

# INSIDE THE DEN

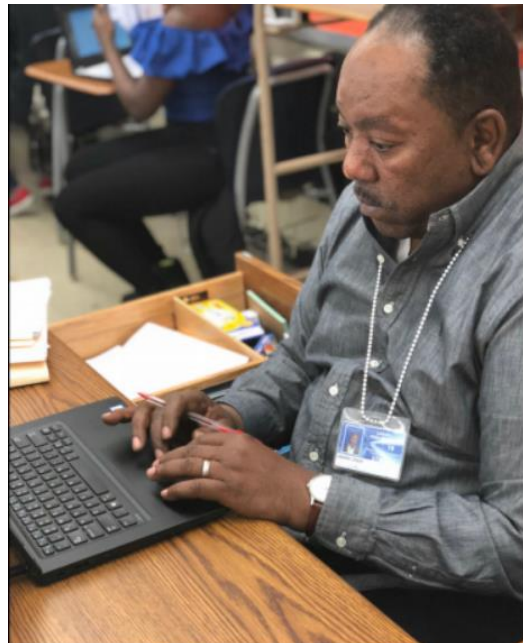
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# LARGO LOSES A LION

## A TRIBUTE TO MR. CRIER



On Wednesday, November 18, 2020, Largo was shaken to its core when news reached students and faculty that our beloved history teacher, Mr. Crier had sadly passed away. He was a great teacher who made us laugh and always supported his students. He was part of the Largo family/community for 25 wonderful years, and those years will never go unnoticed. He taught multiple subjects including: US History, African American Studies, and AP History.

When asked about their beloved teacher this is what some current and former students of his had to say about Mr. Crier. Serah Jawara, an 11th grade student described him, "I had Mr. Crier in my freshman year and I thought his class would be hard. Mr. Crier would always tell me and my classmates, 'You will know everything you need to know by May'. He was right. A quote that will never be forgotten is 'it's hard being a black man but it's easy being a negro'. He always made us laugh every chance he got. Mr. Crier will be missed dearly." Another student by the name of Kimberly Huntley, who had him her freshman year stated, "Mr. Crier

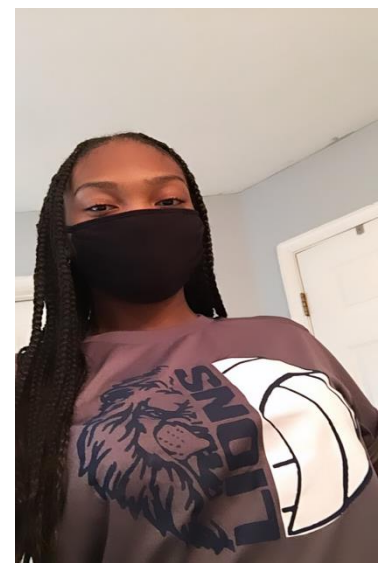
was a very honest and upfront teacher. He never sugarcoated anything. You could tell that he wanted nothing but the best for his students. He will definitely be missed."



# MASKS



# UP



# LARGO!





# LARGO HIGH SCHOOL'S NEW PRINCIPAL, MRS. KIMBERLY FORD

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH INSIDE THE DEN

During the past few months, Largo High School has faced some drastic changes. One change has been distance learning. Another, and more exciting change, has been getting a new addition to the Largo family. On Tuesday, October 21, 2020, the Inside the Den News reporters had the wonderful opportunity to have a one-on-one with Largo's new Principal, Mrs. Kimberly Ford!

Principal Kimberly Ford grew up in Detroit with dreams of becoming a teacher. In her interview she stated, "When I was little, I always wanted to be a teacher. I always said this to myself growing up." It was a goal that she stuck by. However, living in the inner city of a major metropolitan area where many outsiders judge the public-school system, Mrs. Ford didn't begin her journey in public schools. "I didn't have the opportunity to go to public schools right away. I lived in the inner city, so my mother did her best to keep me and my brother in private school." Her opportunity to attend public school finally came as she entered high school. This is when she "grew the interest to make schools better, which led me towards administration."

Mrs. Ford's childhood prepared her for her current role as a principal, but what working experience led her to Largo High School? Mrs. Ford explained that she had been an assistant principal at Bowie High School in Bowie, Maryland. "As an assistant principal, my previous roles and responsibilities were running the 9th grade building at Bowie High School. I worked in the Annex Building at Bowie High School for the last 8 or 9 years."

While the assistant principal with Bowie High School, it was her responsibility to observe classrooms, engage her staff members, and use logistics to put in place structures and systems that would work for her school. She has expressed great interactions with Largo High

well. I have had some communication with parents, and that has been positive also. Sometimes we receive feedback and can get information so that we can make some adjustments, but everybody has received me well. I appreciate all the support that I have gotten so far. I am looking forward to taking advantage of our virtual [opportunity] to meet with as many parents and students as I can."

