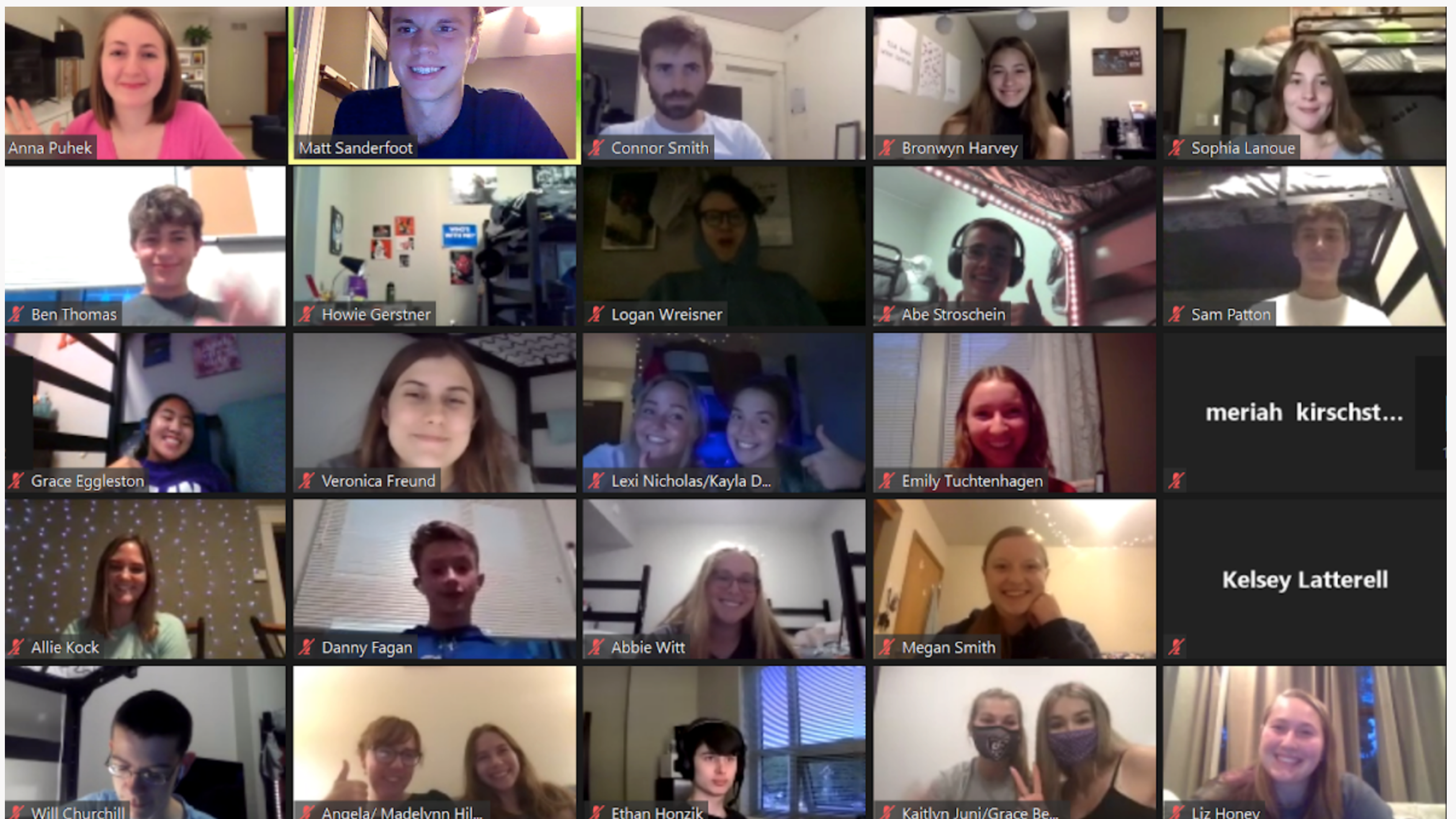

The Scholars Newsletter



2021 February Edition
The Aquinas Scholars Honors Program
Editor: Ashley Burt



In case you missed it...

