

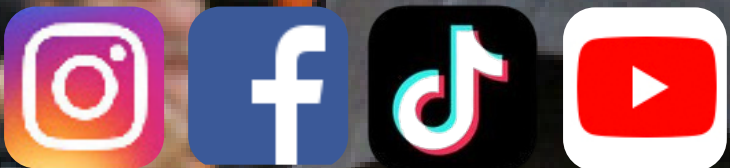
← ARROW

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SIXTEEN NEW MEMBERS INDUCTED INTO UHS HALL OF FAME

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Future Chieftains learning the choreography for their basketball halftime performance in the South Aux Gym on Jan. 16. PHOTO BY KARA BOICE

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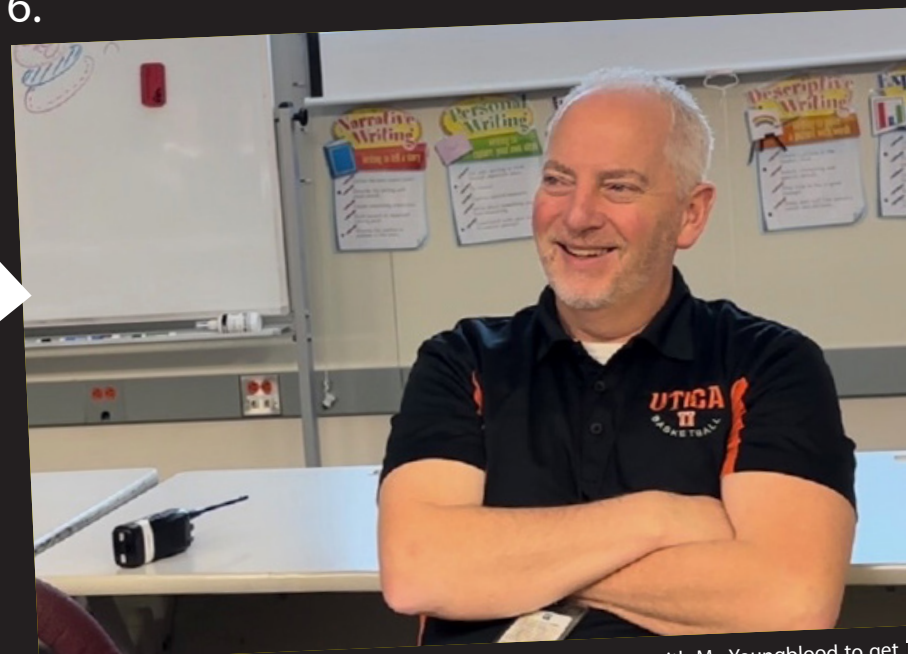


Senior Ava Lasczack diligently annotates the first chapters of "The Secret History" by Donna Tartt to collect information about themes, literary devices and character developments during teacher Suzanne Greenfield's AP Literature & Composition class on JAN. 13. PHOTO BY SOFIA CROOK

CHECK THIS OUT →



FIND OUR MONTHLY PRESS CONFERENCES AND MORE ON OUR YOUTUBE PAGE @UHSARROW.



Watch Arrow Youtube playlists of the Jan. Monthly Press Conference with Mr. Youngblood to get the inside scoop. GRAPHIC BY ANNA BROWN

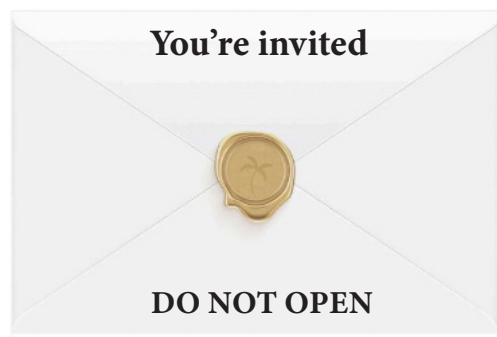


NEWS

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Think before you click

NOLAN DARGA
REPORTER

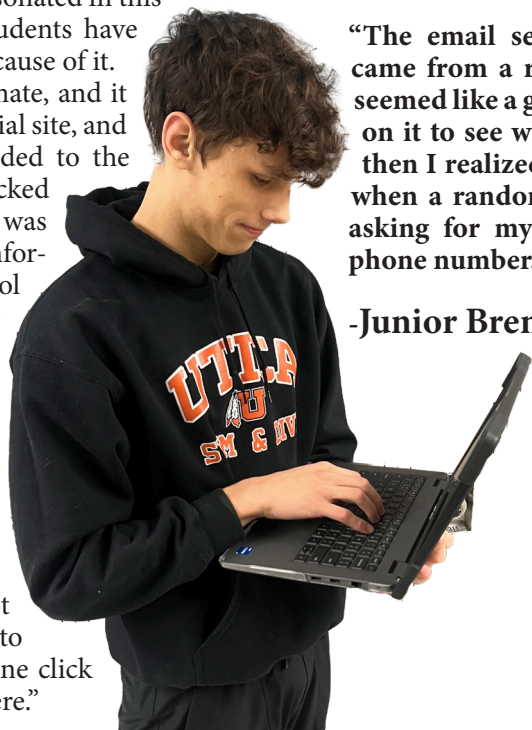


An unexpected invite has recently caught the attention of people across Utica Community Schools. Many students and staff have received emails regarding an invitation to a dinner party; the messages are scams designed to trick the recipient. The motive of the scammers is to gather personal information.

"When I saw the email, it looked legitimate. The website it came from is real. That being said, I heard about the scam before actually getting sent one of the emails, so I didn't click on it. Honestly, if I hadn't heard about it before, it would have been much more convincing," junior Paige Brinkey said. "The first time I heard about the scam was someone telling me her sister had gotten a dinner party email from me. I had no hand in sending that. After I found out, I got sent at least five of these emails by other people, some of which are actual friends of mine."

