Getting Through an Impossible Course  By Susie Beyl

As you go through your time at WHHS, you’re bound to find yourself in a class that is more difficult than you originally anticipated. So, the drop-class date passes and you’re stuck there. Stuck there, pretending to understand what’s going on, for ten whole months. We’ve all been through it. There are, however, ways to fight back! You know the basics: ask questions, take good notes, stay after with your teacher, etc. From what I’ve found, there is one foolproof way you can help yourself and your classmates: Peer tutoring. If you’re in a really hard class, odds are that other people feel just as lost as you do. Classes are designed to challenge you. Everyone, however, has their strengths. This is where you’ve got to put those social skills to work!

Survival tips:
► Talk to a friend in the course every day after course. Take turns explaining the lesson to each other. Who knows? Maybe they will explain it in a way you understand.
► Ask to borrow a friend’s notes. I know, your doodles and sketches of your future ambitions are nice, but some actual material can’t hurt.
► STAY AFTER WITH YOUR TEACHER. 100% of teachers are totally different in a one-on-one basis. Don’t believe me? Find out for yourself.
► Group study dates are your friend. Plan a night where you and some other people from class go out to a local Starbucks (my personal favorite) and work through the homework or do some problems for the book. Hold a bunch of them as the test approaches.
► Additional tip: Try inviting someone who already took the class and did well in it. They have a lot of inside information.
► YouTube it! There are countless resources online. You have everything from math tutorials to psychology chapter outlines right at your fingertips. They can either teach you the lesson or give you a review before a quiz. Textbooks even offer guided video tutorials online. Some reliable sources: Crash Course and Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.org).
► Rewrite your notes. Keep two notebooks: one for class, and one for recopied notes. Every day, rewrite your notes from class very neatly. Color code, include diagrams; the works. When midterms come around, you’ll thank yourself.
► Make study sheets. Before a test/quiz, take one side of a piece of paper. Imagine you can bring that into the test with you: what’s the most key information? By the time you’re done writing it down, you’ll have learned a lot of it!

As someone who is currently bravely fighting through AP Physics 1 H, I swear by these tips. Don’t shy away from challenging courses because you aren’t sure if you can handle them! Remain calm, breathe, get a pizza, and use your resources. Happy studying!

The Inside Scoop
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• Westie Sports Highlights
• Debunking the Attendance Policy
• The Laramie Project
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• A Lesson on Communications
• Artwork by Toni Chambers
• Door Decorating Contest

Left Taylor Lambert. Above Hannah Allen. Using some of the studying techniques from the article in the LMC.
Anyone looking into attending the University of Connecticut should seriously consider participating in the Husky for A Day Program at the university. This program provides students the opportunity to spend a day with a UCONN student, see dorms, eat college food, and get a feel what it is like to be a student at the university. The college students that volunteered their time to give you a feel of the campus are people who are majoring or minoring in something related to the subjects of your interest. This allows you to connect with them on an academic level and talk about similar interests. You also get to sit in with a class that you might take if you decide to go to UCONN with the same major as your student volunteer.

I listed that I wanted to be an economics major. The student I followed around, a guy named Alex, was a junior and an Economics and a Political Science major. I was also paired with another high school student from New York who wanted to major in Political Science. The two of us spent some time with Alex talking about our respective majors, student life, and the academic rigor we might face at the university. He talked about different activities at UCONN and highlighted the realistic pros and cons of the attending UCONN versus attending another institution. He showed us several dorms and types of living at the university as well as different dining halls. The food wasn’t all too bad either. My new friend from New York and I also got to sit in with one of Alex’s political science class. The class turned out to be interesting and I even learned something new.

The big idea for this program is to see the university as you would see it as a student. It is a great way to figure out how you like UCONN and establish if it is the right university for you. One more thing, it’s FREE. And you get a free dining hall meal pass. Also, it’s just fun. The students are great and normal human beings. Alex gave us great tips about the college process and handling senior year and the upcoming college freshman year. The whole experience made college seem more real. I recommend it to anyone interested, even mildly, in the University of Connecticut. Go Huskies!

If it isn’t UCONN, then check out other universities with similar programs. These days are worth spending on college. It’s like seeing into one possible future and deciding if it could be the right one.

Rostrum Box
Susie Beyl, Olivia Bolliger,
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Special thanks to T. Dandelske for photos.

West Haven School System does not discriminate in any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability.
At the start of the season there were many changes, this past soccer season at Westie High. New coach Pete Hamasion stepped in. The Westies ended up with a winning season (13-2-1). Even though they lost close games at the end, Conference game loss 1-0 to Fairfield Prep and a 4-3 loss to Staples, the season was still prosperous. Congrats to the senior soccer players: Dan Prendergast, Jonas Haba, Kyle Pesce, Michael Smith, Selim Turkmen, Sebastian Parra, Jose Lopez, Claudio Quezada, Carlos Orozco, Victor Yanez and Michael Cretella.
Popular movies. Many advantages come with reading the book before going to see the movie. For instance, the author presents so many more details about everything from the characters to the plot and settings. A greater amount of information is always presented in the book. Most books converted to movies have to be edited and leave things out. The details in the book are usually visualized by the reader. While in a movie, that is all done for the viewer on the screen. Try the book first to broaden your knowledge.

