Letter from the Editor:

Nina Raneses

Welcome to the very special 2017 “senior issue” of The Wire! First, we’d like to thank our readers, patrons and everyone involved in the production and ongoing support of our student-run publication. In this issue, we celebrate the accomplishments and look back on the memories of West Potomac’s Class of 2017. As I reflect on three wonderful years at The Wire, I remember all of the people who made my time here so special—my advisors, Mr. Cadorette and Mrs. Huntington, my fellow staff members, and of course, our wonderful school community, who I’ve had the pleasure of covering since I was a sophomore.

I sincerely hope my fellow seniors enjoy this collection of memories from their four years here. Class of 2017—Congrats, and continue being the amazing people I’ve come to know on our four-year journey.

Signing off for my last time as Editor-in-Chief, Nina Raneses.

This issue’s cover was created using Adobe InDesign. The images used for the cover and table of contents were taken by Claudia Santa Anna and Whitney Huntington.

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Senior Issue 2017

By the Numbers
Post-Grad Advice
College Map

Students Attending Service Academies
Our Staff from Then and Now
Four Years in Review
WEST POTOMAC CLASS OF 2017
BY THE NUMBERS
* based on survey data as of June 1, 2017

559
number of students in graduating class

5
average number of colleges applied to
JMU VT VCU W&M

$3,521,879
amount of scholarship money earned, both renewable and non-renewable

1,372.9 days
32,951 hours
1,977,060 minutes
time spent enrolled at West Potomac (09.03.13 - 06.21.17)

107
number of colleges the Class of 2017 will be represented at

26
number of different schools in Virginia

11
number of different schools in Pennsylvania, the second most popular state after Virginia

2
number of students studying abroad for their 1st semester

3
number of students taking an internship before going to school
American University
Appalachian State University
Arcadia University
Arizona State University
Auburn University
Bates College
Belmont University
Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania
Borough of Manhattan Community College of the CUNY
Boston University
Bowdoin College
Bowie State University
Bridgewater College
Brigham Young University, Idaho
Bucknell University
California College of the Arts (San Francisco)
Christopher Newport University
Clemson University
College of Charleston
College of William and Mary
Colorado State University
Columbia College Chicago
Dickinson College
East Carolina University
Elon University
Fordham University
Franklin & Marshall College
George Mason University
Hampden-Sydney College
Hampton University
Harford Community College
High Point University
Iowa State University
Ivy Tech Community College
James Madison University
Liberty University
Longwood University
Mary Baldwin University
Marymount University
Michigan State University
Morgan State University
Mount St. Mary's University
New College of Florida
New York University
Norfolk State University
North Carolina State University
North Country Community College
Northern Virginia Community College
Ohio Wesleyan University
Old Dominion University
Pace University, New York City
Pennsylvania State University
Pennsylvania State University, Abington
Pennsylvania State University, Altoona
Pratt Institute
Prince George's Community College
Radford University
Randolph College
Regent University
Saint Francis University
Saint Joseph's University
Santa Barbara City College
Savannah College of Art and Design
Shenandoah University
Southern Methodist University
St. John's University - Queens Campus
Stetson University
Stevenson University
Stratford University
Temple University
Texas A&M University
The Ohio State University
The University of Alabama
The University of Montana, Missoula
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
The University of Texas, Austin
United States Air Force Academy
United States Coast Guard Academy
United States Naval Academy
University of California, Davis
University of Connecticut
University of Delaware
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of Kansas
University of Kentucky
University of Mary Washington
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
University of North Carolina at Wilmington
University of Notre Dame
University of Pittsburgh
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
University of Virginia
University of Virginia's College at Wise
University of West Florida
Vassar College
Virginia Commonwealth University
Virginia Military Institute
Virginia Tech
Virginia Wesleyan College
Wake Forest University
Washington College
Wesleyan University
West Virginia Community College
West Virginia University
Western New England University
Wilmington University
West Potomac’s Class of 2016 Offer
Advice on Post-Graduation Life

Don't be afraid! First semester might be rough because the adjustments to college life are huge, but put yourself out there and be confident in yourself. If you do that, you will make friends who appreciate you for who you are. - Meredith Barber, College of William & Mary