Phishing scams are a type of cybercrime where hackers impersonate someone familiar to the victim in order to make them hand over personal information. These attackers are usually looking for passwords, banking info, or a way to spread malware. Some of those who've been impersonated in this scam fell for imitation. Many students have had to change their passwords because of it.

"The email came from a classmate, and it was from what looked like an official site, and there was nothing suspicious added to the link or anything like that. So, I clicked on the email looking to see what it was about, but I didn't give it my information," Eisenhower High School junior Taylor Feraru said. "I later heard about a wave of scams going around, and I kept getting text messages from friends who had received the email from me. I knew I had gotten hacked, and as of today, I've been kicked out of my school accounts, my email, and my password is not working. As much as we think we're not 70-year-olds and we're not going to fall for a scam, it is so easy. It's one click and your information is everywhere."



The invitation is seemingly sent out by Greetings Island, a platform that allows users to create free online invitations and greeting cards. The platform itself is real, which makes the emails look even more authentic.

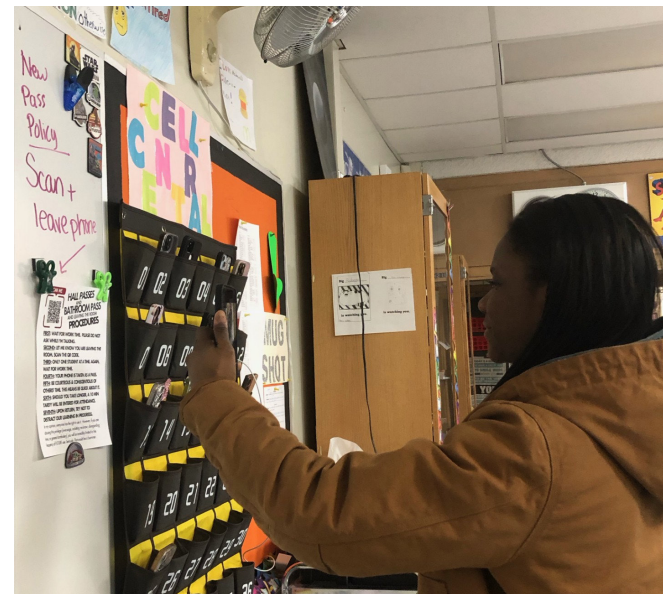
This is not the first time something like this has happened in the UCS district. In 2019, a school contractor was hired by UCS to issue online registration for College Board exams. The contractor misconfigured their cloud storage, which in turn leaked the personal information of students and their parents (K-12). However, unlike the previous incident, this is affecting students and staff more directly.

"I've received a million of these invites to the dinner party from staff and students. I've never actually opened one of them, so I'm not sure what happens when you do. All of these are really concerning in the grand scheme of things. You risk getting hacked and getting malware or viruses on your computer. If you do get that into your system, it might destroy it and maybe even affect records in PowerSchool," principal Timothy Youngblood said. "It could potentially cause some massive issues, but if there is a student who gets affected by the email, we will issue a 'Help Desk' ticket to our IT department."

As this phishing scam continues to circulate through UCS emails, the dinner party invitation serves as a reminder of how easily personal information can be compromised. While some students recognized the warning signs, others learned the risks firsthand. There is no clear information on how the scam started or how it will end, but the district is working to resolve the problem.

"The email seemed real because it came from a real student with what seemed like a genuine e-vite. I clicked on it to see what the invitation was, then I realized the email was a scam when a random 'drop box' site was asking for my UCS log in and my phone number."

-Junior Brendan Pittel



Sophomore Krishya Kelly scanning the new school-wide hall and bathroom pass. PHOTO BY RILEY BANKS

School-wide new bathroom and vending machine rules

How does this effect students?

RILEY BANKS
REPORTER

On Jan. 9th, principal Timothy Youngblood sent out an email to all the teachers at Utica High School that students are restricted from using the bathrooms and vending machines.

"Students cannot go to the vending machines during school hours, and are only limited to 2 designated bathrooms," Youngblood said, "because some students were vaping and many wandering around the school."

Sophomore Krishya Kelly goes into detail, expressing how she feels about the situation and how she feels about the new rule.

"My opinion on the bathroom situation is that they should open the bathrooms again," Kelly said. "because it's not fair to students who don't vape or wander around the hallways. It's like in elementary school when the teacher punishes the whole class instead of the student who ruined it for the whole class."

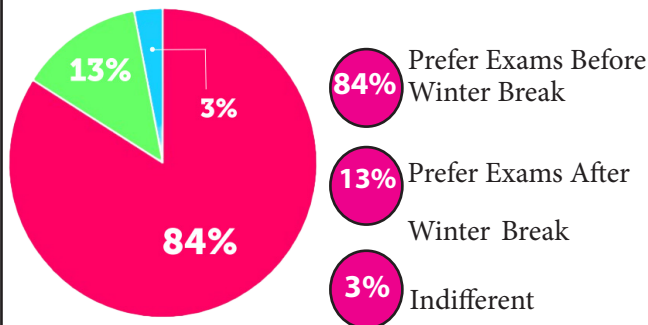
Youngblood shares his view on the situation, explaining that vaping wasn't the only reason they limited the bathrooms; it was due to many people wandering around when they weren't supposed to.

"It wasn't just the vaping," Youngblood said, "it was the wandering; it was the hanging outside class for 10-15 minutes during teaching. As much as it feels like a punishment, the bathrooms are more open for everybody."

Even if there's no way to lower the number of people vaping, there's certainly a way to reduce the number of people wandering around the hallways. This is a start to reducing the number of people out of class.

