



The NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



Volume 14, Issue 01

January 2021

Welcome to the January 2021 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by the FYC. For this issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC were asked “What do you hope 2021 will be like?” This topic allowed members to share their thoughts on their hope for 2021. We hope you will take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to learn about our experiences and enjoy our thoughts and opinions in this edition of *The Noodle*!

Believe in your self!!

Current Members:

John Baldino
Shevie Barnes
Derek Carraway
Alexander Gonzalez
Leah Gorman
JJ Humphrey
Josh Tapia
Christina Waldron
Serena Wetmore
Brandon White
Niki Germain - FYC
Youth Advisor



2021

HAPPY NEW YEAR



My Hopes for 2021

This year has been a roller coaster, so I am looking forward to a fresh start in 2021. More than anything I am looking forward to going back to school with actual classmates who are not behind a screen. I love having lunch with my friends after class, even going to hang out at a restaurant like a typical college student. I want to get back into student government so I can participate in enacting changes on campus that affect me and others with disabilities. I miss the friends that work there in the library, security, and all over the campus.

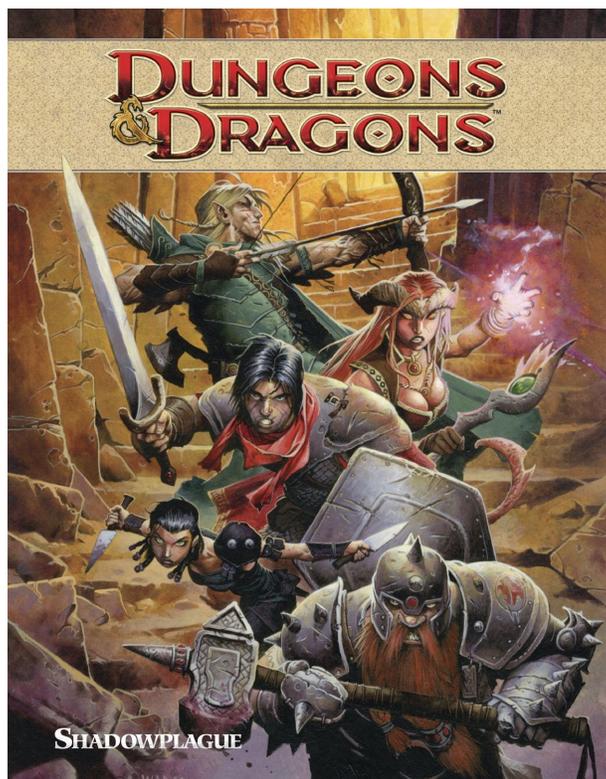
I look forward to going to the mall with my friends, trying on new clothes, and browsing through the crystals in my favorite store to add to my collection. I want to try all the virtual reality experiences in the kiosk “ride” at the mall. Maybe my favorite restaurant will open again in the food court!

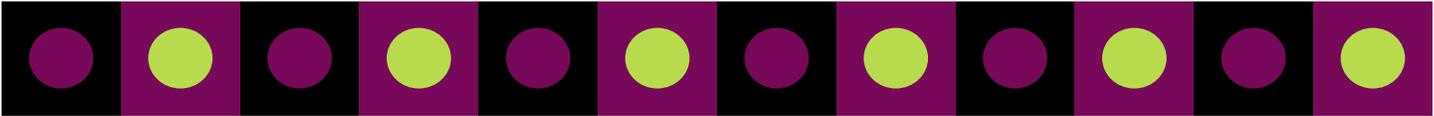
One activity I’ve fallen in love with is playing table-top games, like Dungeons & Dragons and World of Darkness. I want to make this something that is a recurring event at my house when I can have people over more often. It’s a nice escape from daily stresses through role-playing the characters.

I want to go to theme parks again. The Wizarding World is missing this Hufflepuff! Chewbacca is missing his co-pilot! Or at least I like to think so Going to theme parks is always an experience: convincing the staff to let me go on the rides, navigating the crowds with my wheelchair, finding the proper disabled entrances. But that’s just a typical day at the park for me and I can’t wait!

