



# THE LIBERTY BELL



Liberty High School Academy For Newcomers

## Liberty High School



**TORCH Awards Celebrate the Power of Persistence, Teamwork, and Initiative**

*Continued on page 2*



# TORCH Awards Celebrate the Power of Persistence, Teamwork, and Initiative

By Kiandra Fernandez Calderon

On February 6th, Liberty High School proudly held its annual Torch Award Ceremony, a special event dedicated to recognizing students for their hard work. Students, teachers, counselors and administrators reunited together to celebrate those students who have demonstrated excellence throughout the school year.

The Torch Awards represent those that are tenacious, outstanding, resilient, champions, and hardworking. The award recognizes students who inspire others through their positive example, and encourage others to do their best. During the ceremony, the principal reminded everyone that success is not only measured by grades, but also by growth, effort, and the way students project and implement themselves every day.

One of the highest honors of the ceremony was the recognition of students nominated for the Principal’s Ultimate T.O.R.C.H. Award. This special nomination is given to exemplary students who consistently demonstrate leadership, responsibility, and academic dedication. Being nominated for this honor means a lot because it means that you go above and beyond expectations and you serve as a positive role model for others in the school community. As a student that started from 0 in this school, it made me feel proud of myself, because it means that all my hard work is paying off and I can share it with others. *I consistently strive to demonstrate my commitment to excellence and a strong work ethic in everything I do.* This nomination is not only because of my academic success, but also perseverance, and the ability to inspire other students. It is a powerful achievement that represents Liberty High School.

The Torch Award Ceremony once again proved to be a meaningful and inspiring event. By honoring students for their dedication and achievements, Liberty High School continues to encourage a culture of excellence. As the ceremony concluded, students left feeling motivated to continue shining bright and carrying the torch of success throughout the rest of the school year.



## Two Milestone Seasons to Celebrate

### Basketball and Table Tennis Reach Playoff Semifinals for the First Time in School History

#### Reflections from Seniors

#### Mamadou Sow



This year's basketball season was one of the best seasons I ever had. From the first game, I already felt like it was going to be different. We came out strong and I scored around 25 points. That game gave me a lot of confidence and showed me what kind of season it could be.

As the season went on, my teammates and I kept getting better. We practiced hard, grinding every day, and building real chemistry. We started understanding each other more on the court, like knowing where someone was going to be without even looking. My teammates played a big role in our success because everybody did their job, whether it was scoring, defense or bringing energy. Our coach also played a big part in our season, he kept pushing us even when we were tired or losing. He always believed in us and made sure we stayed focused. He helped us to go harder every game. Because of all the hard work, we made it to the playoffs, the first time in my school history. That means a lot for us. In the playoff game that sent us to the semi finals, I scored 21 points. It was a big moment for me and for the team because we knew we were making history.

Overall, this season was special. ***It wasn't just about how many points I scored, but about my team, my coach, and the bond we built. We showed that when we stay locked in and play for each other, we can do big things.***

#### Adam Zoaabi



In 2025-2026, Liberty created its first official Tennis Table team that I was a part of. This team was made in just a few days, but still the Liberty Eagles did not give up. Mr. Kassim and his assistant Mr. Alex supported and helped us become better players in a very short amount of time. They taught us how to compete with other students, and other schools who had many years of experience. The Liberty team, even in its first year made it to the playoffs! ***The challenges we faced, the lack of experience we had and the fear of loss didn't stop us, but inspired us to keep trying our best!*** I might not be able to play next year because I'm a senior, but I am very sure that our team will get better and better, and get the championship next time. No one can stop a team where there's diversity, different types of players and great coaches. I wish the best for all of our teams at Liberty High School such as Tennis Table, Basketball, Running, Soccer, and Volleyball!