Semester exam changes

KATELYN PALARCHIO
BUSINESS EDITOR



POLL CONDUCTED VIA @UHSARROW ON INSTAGRAM

As the bell rang on Dec. 19, students dropped their pencils and let their brains rest for the two weeks of winter break. Ending first semester on the Friday before winter break has been routine for UCS students since the Covid-19 pandemic, but come next school year, that will change. First semester will cease on Jan. 15, with report cards due on Jan 20th. Following this change, exam days will take place from Jan. 13-15. Students will have the three-day weekend for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to rest instead of a two-week break.

Due to the fact that exams will be taking place after winter break, some students are unsure how the time away from school will affect their performance. With the time off, students may have more difficulty remembering material taught weeks earlier.

“The good part about it is obviously a natural break, and then you don’t have to wait two weeks for exams,” said principal Timothy Youngblood. “The problem with it is now first semester is so much shorter than second semester, so the teachers are cramming stuff in, and they’re losing instructional time.”

This shift in the calendar may also change how students view winter break. What has been a time to relax could now include studying or reviewing notes in preparation for exams. For some, stress can build up with exams drawing nearer and nearer. This reality can remove the peaceful aspect of winter break and take away the feeling of having a fresh start once students return to school for the new year.

“I feel like that would be better for people that want more time to study,” said junior Alicia Andrus. “The change will give them a whole week to do so.”

Beyond exams, the extended second quarter has the potential to both positively and negatively impact students’ final grades and overall GPAs. The additional time creates both opportunities for improvement and added academic pressure.

“I actually think it would help GPAs, because it would give kids longer,” said sophomore McKenzie Boyd. “They’ll get an extra three weeks to study over the material.”

The new calendar will take effect next school year, changing the way the semester and grading periods are structured. With exams coming after winter break and the second quarter stretching further into January, students will be returning to a different end-of-semester routine than they’re used to. These changes will affect how winter break, exams, and grading periods are experienced moving forward.

Healthy dose of competition

PAIGE BRINKEY
MANAGING EDITOR



In a moment of pure bliss, sophomores Kristyn Samuel, Nikole Rohn, Abigail Gabridge, and Mihajla Manojlovic cheer as they receive second place in the Community Awareness event.

PHOTO BY MEGAN YAEK

The next generation of lifesaving caretakers is here. Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA) has guided students heading down the health professional career path for 50 years now. This year, Utica High School, along with other schools in region four, took stage at Fraser High School on Jan. 31 for the 2025-26 Regional Leadership Conference.

“The best part of regionals is being supportive of all your other friends, doing your events, and cheering people on,” sophomore Allison Rauchfleish said. “HOSA is a really good opportunity to discover new skills, and it helps you figure out what you might want to do in the future.”

Each HOSA member is allowed to compete in one category, typically pertaining to their future goals in the medical field. Competitors create presentations, take tests, and produce long-term projects for their event. Some events are solo while others require teams of people.

“The category we competed in was Health Education, and I think we did really well. I was really proud of us, especially for pulling it all together. I think working as a group can be challenging sometimes, but we did good,” sophomore Leah Sleiman said. “The best part was the excitement of finding out that we placed top five and walking on the stage in front of everyone. It was an adrenaline rush.”



Scan here to see all region four finalists

Finalists in each event are those who placed first through fifth. Scoring is based on test scores and judge critiques. All HOSA members who’ve placed in the top five of their categories will move onto the 2026 Michigan HOSA State Leadership Conference.

“After seeing that I qualified for states, it was just a flood of emotions,” junior Zack Sharrack said. “Especially this year, doing a solo event, feeling so doubted at times, and being able to overcome that and place second is genuinely one of the best feelings I could have ever experienced.”

Moving forward, Utica HOSA is ready to welcome the future of healthcare providers. With growing interest, the club is shaping leaders both during high school and beyond.

“For anyone thinking about joining HOSA, I would just say, “go for it.” I was a little skeptical at first, but it gave me a general overview of what to do in the future for college,” senior Jade McKinney said. “Especially if you’re younger, come out and try it. You can learn actual skills surrounding what you want to learn.”

There will be 63 students representing Utica on the statewide stage this spring. This year’s state conference is Apr. 16-17 in Acme, Michigan. Until then, all finalists are working to perfect their craft and advance their performances.



Scrubbing in for their events are seniors Rylie Burton, Madeline Peraino, Ava Brunning, and Ryleigh Scott as they take on the 2025-26 Regional Leadership Conference.

PHOTO BY KEITH BRUNNING



“I want to be a pediatric nurse because I really want to help out the kids. The medical system tends to downplay their conditions, I think it’s important to get young people the help they need.”

-Senior Jade McKinney



“I know I want to help people. Ever since I was little, it’s always been my dream to help people through the battles I’ve suffered through and I believe the medical field is the best way to accomplish that.”

-Junior Zack Sharrack



“I want to be a dentist when I’m older because it’s always something that I’ve been interested in, and I would like to help people smile.”

-Sophomore Leah Sleiman



FEATURE

INTERESTING STUFF



FEATURE STORIES

CHECK OUT ARROW'S ONLINE FEATURE STORIES

Preparing for May

AP Literature & Composition students choose books to prepare for the AP exam.

SOPIA CROOK
COPY EDITOR

Preparing for the AP exam in May, AP Literature & Composition students in teacher Suzanne Greenfield's 4th hour chose books to read individually. Students were allowed to choose from nine books that could be utilized on the exam's FRQ [free response question]: "The Awakening", "Animal Farm", "A Thousand Splendid Suns", "Remarkably Bright Creatures", "Frankenstein", "The Catcher in the Rye", "A Raisin in the Sun", "Slaughterhouse Five", or "Hamlet." The students were required to bring their book of choice into class on Jan. 12.

Recently completing "1984" by George Orwell as a class, some students wanted to experience another author's writing rather than reading Orwell's "Animal Farm." Senior Delana Dickow chose to read "A Thousand Splendid Suns" by Khaled Hosseini expressed similar thoughts.

