April Watts ’21 and Nathan Weisbrod ’21 won in last week’s SGA elections, triumphing in a field of six tickets. The duo, on a platform of celebrating Burke student accomplishments and increasing opportunities for dances and performances, became the first rising juniors to win election since Tom Stirling-Hough ’16 and Elvin Meng ’16 won 204’s elections. The victory came after a runoff that included the Myles Nelson/Caleb Weaver ’20 and Elez Berensin-Scher/Max Streitweiser ’20 tickets.

“I feel ecstatic,” Watts said directly after the results came out. “I can’t stop moving.”

“We can’t wait to get to work,” Weisbrod added. SGA elections also moved at an accelerated pace this year, with nominations on April 8th and the general election and speeches April 19th. These changes also affect races for grade representative positions, which had nominations on April 22nd, and four days later, on April 26th, speeches and voting.

Additionally, voting took place electronically, and the results came out the same day as the vote. “It’s going to be a Google Form, it’s going to be instant,” Dean of Students Vanessa Aird said before the elections.

There were a few hiccups, including an overloaded WiFi system that prevented some students from receiving the voting email right away.

But the accelerated schedule allows more time for the transition, making it easier for all future co-presidents to learn their responsibilities.

Liam Widnell ’22 said he was a fan of the changes.

“It’s good for future administrations know what they’re going into before they’re directly thrown into the fire,” he said. (Note: Widnell is a staff photographer for The Cageliner.)

But before the debate and speeches, others said they did not understand the new procedure.

“I’m new here, so I’m not a hundred percent sure what is going on.” said Wes Castle ’22.

Many were nominated at the assembly, but only six pairs of candidates ran. The three other tickets were Etienne Jackson-Jones/Hannah Fofana ’20, Will Edwards/Robbie Dyson ’20, and Kornelia Mostrouss/Ellie Sylers ’20. Before the posters went up, some students didn’t know who was running. “I’ve heard of one or two people who are running, but I’m not quite sure,” Jax August ’21 said.

Most of the candidates ran on platforms of SGA reforms, from swapping out arts credits for sports credits to altering Burke’s snow policy—lofty changes that SGA has little power to enact. All campaigns spoke of the need for every student to have a voice in SGA, but that process is only just beginning.

**Founders’ Day will include new social justice focus**

**BY LEAH WINSTON ’22**

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Founders’ Day this year comes with a new social justice twist.

It will still be a fun day of competition during which students and faculty members from all grades separate into teams to compete for points.

Teams this year will split up into “Battle of the Bands,” to recognize the influential music from the late 60’s, when Burke was founded. The ten teams this year are: The Doors, Diana Ross and the Supremes, Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, James Brown, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, The Beatles, Jimi Hendrix and Pink Floyd.

The change: on previous Founders’ Days, students went to their first two classes and then met up with their teams. This year, high school students and teachers will participate in social-justice-themed activities instead of morning classes.

According to Director of Equity and Inclusion Steven Lee, high school students and teachers will attend workshops about social justice issues.

Everyone will then gather to hear a guest speaker.

The hour-long workshops will be hosted by Burke student-run clubs such as Students of Color, as well as Georgetown Day School students and Burke parents.

Director of Civic Engagement Christiane Connors said the change is part of the work Burke is doing with a grant from the E. E. Ford Foundation. The Foundation helps independent schools “grow and develop in pursuit of their own missions,” which for Burke, means incorporating more social justice into its curricula.

“We want the workshops [and] seminars to be interactive, engaging, relevant and appropriate for high school audiences,” Connors said. “While an hour is not a whole lot of time to delve deep into an issue, we have some great workshops that I think students will walk away from with a better understanding of a particular issue.”

Connors said there will be workshops on sexual assault and temporary protective status, among other topics. She hopes these workshops will help students “think about other perspectives beyond their own and feel a little more empowered to pursue or advocate for justice in different communities.”

**Art History, Economics classes to lose AP status**

**BY SCOTT SUN ’20**

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Burke will phase out two more Advanced Placement (AP) courses next year.

This year, as part of a shift away from AP classes, the school replaced AP Statistics with Advanced Statistics. Next year, AP Art History and AP Economics will shift into Art History and Economics, each split into three trimester-long courses. In Economics, students can choose any combination of Microeconomics, Macroeconomics or Topics in Economics over the year; in Art History, students can take Classical Art & Archaeology, the International Renaissance, and Contemporary Visual Culture as their history elective classes.

Ginger Attarian, Burke’s History Department Chair, said that the new style of classes would allow for more curriculum flexibility and courses more relevant to the real world and college experiences.

“With the new approach, students will engage in more collegiate-style inquiries regarding power, politics, culture, and social justice,” said Attarian. “[It’s] all very much in line with Burke’s mission.”