Don't ever be afraid of a challenge or worry that you might fail. The best way to learn is from your mistakes and you are going to make a lot of those. Apply yourself 100% to whatever you choose to do. - Michael Curtin, U.S. Naval Academy

For the first semester, definitely try to take it easy. You have an entire degrees worth of classes to take so don't overwhelm yourself the first semester. Try to get a feel for what you want to do, if you don't know already, by taking a variety of different classes. You might end up having an affinity for something you thought you hated. - Huda Khan, Northern Virginia Community College

In college for most classes at least half of the material is expected to be learned by you outside of class, by reading your textbooks and assigned reading. In high school I never read the textbook because everything was covered in class but in college it’s an absolute necessity. You will never be able to do all the reading you’re assigned, but you have to learn which ones you need to do. But overall do as many of them as you can because they’re as important as going to class generally. - Jake Hardison, University of Virginia

Find time to do the homework. Getting done early is the best thing you can do for yourself. - Matavin Williams, NOVA

I would just say that whether you are going to college or not, being able to find a balance is essential so you don't go crazy. You can't always be only working or only partying, etc. being able to balance each part of your life makes your life as a whole better. - Philip Drembus

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I'd say to give yourself time to adjust to school and don’t worry if things aren’t immediately perfect. Learn to appreciate your professors and peers and be open to everyone! - Jenny Sutton, Colorado College

College is definitely your chance for freedom and to experience new things but don’t forget what you came to college for, just remember to make time for your classes and don’t underestimate the time commitment. - Elijah Pennock, James Madison University

Don’t walk into your first semester of college nervous or unsure about whether you’ll fit in or have fun. Everyone is thinking the same thing, just put yourself out there and see where it takes you from there. - Hunter Vagt, James Madison University

Don’t be afraid to try something new. Try going to all the dining halls, join all the clubs that you’re interested in, and meet as many new people as you can especially if any of those things pushes you outside of your comfort zone. - Audrey Boling, Virginia Tech

In a nutshell, college is like high school on steroids. Everything you liked about high school is present, times ten. Everything you hated about high school is present, times ten. For example, the social aspect is present, times ten. On the other hand, it can be far more stressful than high school at times. All things considered, the best part about college is the absolute freedom you have to pursue whatever path you want and that there are resources present that can turn your abstract dreams into a tangible reality. - Darrel Mensah, Virginia Tech

I would say don’t worry too much about adjusting to college life, because it’s not as much of a leap as it seems. Put some faith in your previous experiences and let them help you through the present. - Duncan Hoag, Christopher Newport University

My best advice would be to never lose your inner child, your head, or your dreams. Your inner child to help you keep an open mind and heart for all people (both the lovers AND the haters); your head to help you step back no matter how tough life gets, accept anyone’s past is the past, and focus instead on what YOU can do to change the future. It is often the case that finding a way to make your dreams into a reality is even more satisfying than if your dreams had always been your reality. - Michael Bell, College of William & Mary
What’s Next for The Class of 2017?

Alabama
University of Alabama
Hugh Moffitt
Hannah Thompson
Auburn University
Sara Bates
Sarah Much

California
California College of the Arts
Lily Shin

Colorado
US Air Force Academy
Allie Puskar

Connecticut
US Coast Guard Academy
Grayson Wheeler
Wesleyan University
Emily Smith
University of Connecticut
Lindsay Cullen

Delaware
University of Delaware
Emily Flaherty

Florida
New College of Florida
Elizabeth Bowerfield

Indiana
University of Notre Dame
Juliette Burham

Kansas
University of Kansas
Andrew Fisher

Kentucky
University of Kentucky
Kayla Congleton

Maine
Bates College
Theresa Willmott-McMahon
Bowdoin College
Liam Houlgate
Safiya Osei

Maryland
Stevenson University
Cory Jones
US Naval Academy
Nick Hogan
Washington College
Grace Moery

Massachusetts
Boston University
Helen Kitrosser
Western New England

Michigan
Michigan State University
Hunter Baldwin
University of Michigan
Jacob Raman