"I really wanted to branch out more and I didn't think I could take another Orwell book back to back," Dickow said. "When I was looking into all of our options, I saw a "Thousand Splendid Suns" took place in Afghanistan and despite that being a more central part of Asia, I still felt drawn to it as someone from South-west Asia and the Middle East."

Dickow also explained her excitement to see what she can take away from the book and hopes to apply it to her AP exam preparation.

"I think reading the book will help me prepare for the AP exam because I'm interested in the book," Dickow said. "I can better learn the skills I would need for it by absorbing it through the lens of literature I know and enjoy to make it more relevant and captivating."

Senior Ava Laszczak was approved by Greenfield to read a book of her choice, "The Secret History" by Donna Tartt. Similar to Dickow, Laszczak believes she will analyze the book more critically through a lense of interest.

"I believe this book will help me prepare for the AP Literature exam by building my skills for analysis," Laszczak said. "Since it's something I'm really interested in, I feel as though I've been putting a lot more thought into it than I would another book, and because of that I feel like it's helping me learn these skills more than another book."

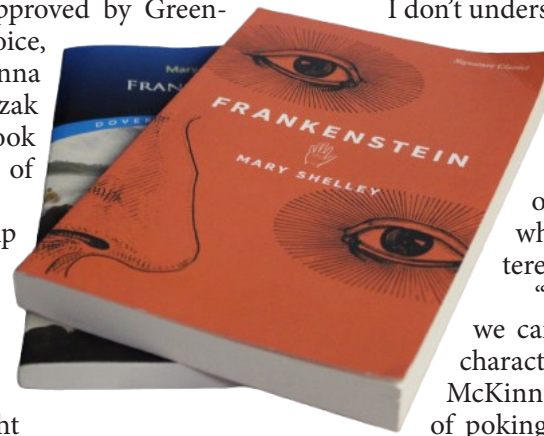
Unlike Dickow and Laszczak, senior Jade McKinney chose to read "Hamlet" by William Shakespeare, one of two plays listed as an option for individual reading.

"I chose "Hamlet" because I honestly really like reading Shakespeare. It's very dramatic and keeps my attention so it's never really boring," said McKinney. "I think I chose a play though because of us also reading "Mac-Beth" currently, so it's something I can reference when I don't understand something or if there's mirroring between the two."

To help students prepare for the exam, Greenfield assigned projects for students to do after they finish reading each quarter of the book. McKinney explained which project option piques her interest the most.

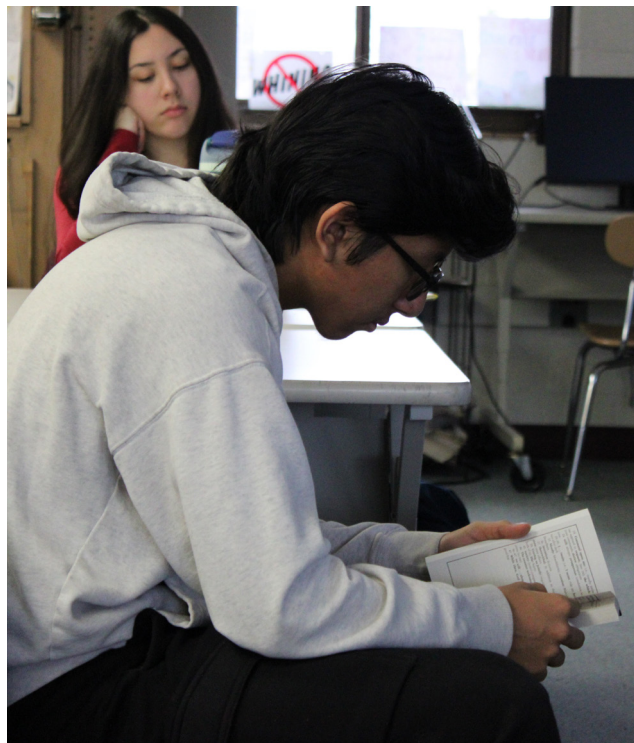
"I like the project option where we can make Wanted posters for the characters in the novels we are reading," McKinney said. "I think it'll be a way of poking fun at their flaws, but we can also discuss the character development they go through as well."

Dickow, Laszczak and McKinney all share the belief that their chosen books will help them effectively prepare for the AP exam in May and that analyzing the books will assist them in applying what they've learned to other subject material.



Senior Delana Dickow places her book, "A Thousand Splendid Suns" by Khaled Hosseini, into her backpack near the end of class after AP Literature & Composition teacher Suzanne Greenfield finishes explaining project choices for each week of reading on Jan.13.

PHOTO BY SOPIA CROOK



Senior Oscar Catarino skims through "Animal Farm" by George Orwell during teacher Suzanne Greenfield's AP Literature & Composition class to become familiar with the book before analyzing it on Jan. 13. PHOTO BY SOPIA CROOK



Senior Ava Laszczak diligently annotates the first chapters of "The Secret History" by Donna Tartt to collect information about themes, literary devices and character developments during teacher Suzanne Greenfield's AP Literature & Composition class on Jan. 13. PHOTO BY SOPIA CROOK

Once a Chieftain, always a Chieftain

Sixteen new members inducted into the Utica High School Hall of Fame after ten years.

ANNA BROWN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Utica High School was alive and well Friday night, Jan. 16, as it hosted the Hall of Fame induction. The Hall of Fame welcomed staff members, students, alumni, family members, and friends to the main gym to recognize 16 extraordinary people and their accomplishments that started from their time as a Chieftain to their careers.

Among those 16 were three current Utica staff members: Karyn Holmes, Gerry Kraemer, and Jim Vigus. Unlike Kraemer, Holmes and Vigus's started their journey in another high school in the Utica Community

be in athletics in high school you spend a lot of what I call 'nighttime hours' here at the building. I have been lucky enough to have my parents involved in Utica events, my husband, and my children, so I kind of made it a family affair for a very long time here."