The move follows an agreement among a group of seven DC private schools last summer to drop all AP classes by 2022. This group includes includes Sidwell Friends, Georgetown Day, and St. Albans.

“Many of our peer schools, local and national, are doing the same thing,” Attarian said. “Burke’s college counselors have already consulted with college admissions offices and are very comfortable explaining these changes and the benefits for Burke students,” said Attarian.

But some juniors, such as Max Streitweiser ’20, said they had their concerns when they first heard that Burke decided to remove the AP classes.
First-person: Asperger's at Burke

I've known for a while. The chatter through typing works much better and chatting a lot. Talking to people online, posting things most of the time. I don't answer questions often, and I don't want anyone to notice me more than average. Some people might think I'm rude because I don't always have a filter. I tend not to speak to people very often, but when I do, I speak my mind most of the time.

I feel more comfortable talking with people online, posting things and chatting a lot. Talking to people through typing works much better for me, because actual talking is awkward and I can't ever think of anything to say. When I text I can have a normal conversation, about games, politics, or anything else.

This leaves me tied to my phone at school sometimes. I'm mostly just mapping out how my day will go or checking Discord, which is a rolling conversation with people.

Their environment isn't designed for people with Asperger's — most classrooms aren't. I enjoy that the classes are small because it's easier to ask for help and it's much less noisy. But it also means I'm much more likely to get noticed, and I'm quicker to be called up for a presentation, I know that in a lot of other schools, kids with Aspergers would instantly get outed as "weird" and bullied, but I feel like the environment here is relaxed and inclusive enough to avoid this.

My video production class was one place where I feel comfortable talking. The class was tiny, only six people, and we need to communicate a lot to get things done. The setting there also allowed me to casually chat and joke with other people. It was pretty fun going to that class.

This essay is a very brief summary of my experiences as a student going to Burke with Aspergers. Although I'm sometimes not able to communicate with people well, I don't want anyone to feel sorry for me — and if you say, "Hi," I will respond to you.

BCC list scandal leads to discussion

Senior boys at Bethesda Chevy Chase (BCC) high school in Maryland distributed a list among themselves which rated almost 20 senior girls participating in the International Baccalaureate Program on a spreadsheet based on their physical appearance. The boys who had been adding to and editing this list for about a year until a female student saw it during class and reported it. Once the list surfaced, the girls went to the administration, which took immediate action, according to the school principal. But the girls who reported it claim that the faculty encouraged them not to talk about it at school or with classmates. On top of that, the only immediate consequence was an in-school detention for one boy involved, which would not show up on his record. This contrasts from the "Zero Tolerance Policy" the BCC administration says they use for bullying and harassment.

The girls showed up at the Assistant Principal’s office and demanded to have a face-to-face conversation with the administration to fix the problem, an action that caught the attention of the Washington Post, Associated Press and countless other news outlets. This process began with meetings between some of the boys involved and many female students. The girls tried to express why the list was symbolic of the constant sexualization and objectification of women. Eighty students came to the first meeting, which lasted two hours. They expressed their fears and experiences of sexual harassment and assault at school, as well as their ideas to improve the school’s system for these issues.

Mira Levin Antilla, a BCC 10th grader, said she thought the solution would include "educating the guys through interactive conversations and working with them so that the cycle of these sorts of lists and this type of behavior stops," which she said was the most effective way to prevent sexism at BCC.

BCC Principal Donna Jones said she intends to implement more disciplinary actions in accordance with the MCPS Student Code of Conduct.

"When it comes to the environment at Burke, students such as Julia Parachini '21 said she thought it was unlikely such a thing would happen at Burke, thanks to the school’s Health Values and Ethics program. "No other high school is talking about gender affects day to day life," she said. According to Parachini, this prevents students at Burke from taking matters of sexual harassment or objectification lightly.

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Five years ago, Mustafa Nusraty came to Burke with the intention of getting out as soon as possible. Or, as soon as he finished his required half-year apprenticeship under Ginger Attarian.

"The program at American University asked you to work half the year at one school and one half the year at another school," Nusraty said. "For the second half of the year you pick the school you think you absolutely do not want to be in, and I said I do not want to be in a small, progressive, private school, so I picked Burke."

"Five minutes after looking at Burke my first day, I realized I got this completely wrong," he said. He's been at Burke ever since.

Nusraty, a native of Onley, Maryland, whose parents were immigrants from Afghanistan, said he liked school as much as he thinks most future teachers do while in high school: a lot.

"I really liked my history and social studies classes. I liked doing sports and theater and I was student government president. I enjoyed doing all of that," he said.