## CUPID'S CORNER

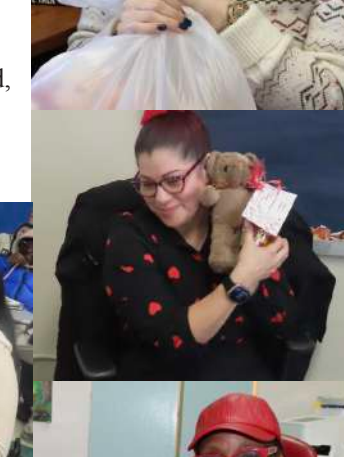
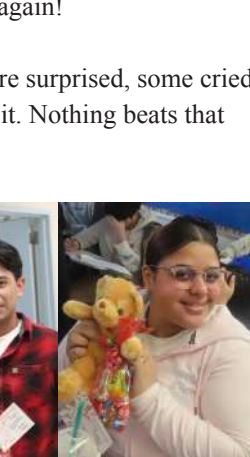
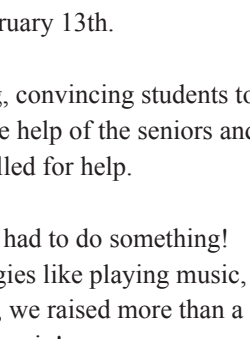
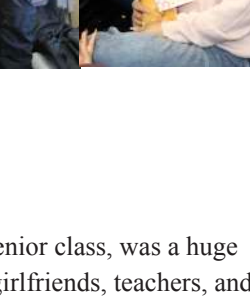
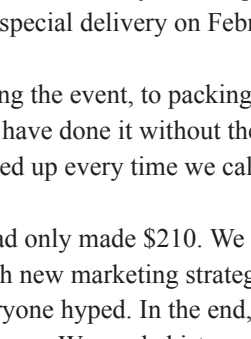
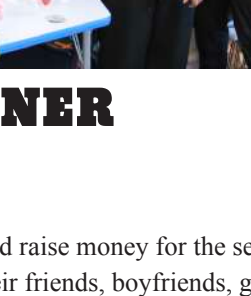
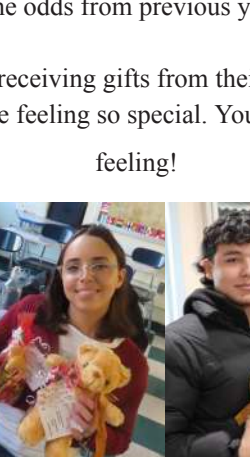
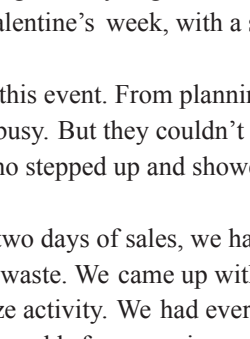
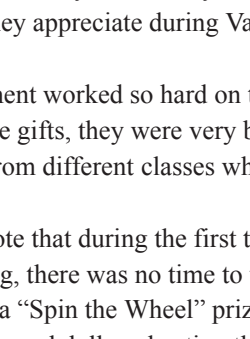
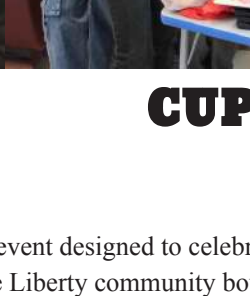
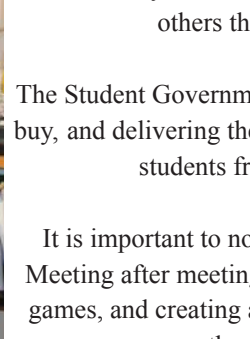
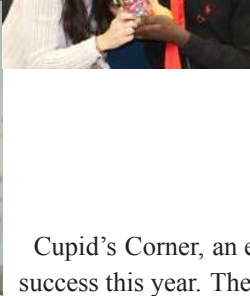
By Seydina Sow

Cupid's Corner, an event designed to celebrate Valentine's Day and raise money for the senior class, was a huge success this year. The Liberty community bought candy bags for their friends, boyfriends, girlfriends, teachers, and others they appreciate during Valentine's week, with a special delivery on February 13th.

The Student Government worked so hard on this event. From planning the event, to packing, convincing students to buy, and delivering the gifts, they were very busy. But they couldn't have done it without the help of the seniors and students from different classes who stepped up and showed up every time we called for help.