Vigus graduated from Eisenhower in 1975 and from Concordia University with an Education degree in 1998. He taught for 21 years before retiring, but continues coming back to Utica to give a helping hand. He was an Athletic Director for 11

years later to teach, but it wasn't his first time back as he already started coaching basketball three years earlier. In total, he coached basketball for 32 years. For 17 of those years, he was the varsity boys basketball head coach, leading them to the Macomb Area Conference White Division Champions in 2012 and three-time District Champions. This resulted in the MAC White Division Coach of the Year in 2012. For 25 years, he was the



Gerry Kraemer

ALL DESIGNS, CUTOUTS,
AND PHOTOS BY ANNA
BROWN

Karyn Holmes

Jim Vigus

Schools District: Eisenhower High School.

Graduating from Eisenhower in the Class of 1991 and from Western Michigan University's Physical Education and Recreation Department in the Winter of 1997, Holmes started her career as a substitute at Utica. While at Utica, she has fulfilled various roles over her teaching career in the Utica Physical Education Department. The list includes, but is not limited to, an athletic director for eight years, a coach (girls basketball, volleyball, and swim), has been a 15 year President of the UHS Athletic Hall of Fame, and a Member of the Macomb County Athletic Directors Association. All of that while promoting and organizing countless athletic fundraisers with the UHS Athletic Boosters as a devoted athletic supporter and Game Staff Management. Those 29 years of service in the chieftain family tree is her gateway into the Hall of Fame, but her roots as an Eisenhower Eagle athlete played a crucial role.

"I played three sports at Eisenhower. I was a basketball, volleyball, and softball player, which led me into coaching in college, and then my career at college in physical education," Holmes said. "When you tend to

years, a junior varsity and varsity football coach for 17 years, and the varsity softball head coach for four years. His greatest accomplishments as a coach were heading to the State Playoffs as the varsity football head coach, an impressive 73-48 record in softball, a back-to-back District and Regional Championships for two years, and selected as the Michigan High School Athletic Association Regional Coach of the Year in 2001. All these great accomplishments allowing him to qualify for the Hall of Fame would not have been possible without Vigus going against the grain and pursuing education.

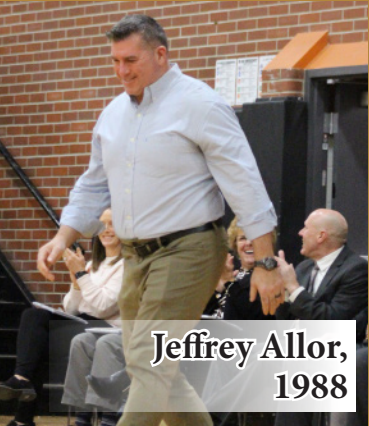
"Education wasn't a big thing in my family," Vigus said. "They wanted me to work in the auto industry, and I did it for a bit, but working on the line for 30 years didn't appeal to me. I went into teaching, getting into coaching and enjoyed practices because of the more interaction with the players."

Kraemer, a chieftain inside and out, graduated from Utica in 1985 and attended Macomb Community College for two years before heading to Wayne State University for three years. He graduated with a major in Physical Education in 1990. Returning to Utica four

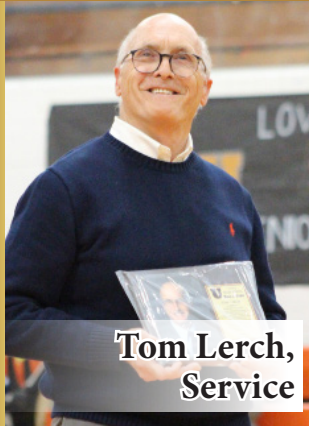
assistant varsity girls basketball coach, helping them become a two-time MAC Red Division Champions, eight-time District Champions in, three-time Regional Champions in, two-time Final Fours, and MHSAA Class A State Champions in 1999. His coaching career started when he was still attending high school.

"I've always loved sports. I played basketball and baseball in high school and started helping out a couple coaches that I had in junior high as an assistant for baseball and basketball, which led to opportunities later on," Kraemer said, "The varsity girls basketball coach at the time was a mentor to me and he brought me in to coach JV girls basketball team, leading to what I'm being recognized for. I was lucky enough to be around a lot of special student athletes, boys and girls."

These staff members have the heart of a Chieftain and have promoted greatness throughout Utica. Without them, Utica athletics would not be where it is today not only inspiring athletes for greatness, but every single Chieftain.



Jeffrey Allor,
1988



Tom Lerch,
Service

Mahti Gwilly representing
Kumehnnu Gwilly, 2016



Hall of Fame,
2026



Kathy Patterson,
Service



Jeffrey Adkins,
2012



Tom McDonald,
Coach



Michael Hollingsworth,
2012



Rachel Chaney,
2011



Ethan Culberson,
2016

Story continues on page 10...

A student's guide to avoiding the cold and flu

MARY LUBIEN
SOCIAL MEDIA AND PAGE EDITOR

All it has to start with is one sneeze suddenly, an illness breaks out. Germ are everywhere, so, how can one stay safe when sickness arises. According to the CDC and National Institute of Health in a school environment students may not have control of how they get sick. While there is no guaranteed way to avoid germs, there are many personal steps students can take to reduce their chances of getting sick.

Why should you care?

Not only is it important to look out for personal health, being sick either way, but it can seriously affect a student's academic life. Missing school due to illness often leads to falling behind on assignments, absences adding up, makeup work, and difficulty keeping up. Then if one attends school while sick, it can make it harder to focus, perform well on tests, and participate in class. By taking steps to prevent illness, students can reduce absences, stay on track academically, and help maintain a healthier school environment for everyone.