Her vision for Largo was passionately given as she continued to give her feedback about joining The Den. "My goal for Largo is to have us continue to build upon the success we have already achieved here at Largo. I also want to make sure that our students are being challenged and that teaching and learning is taking place in the classroom as we're preparing our students to be college- and career-ready. In addition, it means that they are receiving instruction that's going to build their critical thinking skills, making sure that they are able to problem-solve, and making sure that they are able to communicate effectively. Also, being able to develop the idea of being a lifelong learner, so that we are all growing."

Virtual learning hasn't slowed down growth in The Den but it's well known that it has been stressful. Even Mrs. Ford has acknowledged this new era of learning as "a challenge" but offers some advice, especially if she were in the shoes of a student. Her first step, "making sure my class links are up and ready to go. I would constantly check Google Classroom for any upcoming assignments. I would also constantly check Schoolmax to make sure that all the assignments that I did were graded properly."

***"Throughout the many struggles that I had to face I was still able to succeed against the odds."***

Another important step in distance learning, she says is involving parents. She credits her mom with consistently working with her

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## -THE DIGITAL NEWSPAPER-

teachers and made her “self-advocate” more. “Even though I went to school in the ‘80s, I would still be prepared for distance learning. I had to be prepared because my mother was on me, pushing me to do the best I can. Therefore, she didn't have time for excuses.”

“This process of virtual learning has definitely been a challenge but, what it has done [is] pushed our staff and students as well. Students and staff have been pushed to embrace an uncomfortable area and still be able to grow in that space. Even though we've found virtual learning to be difficult, we have to embrace it because this is where we are and through all of this, it's been able to show perseverance in individuals, students and adults alike. We are going to continue to embrace and challenge our students and staff to make sure they are equipped with the tools they need. That's super important and that expectation doesn't go away because of virtual learning.”

However, when the time does come to return to Largo, Mrs. Ford has an action plan for the safety of staff and students from Covid-19 in accordance with Prince George's County Public Schools' guidelines. This includes “making sure that there is a small population of students coming into the building.” One of the suggestions for hybrid learning from the county is that “students with last names starting from A-G will come to school Monday and Tuesday. Then students from H-Z will come Thursday and Friday. We have to make sure that there is spacing in the classrooms and make sure that there is a plan of action for the lunch schedule.” She and the administrative team work daily to plan “where lunches will be, what dismissal from school will be like, how will Largo High School enforce the 6 feet apart guidelines, and transitioning from class to class in the hallways.” Safety is her priority for all students and staff members at Largo High School and she assures that “all the things that will be put in place for the safety of the students, will be placed by the Operational Procedures by PGCPs.”

Telling us more about her personal life, she opened up and shared with us what she could do as a hobby, all day, nonstop, in a virtual setting: research places to travel. She continued, “I love to travel and my favorite travel website to help plan for a trip is TripAdvisor. I use the site to find deals on island getaways, hotels, and really good places to eat. I actually traveled to a couple of places. I've also been to Caribbean islands such as Jamaica. I have also been on a cruise. If I wasn't an educator [and had] unlimited amounts of money, I would travel for the rest of my life. In addition, I would travel to Africa, Europe and the rest of the Caribbean islands.”

Aside from her role as an administrator, getting to know her as a new person in the community took the interview a little off course. Everyone wants to know the woman behind the title of principal. It was asked if she were able to take a year off and write a book, what would the title of the book be and why? After some thought, Mrs. Ford affirmed, “‘Succeeding Against the Odds.’ I would choose that title because life for me was not easy growing up and there were many challenges that I had to endure. Despite that, I'm still standing, pushing forward and preserving, which is what I encourage students to do as well. Throughout the many struggles that I had to face I was still able to ‘succeed against the odds.’ Each chapter would go into depth about the various things that I had to endure and how I overcame them.”