To close out this year, I just want to say Thank You to all the scientists and healthcare workers who are helping us through this year and heading back to normal. Stay safe everyone!

By Serena Wetmore





Looking Forward to 2021

Thank goodness 2020 is over. I'd be willing to bet a lot of people are muttering those words. 2020 wasn't really all that bad for me though. Despite the ongoing pandemic, I still managed to get married and buy a house. So what am I looking forward to in 2021? It's honestly hard to pinpoint one thing at the moment. I guess I could say that I'm just looking forward to some things hopefully being able to go back to normal; such things as being able to gather in large crowds without fear. An example of this in 2021 would be that I'm looking forward to resuming The Annual Family Café conference and our FYC Youth Summit back in-person as it should be and always has been. Under the circumstances, I'm glad technology allowed us to hold virtual versions of both, but it was a lot harder in my opinion due to getting our pre-recorded sessions just right for publishing. I'm also looking forward to the FYC members hopefully (fingers crossed – please Lori LOL) being able to have a face-to-face meeting in 2021 before The Annual Family Café and the Summit are held in the summer. I'm also interested to see how much longer my job lets me continue this wonderful ride of being able to work remotely from home in 2021. I love it, and it and being able to do it saves me the daily stress of dealing with public transportation I had pre-pandemic. These are just a few thoughts on why I'm looking forward to 2021!

By Derek Carraway

Hoping for a COVID-free 2021

What will 2021 be like? It is a tough question because predictions for next year depend mostly on what happens with the COVID-19 pandemic. On New Year's Eve, I will stay up to midnight and watch the ball drop for 2021. At that point, we will have a new year with new feelings, experiences, and events, but what we do will be influenced by the virus.

Right now, the COVID-19 pandemic is worse than ever. In fact, the place where I work has shut down for the rest of the year. Hopefully things will get better in 2021. If they do, fewer people will be sick and we will have fewer deaths. Places that are closed will open up. People will be able to work again and the economy will prosper once more. We will still need to be very careful and wear masks if we go out. We will have to keep our distance and keep washing our hands. These

precautions will remain, but there is hope and it is called a VACCINE!

Once the vaccine is available to everyone, we may be able to move around more freely. The vaccine could come as early as spring for me, but maybe as late as August. I want this pandemic to end so I can get back to work, go out to restaurants, play pool with my friends, and not worry about getting sick.

So, let's all keep our masks on and make sure we follow the proper guidelines so the pandemic will end in 2021!

By John Howard

Here Comes 2021

Considering how 2020 went for all of us, no matter what 2021 will be great. But sometime in 2021 I plan on getting my own place to live and maybe a new car, because my current car isn't doing the best. But that's only if it is the right time, so I'll have to feel out the year and make the right choice, but I'll most likely get a Hyundai Veloster because they look cool. I also plan on going to college or a technical school to become a firefighter/EMT, and if that doesn't seem to work out due to my vision I want to work on boats for a living. Either will be a great career that I'm ready for, however I still have so much to learn about both. Starting a new chapter in my life is something that's scary but I'm excited for it, and moving up to Tallahassee was a big step in the right direction that will shape my future for the better. I think the one thing I'm most excited for is The Annual Family Café event due to the fact that I get to meet countless people and hear their stories. Doing the event online was cool but going in person is just a whole different ballgame that I love to be a part of. It's just one of those things that you need to experience because no matter what it'll impact your life in ways you could never think of.

By Brandon White





How Do I Become Part of The Florida Youth Council?

The Florida Youth Council is a group of youth (between the ages of 15 and 17) and emerging leaders (between the ages of 18 and 30) with disabilities or special health care needs that live in Florida.

The Florida Youth Council is all about getting youth and emerging leaders involved in self-advocacy, peer mentoring and other activities that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging leaders with disabilities in Florida. The program empowers youth and emerging leaders to decide what issues are important to their generation, to discuss those issues in their state and local communities, and to develop strategies to address them.

We are seeking a group of enthusiastic, motivated youth and emerging leaders to participate. If you would like to take a leadership role in advocating for youth and emerging leaders in Florida, please visit The Florida Youth Council website at www.floridayouthcouncil.com. The program is open to application year round. We hope to hear from you soon!



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