Washing your hands really works

One of the most common preventions is washing your hands. According to the CDC, hand washing prevents disease spreading by about 16-17%. Only 20 seconds of washing your hands with soap and water removes germs that cause the cold and flu. It is important to wash your hands before and after eating or contacting your face, door handles, and anywhere many others may have touched previously. Viruses often enter your body through your eyes, nose, or mouth.



Stay home and get rest

If symptoms like a stuffy nose, coughing, fever, sneezing, or phlegm appear, then it is best to stay away from others. The CDC recommends staying home at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, without fever-reducing medicine, to protect others. People with the flu are most contagious during the first 3-4 days after symptoms begin. Getting home and getting proper rest is a proper remedy. Research published by the National Institutes of Health shows that people who get less than seven hours of sleep are more likely to get sick after being exposed to a virus. Staying home and getting rest not only protects others but also promotes fast-track recovery.



Get your flu shot

The most effective and easy way to prevent the flu is to get the flu shot. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has conducted studies that show getting the flu vaccination helps your body recognize and fight the virus. In which reduces illness by about 40% to 60% during peak season. Anyone in good health is recommended to get during September and October before the flu hits its higher points. However, it is never too late to get the shot at any time.



Cover your coughs and sneezes

It shouldn't just be courtesy for others but for protection. When coughing or sneezing, make sure to cover your mouth and nose in a tissue, then discard the tissue after. If there are no tissues available, it is important to cover your face with your elbow, not your hands. Using your hands can actually spread more germs if you touch surfaces afterward. Viruses spread through droplets when people cough or sneeze. Studies have found that flu viruses can travel up to six feet through the air when someone coughs or sneezes.



Clean, clean, clean!

Germs love to stick on to frequently touched items. Cold and flu viruses can live on surfaces like phones, desks and keyboards for several hours. If regularly cleaned, it lowers the risk of infection and the spread of illness to other surfaces.

To conclude, it is important during the cold and flu season to take care of personal hygiene as well as sicknesses spreading across multiple surfaces.

SPORTS

ATHLETES, COACHES, FANS, AND MORE

Creating golden memories

KARA BOICE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Future Chieftains dancing to the song from K-Pop Demon Hunters "Golden" during the halftime show of the varsity boys' basketball game on Jan. 16. PHOTO BY KARA BOICE

Smiles, music and high-energy dancing filled the gym on Jan. 16 as the Utica Varsity Dance team hosted their annual kids' clinic. Future Chieftain dancers participated in the evening event from 5-8:30 p.m.

Towards the end of the clinic, the varsity dancers and the kids involved in the clinic performed at halftime of the varsity boys' basketball game.

Varsity dance captain, senior Claudia Kobylecki, helped teach choreography throughout the clinic. The song chosen for the kids to perform was "Golden" from the movie K-Pop Demon Hunters. The film has gained popularity this past year as a top Netflix movie, and the kids were visibly excited to learn the dance.

"The kids ranged from kindergarten to fifth grade," Kobylecki said. "The kids' clinic was a fun experience because they are energetic and fun to hang out with and teach."

Junior Natalie Carrier grew up attending the clinics and hopes to encourage future Chieftains who love dance to continue returning each year. Teaching choreography similar to what she learned as a child makes the experience a full circle. She encourages the kids that dancing is a great sport that shapes their childhoods.

"My siblings and I have been through the kids' clinic before, and I hope that the kids want to continue to come back each year," Carrier said. "We approach choreography slowly so that all age groups can understand."

In addition to preparing their performance, the varsity dance team members also played fun games with the kids, and they ate pizza.

"I had such a blast playing games with the kids and playing games with them too," junior Pressley Orlovski said. "Not only did we teach them the dance, but we also did fun games like Duck, Duck, Goose, and

dance battles."

The clinic gave young dancers a fun introduction to dance while allowing varsity team members to share their passion. As the tradition continues each year, the event remains a meaningful experience for both current and future Chieftains.



The kids in the clinic learning choreography on Jan. 16 for the halftime show. PHOTO BY KARA BOICE

Senior Claudia Kobylecki



In the auxiliary gym on Jan. 16, senior dancer Claudia Kobylecki plays Duck, Duck, Goose with the kids. PHOTO BY KARA BOICE



The kids in the clinic learning choreography for their halftime performance. PHOTO BY KARA BOICE



Senior Jordan Cleaver interacting with the kids during their annual clinic. PHOTO BY ANNA BROWN

Sophomore Layla Vano and junior Natalie Carrier

From Chieftain to Olympian

110 meter Olympic hurdler and Utica High School alumni Freddie Crittenden returned to the school to accept Hall of Fame award.

ANNA BROWN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The Utica High School Hall of Fame. A ceremony to recognize outstanding achievement of Utica Chieftains of any shape or size came on Jan. 16. Utica welcomed staff members, students, alumni, family members, and friends to the main gym to recognize 16 extraordinary people after ten years of waiting due to the Coronavirus.

Amongst UHS staff and other inductees, one stood out from the rest. In a vivid pale blue blazer, decorated with the American flag across the back, and labeled above in bold letters "Olympian," Freddie Crittenden rose up amongst the crowd to accept the UHS Hall of Fame award.

Born in Saint Louis, Missouri, Crittenden came to Utica in his junior year of high school trying to find his way. He joined track and excelled. He earned two varsity letters and honors in league, regional, county, and states in the 110 and 300 meter hurdles, the 4x100 meter relay and 4x200 meter relay. He set or helped set the school record in each event, including the 4x400 meter relay, all of which still stand to this day. These high school achievements set course for his college career at Syracuse University. Earning four varsity letters, two-time first team All-American, two-time second team All-American, and four-time All-ACC Outdoor in 2015, 2016, 2017 and Indoor in 2017.