"For my ninth graders who are coming in with me, I will say that being organized is very important as it indicates that they are engaged in the class sessions. Making sure they ask many questions, there is no such thing as a stupid question. If you don't understand anything, you ask. If nobody is asking questions, you are accountable for yourself, that's why the teacher is there. Don't wait until the end of class to figure it out when the teacher is not there, go ask questions. Even if you don't understand something, just try your best to get through it. I will also say that students have the opportunity to retake some assessments as long as the teacher agrees. Become involved, come to school every day and engage in class lessons without having an excuse. For 12th graders, make sure you're on top of your grades, as it is your last year. Furthermore, make sure that you are actively visiting colleges and taking advantage of virtual tours. If you're not going to school right away but, you're going into some type of career, whatever training it takes such as doing the ASVAB, if a student is going to the military. If you are looking into some tech program where you can get some additional skills, just leave out of Largo being prepared. That is what I want for my 12th graders. When they get to college, I don't want them to say, ‘Aw man, this math class is too hard, because I wasn't prepared as I thought I was.’ This is the last year, pay attention, don't get senior-itis as it isn't the time to feel like it. We need you to stay focused so, in that way you can end this year successfully with the highest grades you can receive. Also, this should be the time for everyone filling out their FAFSA form and that it is done correctly. Choose something that you are passionate about. This is your last year, so enjoy it. High school is something you can never get back. Enjoy your last year but still be productive. Furthermore, be prepared for what we call the *real world*."

Inside the Den News greatly enjoyed getting to know the new principal and are thrilled to see what else she has in store for Largo. She gave a front row seat into her new role and her journey as she was welcomed into the Largo High School community. She definitely has much to offer. Thank you Mrs. Ford and welcome to Largo High School!

*Article written by: Nya Epps, Khalil Johnson, Quinn Kennedy, Jacqueline Rosales-Lara, Tieshon Nash-Campbell*

## ***NURSE SPENCER'S TAKE ON COVID-19***

Coronavirus is still taking the world by storm, especially for the students and the staff of Prince George's County. In an interview with Largo High School's nurse, Nurse Isha Spencer, she discussed a variety of ways to stay safe and healthy during these hard times.

Nurse Spencer expressed how she felt so far during the pandemic. As it has done with many people, the pandemic helped her connect to her family more and later realized she would be a good housewife. During the interview, she said that has put all her faith and trust in the decision the school officials make in the future. She also added that there is a time for everything. Nurse Spencer's advice to staff

and students during this time was “don't hesitate, do what you love and what makes you happy but stay safe and just trust the process.” When asked about the coronavirus vaccine she didn't have an opinion on it, but she feels the vaccine is going to work, but she believes it's all in God's hands and the experts.

Nurse Spencer encourages everyone to follow the guidelines to stay safe during this pandemic. Staying safe includes washing your hands, social distancing, and wearing your mask while out around people. Remember, stress and panic will not end this pandemic, but staying informed on safety guidelines and practices will lower our numbers.

*Article written by: Awa Coulibaly, Dakota Hawkins, Kimela Manuel, Sadiq Sanni*



-THE DIGITAL NEWSPAPER-



## QUARANTINE SPORTS LIFE

### HOW HAS QUARANTINE IMPACTED SPORTS?

Largo sports have been phenomenal throughout these years. From the basketball team to even golf. However, since the disease came about it has been making it quite hard to do this and that and it is sad.

Sports can literally be the only way people have, and the fact they cannot play sports means they have to rethink a way to get into college to at least try out for a sport. The Largo High School football team has not always been that good. They have not made it to the playoffs since before my 9th grade year. Its football team has not always been good. They have struggles. Especially JV, V had struggles 9th grade year but 10th and 11th grade year we made it but lost in the first round. Basketball however is different.

Largo High School basketball team record shows that they have been an outstanding team thus far into my four years of attending this Largo High School. Both girls and boys. Last year girls' varsity went to regionals, but they lost. The boys on the other hand made it to the regionals but lost in the second round. The JV teams were good for some of them being there for the first time. Now the track team was phenomenal.

Girls track team won states last year for indoor track, but for outdoor track they lost, sadly. As for boys' indoor track made it to regionals but placed 2nd, and outdoor track went to regionals and lost yet again. Sports means everything to certain people. So just the thought of them getting 2nd some may feel defeated and sad while others may just feel nothing.

While being quarantined the school board should figure out a way for players to still be scouted. Most kids struggle right now with probably staying out the streets, and sports was their way out. you never know what someone is going through. If the hope of the students that a safe way to manage sports will be found within the next few weeks.

*Article written by: Tamaia Fogle, Alexia Hackett, Joseph Kanu*



## LARGO & THE COMMUNITY

### AMAZING THINGS TO COME

The Largo High School community is trying to forge a memorable 2020 - 2021 school year through the unfortunate Virtual Learning Dilemma.

Senior class is planning to have their very own twist on Family Feud. Turn in your money for senior package dues so you're able to pick what package you want and seniors put your best face forward because it's about that time for senior photos.

Donations for canned goods, coats, hats and gloves for the homeless shelter will begin.

Junior Class Administrator and the rest of the Largo Staff came to a decision about the next steps in ensuring staff members safety by basing everything off CDC, from Maryland and Medical Officials. Soaring academic achievement is the goal for this school year!