Thriller Novel

**Gone Girl**
by Gillian Flynn
©2012

*Movie directed by David Fincher starring Ben Affleck*

**American Sniper**
by Chris Kyle
©2012

*Movie directed by Clint Eastwood starring Bradley Cooper*

**Unbroken**
by Laura Hillenbrand
©2010

*Movie directed by Angelina Jolie*

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**Mrs. Lynch found a treasure for you:**

**Attention book lovers and readers.**

Libraries are awesome and there, books are always available to borrow. In addition, there is another electronic book service that offers free books to read. It is called Book Bub. Book Bub is a daily email service that informs readers to some promotions of free or deeply discounted ebooks across a variety of platforms. Recently, they notified nearly 1 million readers of the free *Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown deal last spring. Why? Simply to get lots of people interested in the author’s new book, *Inferno*. For the reader, Book Bub really has no risk. Give it a try! Find it on-line.

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The Rostrum  December, 2014

The Ebola Alert  by Olivia Bollinger and Cailynn Joyner

Do you recognize the picture on the left? Recently, this picture was on every television, computer screen and newsflash all over the world. It is the Ebola virus under a microscope.

Ebola is an infectious and generally fatal disease marked by fever and severe internal bleeding, spread through contact with infected body fluids. Researchers believe that the Ebola virus lives in an animal that lives in the African continent. They are still in the process of looking for the animal. But from research, they believe the animal most likely is a bat.

For 2 to 21 days, an infected person feels normal. But inside the body the virus is multiplying. Some symptoms of the disease include a fever, sore throat, weakness of the body, headaches/migraines, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, and dehydration. Once a person starts to have massive blood loss, death will soon occur. There is currently no specific anti-viral therapy for Ebola. However, several new therapies and a vaccine are now being tested. If these clinical tests are successful, the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization plan to have all of these available by early 2015 for West African patients and any others in need.

In order to catch Ebola, you need to have direct contact with an infected person, and by direct contact it has to get inside of broken skin, such as a wound. For example, infected blood, urine or spit. So everyone needs to stop worrying! What is scary about it is that someone who dies from the virus will have a very high viral load. So don’t think that just because they have died doesn’t mean you can’t get it from them. The chance a West Haven High School student will catch Ebola is scarce. Stay sanitized and make sure you know if someone around you has been infected. If a person was exposed to someone with Ebola, they should isolate themselves.

In Western Africa in the countries Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Nigeria over 3,000 people have died in a tragic epidemic of Ebola. The chances of any outbreak in our country does not exist because of the screening process. There have so far been five reported cases and these people were all isolated and the proper medical procedures were taken to avoid an epidemic. Despite the largest Ebola outbreak half way around the world from us, the risks remain low in our country and our community. Remember to use good sanitation practice by washing hands thoroughly or using hand sanitation gel such as Purell. This will avoid germs that cause viruses and diseases. And the real good news: scientists claim they are close to a vaccine for prevention.

The Laramie Project  By D’Mahdnes Failey  An Actor’s Personal Experience

#Student #Actor #AwesomePerson #DmahdnesFailey

The Laramie Project was probably one of the most delicate scripts I’ve worked with. It wasn’t because it touched on the issue of homosexuality or hate crimes exploited by the media, but rather the depth of the words said by actual people not characters. A great deal of research was needed to accurately portray these people as organically and honestly as I could. I remember going home after late night rehearsals and going on YouTube searching for specific idiosyncrasies of these different people simply finding out what makes them “them”. That was rough. What was also rough was scheduling. This was REALLY rough because, well, here’s my schedule:

5:45a.m. – wake up. 6:45 – catch the bus. 7:30-12:11p.m. – West Haven high classes. 1:00-4:45p.m. – ECA
5:30-9:00p.m. – Laramie Project rehearsals. 10:30-until – Homework/ Studying/ TV / Eat/ Procrastination/ Selfies

And this was almost every day for I don’t know how many weeks lol. I never had a break. And the time gaps were usually consumed by car rides to and from the listed locations. That’s the glory of being an actor. The chaos because you never know what to expect. Something can always go wrong and I enjoy that kind of excitement.

What else can I touch on? Well, the NoH8 campaign that the ensemble and I took part in was pretty awesome. I think it’s important to spread peace and love and being part of the campaign really allowed me to have a voice in this school. Not to mention the awkward moments I’d be walking down the hall and get scared because I’m seeing my face everywhere with duct tape and handcuffs… it got pretty intense in the halls, if I do say so myself.