"I only spent my last two years of high school here at Utica and when I got here I was kind of lost," Crittenden said. "Coming here, meeting my friends, my coaches, my teammates, and my teachers shifted my trajectory of my career and helped me focus on the things that are important, setting up my career and relationships that stayed with me for the rest of my life."

Crittenden continued to grow after his college career and advanced to the 2023 US Indoor Championship, placing first in the 60 meter hurdles. Continuing his journey, he went and placed fourth in the 2023 World Championship in the 110 meter hurdles and moved up to the 2024 US Olympic

Not only were his closest supporters rooting for him, but the entire Utica community. From complete strangers to old classmates and teachers, the community came together to cheer him on at the Olympic games.

"It felt really good knowing I had a large group of people cheering me on, having my back, supporting me, watching me and hoping that I do well," Crittenden said. "It was a really nice feeling. Obviously, in a space like that, you carry all of that feeling and emotion, and it motivates you."

At the Olympics, Crittenden intentionally had a 'slow' race in the First Round due to experiencing a minor injury knowing he would qualify automatically for the Repechage Round and be able to recover. Doing well, he overcame the Repechage Round and the Semifinals, advancing to the Finals where he finished in sixth place with a time of 13.32 seconds. Reflecting back on his experience, he explained what was truly going on behind the scenes to lead him where he is today.

"I think going to the Olympics was a catalyst for a lot of things. It motivated me. It validated a lot of my

journey and what I have been trying to do. It was more confirmation that I could do things at a high level," Crittenden said. "I want to finish out my career breaking even more records, break even more ground towards higher goals, bigger achievements, and keep getting better till I decide to call it quits."

The UHS Hall of Fame is a full circle moment for Crittenden returning to Utica where his journey began.

"I think it is very nostalgic to come back here, and walk these hallways, see the classrooms, see their faces, and look them in the face and say thank you," Crittenden said. "It was a very transformative two years coming to Utica, a life defying two years, and I'm very grateful for it."



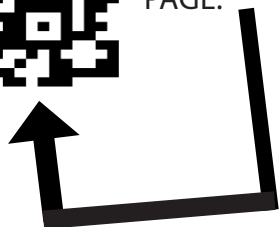
CUTOUTS AND PHOTOS
BY ANNA BROWN

Trials, placing second in the 110 meter hurdles, unlocking the opportunity of the lifetime: running in the 2024 Olympic Games 110 meter hurdle event.

"It was surreal. It's hard to put it into words. Obviously, it's an achievement of a lifetime. Something I thought about since I was very young," Crittenden said. "It was a very beautiful thing and unique because my first daughter was just born, so that was played in there too. But competing and representing my family and friends, my coaches, everyone that helped me achieve that high level on the journey was really a satisfying thing."



LISTEN TO THE INTERVIEW WITH FREDDIE CRITTENDEN ON OUR YOUTUBE PAGE.



Continuation



Olympian Freddie Crittenden posing with his plaque and some of the people that helped him find his way to become an Olympian. His track coach, Megan Berry and his family; mom Cassandra, dad Fred, and one of his seven siblings Sophronia Crittenden after the Hall of Fame ceremony in the Utica High School cafeteria on Jan. 16. PHOTOS BY ANNA BROWN

OPINION

Bad Bunny takes Superbowl halftime by storm

SOFIA CROOK
COPY EDITOR

The rustling of tropical plants, the iconic '64' on the back of the jersey, and the inspiring message: "Together, we are America" printed on a football presented by halftime show performer Bad Bunny only added to the uniting message conveyed by Bunny at Super Bowl LX on Feb. 8.

During the performance, Bad Bunny highlighted the every-day environment of his birthplace Puerto Rico, a territory of the U.S., and neighboring Hispanic countries in the Americas. Featuring traditional architecture, those apart of the performance celebrated on stage. Even revealing singer Lady Gaga, to prove that one doesn't have to be of Hispanic descent to enjoy the music the culture brings to the table.

While controversial, Bad Bunny made history with his entirely Spanish set while performing in front of an average of 128.2 million viewers towards the beginning of half time according to NBC (Sporting News). Sharing his culture, shining light on several other countries and representing all ages, viewers were left with an inspiring message to close out the show that glared in bold from a sign above Levi's Stadium: "THE ONLY THING MORE POWERFUL THAN HATE IS LOVE." I can confidently say that Bad Bunny's message of unity resonated with me as it was sweet to feel a sense of community.



In Bad Bunny's halftime performance he displayed the message. "THE ONLY THING MORE POWERFUL THAN HATE IS LOVE" prominently as a message of unity and resistance. The performance was noted for its focus on joy, inclusivity, and overcoming division with a message of love. He concluded the show with the statement "We're still here" (in Spanish) and displayed a football with the message "Together, We Are America". GRAPHIC BY KARA BOICE

Patriotism vs. Politics

KATELYN PALARCHIO
BUSINESS EDITOR

The 2026 Super Bowl LX was the talk of the country this weekend, with Puerto Rican singer Bad Bunny performing at halftime. Previously in 2025, he made a statement saying that he would not tour in America, in fear of NICE (National Immigration Center for Enforcement), formally known as ICE before being reformed by President Donald Trump, raids at his concerts. He began residency shows that took place over a course of 31 days that were hosted at the iconic Coliseo de Puerto Rico, located in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

In defiance to Bad Bunny's halftime show, some people chose to watch an alternative show hosted by Turning Point USA (TPUSA), my family and I being one of those who watched. Obviously, the production was not as good as the official NFL halftime show, but the performances felt more genuine and American. The alternative show had more patriotism, opening with a guitar rendition of the national anthem and later performances from Kid Rock, Brantley Gilbert, Lee Brice, and Gabby Barrett. The performances had more soul to them than just a big performance that's mainly used for marketing. TPUSA described the show as an "opportunity for all Americans to enjoy a halftime show with no agenda other than to celebrate faith, freedom, family, and freedom" (USA Today).