Minnesota
University of Minnesota
Natalie Lorca

New York
Fordham University
Sean Franklin
North County College
Ty Taylor
Pace University
Kailey O’Farrell
St. John’s University
Wingel Caburian
Megan Ruelas Mendoza
Vassar College
Juliana Sprague

North Carolina
Appalachian State University
Grant Benick
Nicholas Crow
East Carolina University
Savannah Beeby
Elon University
Taylor Stephens
High Point University
Joseph Chromey
North Carolina A&T State University
Destinee Parker
University of North Carolina
Nelson Flores
University of North Carolina Wilmington
Katie Buell

Ohio
Ohio Wesleyan University
Bela Starinchek

Pennsylvania
Franklin and Marshall College
Liz Brodie
Bloomsburg University
Maggie McDonald
Dickinson College
Elizabeth Imphong
Temple University
Kyle White

Arcadia University
Cayla Cotton
Saint Francis University
Branden Lisenby
Pennsylvania State University
Precious Asumadu
Sammy Entabi
Pennsylvania State University Altoona
William Didden

South Carolina
Clemson University
Megan Fuqua

Texas
Southern Methodist University
Sophie Adler
Texas A&M University
Rachael Brautigam

Washington DC
Georgetown University
Maddie Finn
Signing to Serve

Three West Potomac seniors have opted to attend the United States’ service academies, including Air Force, Coast Guard and the Navy. For some, the decision was a long time coming, while for others it was more by chance.

Allie Puskar-Beckett

Q: Why did you choose the Air Force?
A: I chose the U.S. Air Force Academy because they have a great medical program and also the fastest swim team out of all the academies. I wanted to swim in college no matter what.

Q: What are you looking forward to the most about next year?
A: I’m really looking forward to being on the swim team. Since we’re a varsity sport at the academy, we’re sponsored by Nike and they give us lots of apparel we can wear. I’m also super excited to meet more people and have more connections while there.

Q: How long have you thought about or wanted to attend the school you’re going to?
A: My parents actually forced me to go on a visit to the academy for swimming, and I was actually dreading the trip. I never wanted to go to USAFA prior to that, and it was mainly my parents making me go. I knew a little bit about the academies prior to that, since people I knew had gone to them, but I still didn’t know a lot. I decided that USAFA was the school for me on the last day of my 3 day recruiting trip. I decided it was the college for me because I grew up in a huge military family, and I knew I would miss the benefits the military had (since my dad just retired) and also my huge family. Going there and sitting down at their meals and seeing everyone’s Element (sub group consisting of 10 cadets that you have to do activities with and have meals with) I realized how much of a family everyone was and how everyone had each others back. I really loved that aspect and I also loved how if I ever needed anything even after my visit people gave me their numbers and told me to text them any questions I had. Just having so many people want to see you succeed was amazing and I honestly just felt at home. I actually ending up waking to Walmart at midnight with 2 other swim recruits who are from Virginia and we all bought so much Air Force gear because we all knew that this was the school for us.
Nick Hogan

**Q:** Why did you choose the Navy?
**A:** I choose to go to Navy because I have family history there, my grandfather was USNA class of 1953, and my father also served in the Navy.

**Q:** What are you looking forward to the most about next year?
**A:** To be honest, it’s probably going to be the people, the service academies have some of the most dedicated and qualified individuals that you will ever see, so when you put them all together, great things are going to happen.

**Q:** How long have you thought about or wanted to attend the school you’re going to?
**A:** I’ve probably wanted to join the military since about 6th grade, but got really interested in the academies in 8th.

Grayson Wheeler

**Q:** Why did you choose the Coast Guard?
**A:** I chose the Coast Guard Academy for its emphasis on humanitarian missions. The Coast Guard protects our shores and citizens, and I would be honored to serve our country in this way. As a graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, I will have various choices for a career, all of which I would be eager to do. I switched into JROTC my senior year to help get me into the military mindset. My only regret is not taking COL Bullard and CSM Pearson’s class sooner!