It is important to note that during the first two days of sales, we had only made \$210. We had to do something! Meeting after meeting, there was no time to waste. We came up with new marketing strategies like playing music, games, and creating a "Spin the Wheel" prize activity. We had everyone hyped. In the end, we raised more than a thousand dollars, beating the odds from previous years. We made history again!

It felt so nice seeing students' reactions after receiving gifts from their loved ones. Some were surprised, some cried, and some smiled as if it was their first time feeling so special. You had to be there to see it. Nothing beats that feeling!



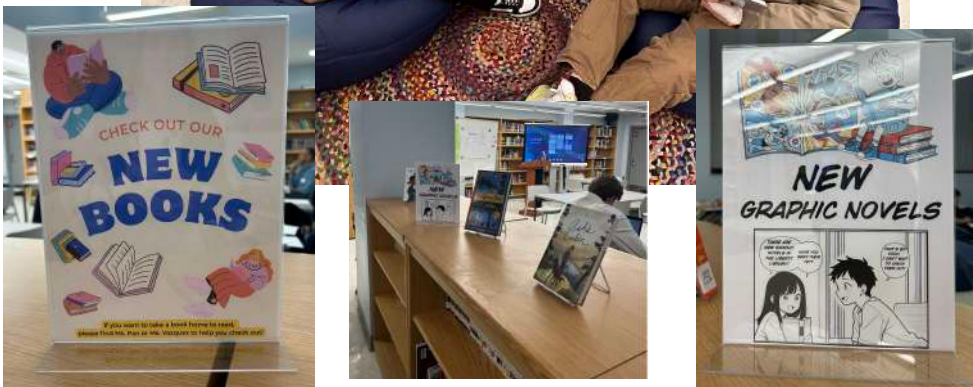
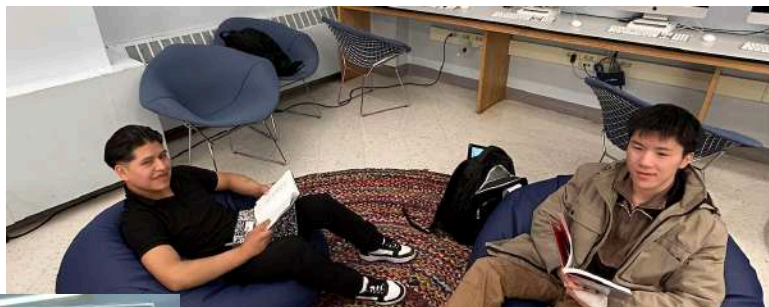
## News From Teachers...

### What's New in the Library?

Have you noticed any changes in the library recently? We're working hard to reorganize the shelves and bring in new books to the collection! Your fellow students also worked hard recently to campaign for new bean bag chairs which are coming in soon.

Please help to keep our shared space comfortable and clean by not eating or drinking in the library. Some of the books are older than our students—and we want to keep them in good shape for years to come!

If you're interested in borrowing any books to take home, please find Ms. Pan or Ms. Vazquez in the library to help you check out.



### YOGA

Every Wednesday after school at 2:35 pm.

All are welcome!



### Math & Biology Tutoring

**Do you want to improve in math or science?**

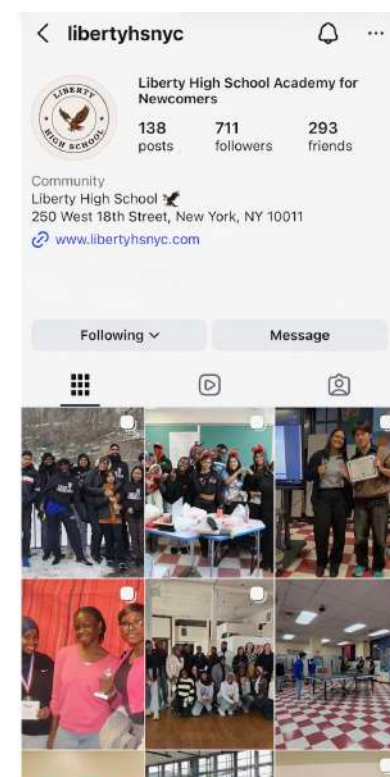
Our school is excited to announce a new opportunity FOR YOU! Beginning the week of February 23rd, professional, bilingual tutors will be available during lunch in the library and after school on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Please see your counselors or Ms. Vazquez in the Library for more information.



