engineer.

"I take a lot of pride in coming from Chicago Public Schools and Jones, and I know how valuable a computer science education is," said Niser. "Even though I'm not working as a software engineer, the skills I learned here have been incredibly useful."

Addressing current students, Niser encouraged them to explore their strengths and passions in high school, as this can help shape their future career paths.

"When you're 16, 17, or 18, you don't always know what you want to do," Niser said. "What helped me was figuring out what I was good at and what I enjoyed, and then focusing on that in the long run. High school is a great time to start figuring that out."

Niser also emphasized the importance of networking and personal branding, sharing how platforms like LinkedIn helped him secure opportunities.

"I started building my LinkedIn profile in high school, which was incredibly helpful," said Niser. "Now, I have over 2,200 followers, and that's opened up so many work opportunities, school connections, and recruiting chances. It's important to network and connect with people who share your interests."

Throughout his speech, Niser highlighted a central theme: the world is digitalizing and computer science knowledge is valuable across industries, not just in software engineering.

"Computer science opens up a lot of doors," said Niser. "It's not just about coding or software engineering—many of the concepts students are learning now are directly applicable to different career paths, including my own."

## Jones Valentine's Day Word Search

x c t e o y r a u r b e f h e  
 j z s a f v g q r l u u v o l  
 x o t l d y e q w s s p f c g  
 r u n y f d t j v a h x q o a  
 y e r x y a q v h l t u u l e  
 r n r a c e x x h o e c m a n  
 c i k g v g n u l a u q f t e  
 s t c g h z l v u p g g v e w  
 x n e v d g a r i p m z c c m  
 m e h e a r t d q j d f i d a  
 l l k e r r y d o l a n c z l  
 c a f b t m t s a h o c e n y  
 d v k g g k c k a j t b z h l

LOVE YOU

Chocolates  
 Eagles  
 JCP  
 Metal detectors  
 Cupid  
 February  
 Kerry Dolan  
 Roses  
 Date  
 Heart  
 Valentine  
 Love

TRUE LOVE

## Jones Rizz

"Are you from Tennessee? because you're the only 10 I see"

"Hey, how you doing?"

"Are you WI-FI? Because I'm feeling a connection"

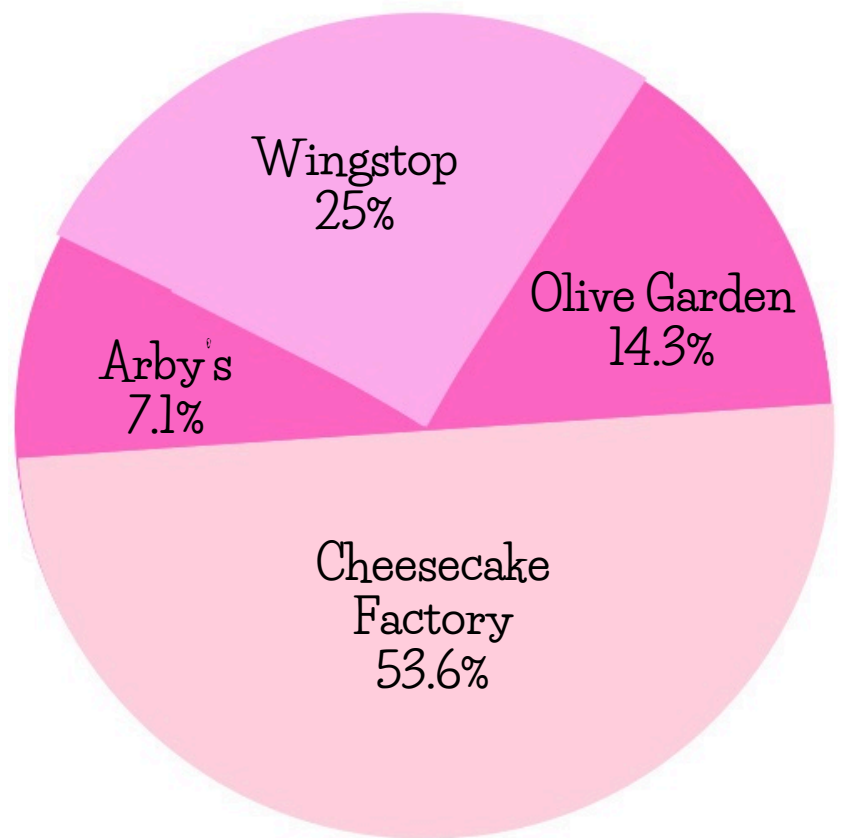
"I lost my phone number, can I borrow yours?"

"Are you https? Because without you I'm ://"

"Are you tired? Because you've been running through my mind all day"

BE MINE

## Where are we dining?



## Plans?

- "Galentines"
- "Eating ice cream alone"
- "Going up to couples and asking them to swap cell phones"

\*Results from BluePrint Staff

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