After graduating University of Maryland, with a degree in Political Science, Nusraty worked in both the House of Representatives and in the Senate. But after the senator he was working for lost his reelection, he decided to pursue his interest in education policy and teaching and took a job at the D.C. Public Charter School Board, but it wasn't quite what he wanted to do, he said.

"I didn't really love it so I was trying to figure out what I should do next. So my wife said, 'you always wanted to be a teacher — why don't you try teaching and become a teacher,'" Nusraty said.

From there, he arrived at Burke as a student teacher and later took his job as history teacher.

"Since arriving at Burke, Nusraty says his teaching has developed a lot. He knows understands the students and his job much better."

"I've spent more time with students now," Nusraty said. "I've taught all of my subjects a few times. I can anticipate the types of questions students are going to ask and what kinds of problems might arise, so I can key on them earlier the students and his job much better."

"The program at American wasn't quite what I thought it was going to be," Nusraty said. "The program at American was involved in an underlying crime related to Russian election interference in the 2016 presidential election, featuring the major conflicts of the investigation without information about key witnesses and grand juries.

Though Mueller's report said that Russia successfully interfered in the 2016 election via misinformation and hacking, Nusraty's comment was not well received by the students. He ended the report without a discussion on one another on obstruction of justice.

"In this investigation, the evidence does not establish that the president was involved in an underlying crime related to Russian election interference in 2016," Mueller wrote in his report. "If Jim Comey's evidence does not rise to a level of possible personal motives animating the president's conduct, as the report states, the rule of law is undermined.

"The investigation did not make it clear that the president was involved in any criminal act," Nusraty said. "The investigation did not make it clear that the president was involved in any criminal act, it also does not exonerate him."

"I think basically it's Congress, it's up to you to take this further with regards to obstruction and other matters that might come up," Cummings said, per Newsweek. "If we do nothing here, the president is going to be emboldened."

Trump was facing a number of potential legal consequences if he did.

"This sad chapter of American history is behind us. It would be a disservice to the American people if misguided politicized investigations to continue," he said.

The report also revealed a dramatic moment during which Trump recognized the severity of the investigation.

"This is the end of my Presidency. I'm f—d," the report quoted him as saying. "Everyone tells me if you get one of these independent counsels it ruins your presidency."

It remains unclear if Trump actually broke the law, and what consequences will occur if he did. Trump could be impeached by the House if significant and clear evidence arises that he obstructed justice, according to Pelosi, but it remains unlikely that the Republican Senate would convict the president.

While Trump probably won't be charged based on the findings of the Mueller report, Attorney General Karl Racine has also issued a suit against Trump based on his hotel's potential violation of the emoluments clause, and multiple House committees have called a number of the president's personal circle to testify before Congress.
Woody KUZBANSKY ’19

 Druid, a Wizards fan since 1983, said, “put together some good teams.”

— though they did note that “Ernie with close ties to the Wizards said weren’t very good at all,” a source were average and half the time we

"time," Nusraty said. "His tenure was

"Finals."

"I know there was [sic] poor construction of the teams

in a very cool way." "We put a premium on people being their

authentic selves," Jones later said in the same

email. "It’s a pleasure to work with thoughtful,

concerned, playful, and genuine folks day in and

day out.” "Jone also said in the email he was proud of helping the school's history department shift from “more Euro-centric to a global approach.”

While the school will lose one of its longest-
tenured teachers and the only known member of the faculty or the student body that arrives

via motorcycle—a Honda Night Hawk 750, to be

"Jone said he’s ready for whatever will come next year.

“ fortified with outbursts like that for

several years."

"I don’t think [Wall and Beal are] the best of friends, but I think they have a healthy and mutual respect for each other," the source said.

Nusraty said he thought it was time for Brooks to see the door alongside Grunfeld.

"There’s no reason any senior persons on that team should remain given the last few years."

As for the next General Manager, the source said, "keep an eye" on Tim Connelly, the president of basketball operations for the Denver Nuggets, though NBC Sports Washington said a number of other candidates, interim GM Tommy Shepard included, are possibilities.

And, the source said, whoever comes in will likely dictate if the team gets torn down or set back up to compete around Wall and Beal.

But they also noted that Wall’s "immovable" contract worth $169 million over four years could hamper a total rebuild.

"The hope is that whoever comes in has the chance to do a quick fix. But if that isn’t the vision, Bradley Beal’s value is never going to be higher. I’m sure they’ve got offers."

If the Wizards decide to rebuild entirely, it could leave them struggling for years, but both Nusraty and Doyle—who described himself as "ride or die"—said they were ready and willing to go through the process.

“I’m a fan of Washington and Baltimore sports teams,” Nusraty said. "More often than not I’m disappointed."