### Academic Support Class

The after-school academic support class starts February 11th. The class is in room 409 on Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays. In this class, we do hands-on projects, practice conversational English, get help in math science, classwork and homework. This semester we will take several fun trips around the neighborhood on Fridays. If you have any additional questions, or want to join, speak with your counselor or Ms. Vazquez in the library.

**Don't forget to follow Liberty on  
instagram!  
@libertyhsnyc**



## More News...

### Your Voice Matters: School and Parent Surveys Are Here!

By Mr. Segura

This month, our school will be administering its annual student and parent surveys. Surveys are not just another form to fill out. They are an opportunity to be heard, to shape the environment where you learn, grow, and build your futures. Every student experiences school differently. Some may feel deeply supported and connected. Others may see areas where we can grow. The best way we can improve the school community is if you speak up. When students and families complete surveys thoughtfully and honestly, real change can happen!

Feedback helps school leaders:

- Improve teaching and learning strategies
- Strengthen school safety and inclusivity
- Expand programs and extracurricular opportunities
- Enhance communication between families and staff
- Address concerns before they become bigger issues

This survey is confidential, which means no one will know how you responded. If something is working well, say so — schools need to know their strengths. If something needs improvement, explain why. Specific feedback leads to specific action.

When it's time to take the survey, don't ignore it. Take a few minutes. Reflect. Respond. This is more than a survey. It's your voice.

Finally, **all students and parents who complete the school survey will be entered to win Apple AirPods.** Please see Catholic Charities, your Guidance Counselor, or Mr. Segura if you need help completing the survey. Thank you.



### Guidance Department

**Attendance** is an important part of your academic success!

Develop the habit to come to school **everyday** and attend your classes with a present mindset.

It is important for you to know the different types of absences:

**Excused absence:** Absent from school for a specific reason such as: an appointment, a death in the family.

Students need to bring proof of why they were absent.

**Unexcused absences:** Absent without reason. No proof provided for the absence.

**Consecutive absences:** Absent for 10 days in a row.

**Chronic Absence:** Being absent for about 18 days from school.

### Catholic Charities Ramapo Retreat

During mid-winter break members of C.U.T.E, LILO and MBK clubs attended an overnight retreat to Ramapo where they engaged in team building and leadership exercises. They defied gravity and their fears while bonding with members from other clubs.


Thank you Dr. Huegel for sponsoring this trip!

If you would like to join one of these clubs see a member of Catholic Charities, Ms. Polanco, Ms. Segarra or Mr. Judd.

**You Are NOT Alone**

Sad, Depressed, Anxious,  
Overwhelmed in School, at Home,  
Work, or in a Relationship..

See Nurse Gabrielle - Medical Room 516



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## Your March Horoscope!