The Super Bowl feels as if it's the most American event of the year, with friends gathering and throwing hamburgers on the grill to sit down to the biggest night of football. Why have a Spanish singer highlight the most patriotic sports night of the year? All the songs Bad Bunny sang were in Spanish, which approximately only 14% of Americans speak (Factually). If the main goal of the 2026 halftime show was to show inclusivity to all Americans, parts should have been in English.

The NFL's halftime show was posed more as a political stance to NICE and the matter of the deportation of illegal immigrants in the country. With Bad Bunny being from Puerto Rico, he served as a symbol of all the Latin Americans in America who oppose NICE policies. The week before the halftime show, Bunny wore a pin to the Grammys stating, "Ice Out" representing where he stands on the matter. The Super Bowl should not be about resisting the larger power at hand but representing America and all that it stands for.



PHOTO COURSESEY OF "KID ROCHOTK 10" BY E PHOTOS IS LICENSED UNDER CC BY 2.0.



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Staff policy

Arrow is published monthly by the newspaper class of Utica High School and is funded by advertising. Our main purpose is to (1) inform the students, faculty and community of school-related news; (2) broaden the range of thinking of staff members and readers; (3) provide a forum for readers; (4) train the students in the functions of the press in a democratic society; and (5) provide entertaining features of interest to the students. All editorials without a byline reflect at least two-thirds opinion of the Arrow staff but are not necessarily the opinion of the administration.

Letters to the Editor are welcomed and must be signed; however, names will be withheld for valid reasons. Letters may be dropped off in room 205, and electronic submissions will be verified. All contributions are subject for restrictions of libel, defamation, slander and obscenity. Arrow staff reserves the right to edit letters without changing the meaning, and also reserves the right to reject letters for reasons of limited space, untimely material, or unbalanced coverage.

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SPOTLIGHT

HIGHLIGHTING UNIQUE TALENTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WHO SHOULD BE IN THE SPOTLIGHT NEXT?

Share your spare

UHS Stuco brings awareness to Ashley Wiseman's journey for a living donor.

SOFIA CROOK
COPY EDITOR

Scan the QR code to learn more about Ashley and her condition with her 'wish upon a donor' video.



Sophomore Ashley Wiseman poses with the varsity wrestling captains: junior Merrick Kustarz and seniors Tate Tomatti, Lucas Abro, Andrew Wiseman and Landon Cooke before the meet against Ike officially began on Jan. 23. PHOTO BY JENNIFER WISEMAN

She wishes for more afternoons spending time with her sister, more nights cheering on her brother, and more birthdays. Utica High sophomore Ashley Wiseman was diagnosed with end stage renal failure on May 20, 2025. Wiseman receives dialysis three days a week as she waits for a kidney transplant from a living donor. To support her cause, her mother, Jennifer Wiseman, teamed up with student council advisor Mark Moehlig and scheduled a Share Your Spare green-out at Utica's home wrestling meet against Ike on Jan. 23.

In an Instagram post made by Utica's student council on Jan. 20 to raise awareness, Ashley expressed what it felt like to receive her diagnosis at the Children's Hospital in Detroit.

"They told me I'd have to do dialysis and that I needed a new kidney," said Ashley Wiseman. "I had no idea what that meant; it was overwhelming and scary."

Wiseman also explained who her biggest supporters are and how they help her remain positive while managing her condition.

"My parents, my siblings and my grandma," Ashley Wiseman. "Their support helps me with all the sadness."

In that same post on Jan. 20, Jennifer Wiseman shared that she hoped to rally support from fellow Utica students during a home wrestling meet.

"In the past, Utica has done a gold-out for childhood cancer and a purple out for [anti] domestic violence," said Jennifer Wiseman.

Sophomore Ashley Wiseman stands tall, dressed in green, looking to raise awareness for renal failure. PHOTO BY JENNIFER WISEMAN

"I'd love a green-out for kidney and Share your Spare awareness during a home wrestling meet."

Friday, Jan. 23, wrestlers from both Utica and Ike showed out to support, complete with green ribbon stickers on head gear, green socks, shirts and shoes. Wiseman's family also showed up with personally designed shirts and green ribbons in their hair.

Wiseman's sister, Aubrey, expressed how seeing the overwhelming support made her feel.

"It made me super happy to see all of the people in green at the wrestling meet," said Aubrey Wiseman. "I think it was super sweet that both Ike and Utica participated. It really meant a lot to my sister to see just how many people were participating and wearing green."

Supporting her sister, Ashley Wiseman encourages those who may be experiencing end stage renal failure or a condition similar to remain optimistic.

"My best advice to anyone struggling with a condition like end stage renal failure is to stay positive," Ashley Wiseman said. "I think it can be super easy is to get caught up in all of the negatives of a situation but if you try your best to focus on all the positives, it will make you much stronger. Battling a condition like end stage renal failure is super challenging but if you make the choice to focus on good and positives it can make all of the difference."

To learn more about Ashley and her condition, her 'wish upon a donor' video is linked above. Help Ashley find a living kidney and support her dreams of becoming a special education teacher by donating to Live Health on behalf of the University of Michigan.

Dressed in green, the Utica Varsity Wrestling team sits on the sidelines to cheer on their competing teammate and show support for Ashley Wiseman's Share your Spare initiative on Jan. 23. PHOTO BY SOFIA CROOK



Dressed in green, the Utica Varsity Wrestling team sits on the sidelines to cheer on their competing teammate and show support for Ashley Wiseman's 'Share your Spare' initiative on Jan. 23. PHOTO BY JENNIFER WISEMAN



Sophomore Ashley Wiseman joins the varsity wrestling team captains during the coin toss against Ike at the beginning of the wrestling meet to help decide which team gets to choose the starting weight class on Jan. 23. PHOTO BY JENNIFER WISEMAN