**Q:** How long have you thought about or wanted to attend the school you’re going to?
**A:** Between Sophomore and Junior year in high school, I met the Coast Guard Academy rifle coach and learned about the opportunity of attending USCGA as a recruited athlete for rifle. It was probably the first time I seriously thought that I might be on track to be competitive enough to shoot at the college level. Thinking it over for the next year, balancing my academics and rifle competitions, I decided to apply to the CGA in the fall of 2016. To be competitive in NCAA rifle, one must shoot Air rifle (60 shots standing) and Smallbore (20 shots, 3 positions) at a consistent scoring level. In addition to competing for the high school varsity team, I had been accepted to an area club team that routinely competed in these disciplines and provided Olympic calibre coaching. I believe my dedication to my sport is what set me apart from the Coast Guard Academy application pool.

**Q:** What are you looking forward to the most about next year?
**A:** I most look forward to being able to make a difference through my career and working in a team alongside other like-minded people. I also look forward to competing for USCGA’s rifle team. Go Bears!
So Long,
Senior Staff
Class of 2017!

Nina Raneses: Editor In Chief

Shahtaj Ali: Editor

Andrea Lugo: Team Leader

Claudia Santa Anna: Editor

Drew Taylor: Reporter

Wingel Caburian: Team Leader
Not Pictured: Cooper Rosenberg, Omar Rahim

Grant Benick: Team Leader
Blast From the Past

Ms. Kara Weiner  Mr. Thomas Cadorette

Ms. Laura Pendleton  Ms. Nicole Borghard  Ms. Brandi Martino

Mr. Paul Laguna  Ms. Melinda Hedenberg  Ms. Jessica Ladnon
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Macklemore and Ryan Lewis’ “Thrift Shop” was the top song of 2013.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>The second Hunger Games movie, “Catching Fire” was the top movie of the year at the box office. Edward Snowden leaked information on government surveillance, sparking national controversy. The Harlem Shake dance craze dominated the internet.</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>“Happy” by Pharrell Williams was critically and popularly adored. The controversial movie “American Sniper” earned the highest domestic box office earnings in 2014. The Ferguson protests brought police brutality to the front of the social consciousness. Celebrities and individuals participated in the Ice Bucket Challenge to raise awareness for ALS.</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>“Uptown Funk” made its way to the top of the charts early in the year and maintained its position as top selling song of the year. The new Star Wars movie, “The Force Awakens” dominated the box office. The Supreme Court legalized gay marriage in all 50 states. The world came together in support of Paris, France after the November attacks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Justin Timberlake’s “Can’t Stop the Feeling” was the best-selling song of 2016. Beyonce released “Lemonade” an hour long visual film with an album, it went on to win Best Urban Contemporary album at the Grammys. Republican candidate Donald Trump won the 2016 Presidential election, against democratic competitor Hillary Clinton. “Rogue One: A Star Wars Story” was the top grossing movie of 2016, it was released December 10.</td>
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<td>2018</td>
<td>Emma Watson and Dan Stevens starred in the year’s highest grossing film thus far in the live action “Beauty and the Beast”. Ed Sheeran topped the Billboard 100 charts for 10 weeks straight with his single “Shape of You”. Presenter Warren Beatty misread the card for Best Picture—mistaking “La La Land” for “Moonlight”. Millions of people around the world attended the Women’s March, marching for a variety of reasons.</td>
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As Oscar Wilde once said, "The only thing to do with good advice is to pass it on. It is never of any use to oneself." Good luck, Class of '17, and don't take any wooden nickels.

Mr. Cadorette

Find your voice and stand up to bullies. Shatter complacency. Get to know professors so that they know you — remember build connections for success.

Ed Chapman

Students of the class of 2017,

The Latin word “Cor” meaning “heart” is the root of “courage.” Your courage has brought you this far and your courage will carry you forward. Mr. Rigby

Surround yourself with positive people. Strive to do your best in every class. Keep a full metaphorical pen in your back pocket. Love, Miss B

Class of 2017, congratulations! I am so proud of you all. It has been a pleasure teaching many of you, your freshmen and senior years. I have loved getting to know you and can’t wait to see what comes your way in the future. I know you all will be successful. Enjoy the rest of your senior year and last summer before school/military work. It goes fast — live it up! Keep in touch and come back and visit! ♡ MS. McBride