

Look at you – look at how far you've come. How long has it been since freshman orientation? Are you the same person you were back then?

No. You've changed. The stories you tell during first-day icebreakers, that one awkward thing you did freshman year that still keeps you up at night – these formed you into the person you are today.

You may be a Warrior, but within the sea of students at the homecoming assembly, you're so much more. You've experienced things no one else has, shaped the lives of countless people, many of whom you'll never even know. It's your life that's led only from your eyes. No one else saw your perspective.

You're the one who looked out upon your audience, reciting those lines you spent hours alone in your room memorizing. Maybe no one knew the effort that took, but they felt the emotion in your voice.

You're the one who stared down that linebacker while dominating the field. Sure, no one else felt the sweat on your brow and the soreness in your legs, but they saw the 42-0 scoreboard, and cheered as the Milkjug was paraded around school.

You're the one who stayed in the building until 10pm writing the newest issue of The Herald. Yeah, no one knew the stress of making the deadline, but they read through each and every single article.

All that time hunched over a textbook, those unbelievable stories you come back with after summer, the late nights with friends that feel like so long ago.

Those are what shape you. They're what make you, you.

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And those stories aren't over yet. So get up. Look around. It's time to take control.

Who says those days are over? Because even now, you're changing. So seize the moment and embrace it.

Go talk to that favorite teacher that you never visit outside of class. Go to the soccer games that everyone talks about the morning after.

There's so many paths in front of you, you and nobody else. Who WERE you and who are you NOW? WHAT changed about you and WHY?

Freshman year you swore you'd never set foot in the weight room, by junior you're hitting new PRs. You're the one who never thought they could act and now has a role in Game of Tiaras.

You were the scared and timid freshmen who saw a teacher's nametag and lowered your eyes. Now, you're the one at the school board meetings, challenging the authority and fighting for what you know is right.

You get asked, "Would 10-year-old you be proud of you now?" A better question is – Would 10-year-old you even recognize you now? Because no one sets your limits. At the end of the day, you're the one making the choices. So here you are. All these opportunities. Take them. IT'S YOUR TIME.

### Captions

FROM THE BLUE LINE, LUKE SOKOLOWSKI, 11, takes a shot. Sokolowski was named Assistant Captain during his third year in the program. "There's a lot of younger guys in the program, I'm looking forward to helping them develop throughout the program," Sokolowski said. Photo by A. Evangelista.

POM POMS IN HAND, CARLEY FAGLER, 11, gazes in wonder at fireworks. The homecoming football game was a near shutout, and the team beat Thunder Ridge by nearly 20 points. "I love the feeling of being in front of a crowd and performing my skills," Fagler said. Photo by A. Evangelista.

READY TO ATTACK, MAIA TRAVIS, 12, plays Agnes in the show 'She Kills Monsters'. The play was showcased by the Company class at the end of the fall semester. "'She Kills Monsters' tells the story of loss, specifically with the feeling of not knowing who your lost loved one was as a person, and regretting not getting to know them. It also ends letting people know that you can continue on even though they are not with you anymore," Travis said. Photo by A. Evangelista.

AT THE OCTOBER CHOIR CONCERT, MARISA COLBERT, 12, performs the song with the Crescendos. The recital was to raise awareness for mental health. "mental health awareness is such an important thing, and the fact that I had the chance to be a part of the concert that supported mental health awareness means a lot," Colbert said.

WITH A SOLID STANCE, HAILEY SCHAFFER, 12, prepares to finish her performance in the Marching Band performance of *The Grind*. Schaefer was the only performer to wear pants while performing. "Being able to express myself without limits due to the clothes I have to wear is more freeing than most know. Being non-binary, wearing these pants made me feel heard and seen. I finally felt comfortable in my own skin," Schaefer said.

HOLDING OFF AN OPPONENT, BLAKE D'AGOSTINO, 10, battles to keep the ball in a playoff game. D'Agostino's passion for soccer started when he was just five years old. "My favorite memory is when we beat Creek in double overtime and everyone rushed the field," D'Agostino said. Photo by A. Evangelista.