**Aries:** This month is quieter before your new start. Rest, reflect, and prepare for action later.

**Taurus:** Friends and plans for the future matter. Work slowly toward goals you care about.

**Gemini:** Career and work need review. Take your time and fix old plans.

**Cancer:** Learning and new ideas grow. Be patient and trust your feelings.

**Leo:** Money and shared resources need care. Avoid rushing financial choices.

**Virgo:** Big personal changes happen. Let go of habits that stress you.

**Libra:** Rest and health are important. Slow down and listen to your body.

**Scorpio:** Creativity and love feel strong. Express yourself honestly.

**Sagittarius:** Home and family need attention. Create comfort and emotional safety.

**Capricorn:** Communication needs care. Think before you speak or sign things.

**Aquarius:** Money and values are important. Review spending and save carefully.

**Pisces:** This is a powerful month for you. Reflect, heal, and trust yourself.



|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Aries</b><br>March 21 to April 19<br><br>Ram         | <b>Taurus</b><br>April 20 to May 20<br><br>Bull            | <b>Gemini</b><br>May 21 to June 20<br><br>Twins            | <b>Cancer</b><br>June 21 to July 22<br><br>Crab      |
| <b>Leo</b><br>July 23 to Aug. 22<br><br>Lion            | <b>Virgo</b><br>Aug. 23 to Sept. 22<br><br>Virgin          | <b>Libra</b><br>Sept. 23 to Oct. 22<br><br>Balance         | <b>Scorpio</b><br>Oct. 23 to Nov. 21<br><br>Scorpion |
| <b>Sagittarius</b><br>Nov. 22 to Dec. 21<br><br>Archer | <b>Capricorn</b><br>Dec. 22 to Jan. 19<br><br>Horned goat | <b>Aquarius</b><br>Jan. 20 to Feb. 18<br><br>Water bearer | <b>Pisces</b><br>Feb. 19 to March 20<br><br>Fish    |

## Words of the Month:

**Resilience:** The ability to keep going and grow stronger after hard times.

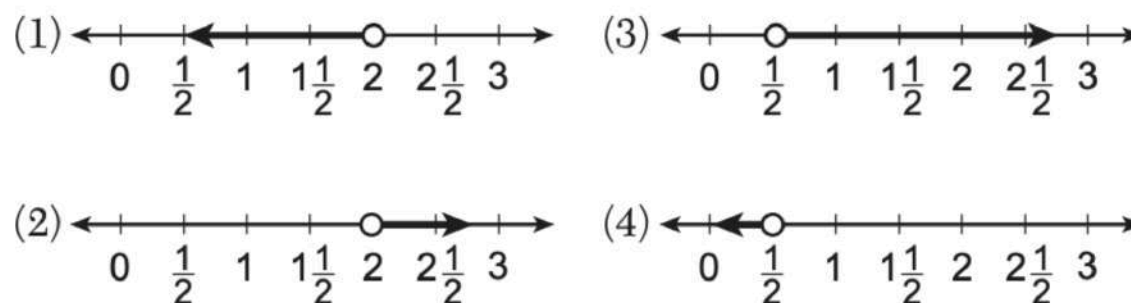
Throughout history, women showed **resilience** by not giving up, even during difficult times.

*Happy Women's History Month!*



**Regents Multiple Choice Practice:** Show your answers to your teachers to see if you're correct!

Which graph represents the solution to the inequality  $4 + 3x > 9 - 7x$ ?



As used in line 81, "resonant" most nearly means

- (1) rich                      (3) startling  
 (2) muffled                (4) harsh

Astronomers call that the cosmic microwave background. It's the residual radiation of the Big Bang, the explosion that created the universe fourteen billion years ago. But you can also think of it as a barely audible reverberation<sup>7</sup> of that original "om." That syllable was so resonant that the night sky will keep vibrating for as long as the universe exists.

When Arecibo is not listening to anything else, it hears the voice of creation.

<sup>7</sup> reverberation — echo

## Sports

### Running Team Racing Towards first Indoor Championship Race

In preparation for the CPSAL Championships, the running team participated in two events over the February break. This included the New York Road Runners (NYRR) Open Run event at Morningside Park followed by the Youth Championship race at the Nike Armory.

At the Armory, **Ronardo Montilla** broke two Liberty HS records, running the 200 meter dash in 26.23 seconds followed by a 1,500 meter run in 5 minutes and 13 seconds. **Aboubakr Diallo** ran the second fastest 1,500 in 5:17. On the women's team, the top performer was **Wuilianin Pina**, running the 400 meter dash in 1:24, the second fastest in school history.

The team will compete in the CPSAL Indoor Track Championship on March 4th at the Armory. Prior the meet, top female runner, **Oumou Diallo** will receive an award from NYRR for her dominant Fall season, winning two medals and leading the team to a second place finish at the CPSAL Cross Country Championship.