If you read this, contact me: #DmahdnesFailey on any social media site. Let me know what you thought. Hit me up with any question and/or concerns you may have or just to talk. Peace! DF

The Laramie Project (2000) is a play by Moisés Kaufman and members of the Tectonic Theater Project. T Leigh Fondakowski, Stephen Belber, Greg Pierotti, Barbara Pitts, Stephen Wangh, Amanda Gronich, Sara Lambert, John McAdams, Maude Mitchell, Andy Paris, and Kelli Simpkins) about the reaction to the 1998 murder of University of Wyoming gay student Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming. The murder was denounced as a hate crime and brought attention to the lack of hate crimes laws in various states, including Wyoming. The play draws on hundreds of interviews conducted by the theatre company with inhabitants of the town, company members’ own journal entries, and published news reports. It is divided into three acts, and eight actors portray more than sixty characters in a series of short scenes. The West Haven Theater Workshop performed this play successfully on November 21st and 22nd and the crowd loved the performances. Congratulations to our WHHSTW on another fine production.
A Lesson about Communications at Colombia Dental by Jamie Kelley

Cell Phones were officially created on April 3rd, 1973 and the first Personal Computer (PC) was created in 1981. Has anyone noticed with these inventions, human communication has decreased dramatically? Through this change, the average teenager would rather text a person across the room than open their mouth and speak to them. Personal thoughts, exclamations of love, and much, much more are now shared through a cellular device instead of actually talking to someone. Why?

To truly explain the sadness I feel for this, I must explain to you why I’m writing about it. On Wednesday, November 19th, I had a conversation I will not soon forget. I had decided to accompany my dad to the dentists’ office. Don’t ask me why because I honestly don’t know. But I did, and a man walked in to the waiting area. At first glance, you’d look at this man and think “Oh my god. Please don’t hurt me.” He was a big man, a huge man, 6 feet tall and muscular too. His face was weathered and showed obvious age, wear and tear, and his leather jacket and wooden cane added to the intimidation factor even more. He simply looked like someone you did not want to mess with.

I’m sitting there, typing away on my phone, when my battery dies. Awkwardly I avoid this man’s gaze as best I can. And then he just starts talking to the ladies at the desk. He was a jokester and nothing like the scary person he appeared to be. I found myself laughing with him as he joked about some more.

He introduces himself very nicely as Mr. Tate and I introduce myself as well and he starts talking about how I remind him of his granddaughter, who ironically enough is studying to become lawyer, like I wish to be, at a college I plan on applying to. I listen and talk to him about school and a bunch of other things like his time as a Marine and so on and so forth. Eventually, he gets called inside for his appointment.

I found myself disappointed.

But something that he said struck me the most. He said to me that he didn’t understand why I had been so enchanted by my phone scene. He asked me this question “What can you possibly learn if you always have your head buried in such a pointless object?” and followed that with “You can’t learn much without putting yourself out there and doing it. The world is a beautiful place, why not explore it, learn from it, and be a part of it?”

This generation does not seem to understand that question. Why do we hide in an inanimate object? Why don’t we explore, learn from it, and be a part of it?

Mr. Tate grew up in a time where oral communication was all people had. He was born in the late 1940s during World War II. People talked about everything. There were no computers or cell phones, and T.V. was a luxury some did not own. Kids played in the streets and laughed and loved and respected others.

Kids now play video games, watch pointless nothing T.V., text, and bully each other through social media websites like Twitter, Facebook, Ask.com, and others.

What is so harmful about a phone call? Or better yet, a visit?

I challenge my peers to put down their phone for a week, or even just a day, and look at the world around you. We are offered so many opportunities in today’s society but if we keep burying our noses in these electronics we’ll lose so many of them. We need to live outside Verizon, AT&T, and Wi-Fi connection.

If I hadn’t put down my phone, I would have never talked to Mr. Tate. I would have never learned so many interesting things from a man that served our country as a Marine. The art of oral communication is unfortunately being dismantled and squashed by our lack of interaction with each other.
Congratulations to the West Haven High School cheerleaders for winning first place in two divisions at a regional championship last month and we wish them luck for nationals in Orlando, Florida. The team won first place in both the Game Day division and Medium Varsity Non-Tumbling division at the Dec. 13 Universal Cheerleaders Association Empire Regionals at Stony Brook University in New York.
Congratulations to all that participated in the door decorating contest. Great job.

Best Incorporation of Theme – Italian Holiday Traditions – Mrs. Brackenbury
Most Original – Gym - Technological Tree – Mr. Lafo’s Advisory
Judge’s Choice – F19 – Don’t Feed the Reindeer – Mrs. Trenchard Advisory
Best Incorporation of Content – F14 – Chemis - TREE - Mrs. Poffenberger Advisory
Principal’s Award – B109 – The Stockings Were hung by the chimney with care – Mr. Dandelske
School Spirit Award – Best Incorporation of Blue & White – C111 – Frozen Theme – Mrs. Rice
1st place – F117 – Cookie Swap Theme – Mrs. Thompson Advisory
2nd Place – B14 – Trivia Game – Mrs. Cribbin Advisory
3rd Place – F109 – Tree Student Santa’s – Mrs. Suraci Advisory

Above, the WHHS LMC Holiday tree, The Tree of Knowledge. Constructed of books. Each sign says Merry Christmas in a different language.