Valentine's Day Cards for Nursing Homes



Trivia Night

2021 Politics (So Far...)

Kyle

2

13245
13 out of 16

Zak H

1

15085
14 out of 16

Sam

3

13159
12 out of 16

Runners-up

4 ClassyJa...

5 Olivia

2021 Pop Culture (So Far...)

Elise

2

19689
20 out of 24

Eli

1

20993
21 out of 24

Zak H

3

19476
20 out of 24

Scholars Journal

Outgrown Scholar: Izzy Iliff

On a hike sticky summer heat
long hair of childhood plastered sweat
on the back of my neck. The night before
I dreamt of Peter Pan pirate ships
and petticoats I dreamt of being
taken away to that land where
magic still exists. On a hike crisp mulch
and wooden splinters a shiny thimble glistens.
A gift for me childhood belief in what I couldn't
see my parents made it easy to know
magic. By that winter I learned
thimbles don't just sprout up on hikes at the local
parks and I learned I was already
too old for Neverland.

Scholars Journal

#StoryCity
Scholar: Maria Baklund



This video is for a project I worked on for the Playful Learning Lab, called #StoryCity. We partnered with the LEGO Foundation to create and then redesign a website that promotes kids' creativity. It originally launched at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S. as a way for students and kids to use materials at home to create their own city. Participants are encouraged to upload photos of their creations and submit them online with the hashtag #StoryCity. That way they can view others' cities and share their own. We've expanded the inspiration resources to include focuses on building, writing and drawing. The stop-motion, storyboard, script, and audio recording were all done by a small team of students from UST.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKD4h16A1H4>

Scholars Journal

What is College Really About? Scholar: Evan Dietry

In his lecture, “The Dying Art of Disagreement,” Bret Stephens uncovers some flaws in our declining society, illustrating how we have become so divided and blinded by our beliefs. He says, “Extensive survey data show that Republicans are much more right-leaning than they were twenty years ago, Democrats much more left-leaning, and both sides much more likely to see the other as a mortal threat to the nation’s welfare.” Stephens also presents what can be done to mend our differences, or at least help us to understand and learn why we have differences: allow disagreement to force independent thought. Disagreement is so important because it allows us to understand other people’s views, become a more well-rounded person, and most importantly be - and think - for ourselves instead of trying to fit in with another group of people. On the second page of the transcription, Stephens says, “Most importantly, they are never based on a misunderstanding. On the contrary, the disagreements arise from perfect comprehension; from having chewed over the ideas of your intellectual opponent so thoroughly that you can properly spit them out.” To become independent, well rounded people through disagreement, it requires learning about others and listening to what they have to say. Keeping an open mind and stepping into other people’s shoes are another two necessities for disagreement. Today in the United States, Stephens points out how many college students lack these skills due to a failure in their early education. Most don’t fully understand the rights protected by the First Amendment, which leads to the belief that if they don’t share an opinion with someone, they can claim offense and go to any extent to stop that person from

sharing their opinion – even violence. This is largely due to identity politics, which Stephens shows is dominating college campuses. Within identity politics, “...the primary test of an argument isn’t the quality of the thinking but the cultural, racial, or sexual standing of the person making it.” Stephens says that identity politics replaces individual thought, and herein lies the miseducation of American college students. Instead of being taught to identify with others, students need to be taught to be independent and think for themselves. If students do not do this, and they allow identity politics to govern their thoughts, then they fall into a “safe space of a uniquely pernicious kind – a safe space from thought, rather than a safe space for thought.”

Personally, I completely agree with Stephens’ thoughts on disagreement, hence I disagree with identity politics and the divide across America right now. The world has gone soft, and we allow offense to govern our lives. People need to get thicker skin and accept that not everyone thinks the same or shares the same opinions. Everyone is different, and that is completely okay. Today, “sticks and stones could break my bones but words would never hurt me,” no longer stands true, and because of it people are close-minded, inconsiderate, and not well-rounded. When we disagree with a speaker, instead of shouting them down or threatening violence, either listen or do not listen. Never take away another person’s ability to listen either. Disagreement should be revived, in its most civil form.

Events to Look Forward to!

1

March Madness Bracketology

What: Annual March Madness competition.

When: March 15th



Snack Pack Decorating

What: Decorating and filling paper bags with healthy snacks for donation.

When: March 15th-23rd

2

3

Name that Tune

What: Test how fast you can name the song being played over Zoom.

When: April 7th



Contact Us!



Cheyanne Simpson, President
simp1139@stthomas.edu



Connor Glinski, Vice President
connor.glinski@stthomas.edu



Megan Smith, Webmaster
megan.smith@stthomas.edu



Ashley Burt, Publications
burt4116@stthomas.edu



Dr. Eric Fort, Faculty Director
ehfort@stthomas.edu



Erica Berglund, Administrative Assistant
berg7582@stthomas.edu