Junior Class has many exciting things awaiting them throughout the course of this school year. Do not be

disappointed class, there're eventful fun moments coming up in May for Rising Senior Week.

If the events are possibly virtual, the Junior Class still won't miss out because Junior Admin is pulling out all the stops to make this year memorable. Junior Admin is keeping everything under wraps because they want it to be a surprise for the Class of 2022 students. Junior class also has surprises for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year (being dedicated to the class of 2022 Senior Class).

The Junior Class will be holding a Class Fundraiser this month, and also there will be an Honor Roll celebration, to show appreciation for the Junior students who put in their hard work to earn honor roll and principal's honor roll.

*Want more information about your class? Administrator contact information will be on page 6.*

# WAS TRUMP HAVING COVID A HOAX: AN OPINION PIECE FROM INSIDE THE DEN

## TRUMP CLAIMED TO BE DIAGNOSED WITH COVID

On October 10th, 2020 President Donald Trump was diagnosed with the coronavirus. Trump was taken to Walter Reed Medical Center, but suddenly left the hospital disregarding his doctor's orders.

In our opinion, President Trump was not telling the truth about contracting Coronavirus. We believe that President Trump had the coronavirus, but the White House staff as well as his doctors are lying about the timeline in which he contracted it. There have been countless clues that he does have it, for example when he was standing on a balcony he could be seen practically gasping for air.

Some people believe he wanted sympathy votes, people to feel bad for him, or even make them think there is no coronavirus. President Trump has repeatedly criticized people and spread false information about wearing masks and what United States citizens should do to protect themselves along with others. An example of when President Trump spread misinformation is when he stated "if you drink bleach maybe it would kill the virus." President Trump is exhibiting this behavior, for he handled the Coronavirus frivolously from when he was first made aware of the virus.

We believe that President Trump had the coronavirus. We do think he is denying how he contracted the coronavirus in order to get every vote he can, and maintain a façade that he is in good health, and that everything regarding the Coronavirus will cease.

*Calefati, Jessica. "Fact-check: Did Trump tell people to drink bleach to kill the coronavirus?" statesman.com, Politifact, 13 July 2020, <https://www.statesman.com/news/20200713/fact-check-did-trump-tell-people-to-drink-bleach-to-kill-coronavirus>. Accessed 28 10 2020.*

## **NETFLIX RELEASED THE DOCUMENTARY, "AMERICAN MURDER: THE FAMILY NEXT DOOR." CRIME FILM ABOUT THE WATTS FAMILY MURDERS RISE TO THE "TOP 5" MOST WATCHED MOVIES TODAY.**

A REVIEW OF A NETFLIX CRIME DOCUMENTARY

In the early morning hours of August 13, 2018, in Frederick, Colorado, US, Christopher Lee Watts admitted to killing his two daughters and his pregnant wife. Before admitting to these evil deeds, this story takes a lot of twists and turns. This documentary uses firsthand footage to examine these twists and turns and how they lead to the disappearance of Shanann Watts and her children.

The true crime documentary, American Murder: The Family Next Door, is the latest Netflix sensation.

The true crime documentary, American Murder: The Family Next Door, is the latest Netflix sensation. The documentary reveals the story behind Chris Watts killing his wife and two daughters. Fans are hoping that this documentary digs deep into the case. Some consider the case "unique in its savagery". Chris Watts confessed to the murder of his wife, Shanann Cathryn Watts, and their two daughters, Bella and Celeste, on the morning of August. 13, 2018. The documentary consists of assembled archival footage, including his slain wife's social Christopher Lee Watts who admitted to the murdering of his pregnant wife by strangulation and the killing their daughters, by

smothering them in a blanket was pleaded guilty to multiple counts of first degree murder as part of a plea deal. when the death penalty was removed from sentencing, he was sentenced to five life sentences without the possibility of parole, three to be served consequently and two to be served concurrently.

Social media posts, body-cam recordings, and police interrogation tapes. Rather than focus on Mr. Watts, the story focuses on the victims. Since, his wife often recorded her children and herself, there will be footage that will show what she put on her social media before her death. Shanann used social media for personal and professional updates. These updates promoted her work with Le-Vel and its Thrive brand wellness products with her own personal story. In these stories, she describes Chris as a seemingly perfect husband and father. What drove this man of high regards to turn into a monster responsible for killing people closest to him? Watch The American Murder: The Family Next Door on Netflix to find out.

*Article written by: JaJuan Hall, Kevin Hinton, Veronica Landers, Petra Okoye*



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## **LARGO & THE COMMUNITY**

### ***AMAZING THINGS TO COME***

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