

PPAS Voice

Celebrating diversity, promoting unity

Taking Our Next Shot at Beating the Pandemic

By: Tanya Jaffe

About 26 million people have received their first Covid-19 vaccination shot as of late January, leaving almost six million being fully vaccinated, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. As more Americans are getting vaccinated, many still have their doubts.

In order to defeat the coronavirus in the U.S., at least 75% of Americans need to get both shots in order to reach herd immunity, said Anthony Fauci, the chief medical advisor to the president. While about 50% of Americans said they would get vaccinated in a poll last summer, that number has risen to about 60%-70%, a New York Times poll conducted in October and November showed. Vaccine distribution is different in every state. In New York, health-care workers, residents of group homes and homeless shelters, people over the age of 65, grocery-store workers, first responders,



Jacob Javits Center vaccination hub.

Brendan McDermid, Reuters

transit workers, corrections officers, and P-12 teachers have been granted access to vaccines. The general public is expected to be eligible to receive the vaccine this summer, city officials say. To learn more about vaccine distribution in New York, [click here](#). The coronavirus vaccines are different from conventional ones, which are administered by injecting a weakened or

killed version of a pathogen, initiating an immune response. The germ is recognized as foreign, and the immune system creates antibodies to combat it, making the person immune. But conventional vaccines, which generally take a lot longer to develop and produce, would leave people at risk of contracting the coronavirus. Instead, these new shots are so-called mRNA vaccines,

in which messenger RNA instructs human cells to create the spike protein found on the surface of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19. The immune response is triggered and antibodies against the virus are produced. Pfizer's and Moderna's vaccines are made with synthetic mRNA.

After receiving a second shot, a person develops immunity to the coronavirus in 10-15 days, Dr. Fauci said. Still, it is recommended that they continue to wear masks and practice social distancing until herd immunity is achieved.

Scientists say they don't know if vaccinated people can still transmit Covid-19 to non-vaccinated people. This is why getting vaccinated is so important. Large-scale vaccination is the only way to truly protect ourselves and others from coronavirus.



MAYOR'S RACE HEATS UP WITH YANG ENTRY

By: Ellis Rubin

This article is the first in a series about the upcoming mayoral race in NYC.

After a contentious 2020 presidential election, an equally bitter one is in the making in 2021. Except this time, candidates aren't vying for control of the country, but of New York City. Due to term limits, Mayor Bill de Blasio cannot seek a third term, leaving the door wide open for a new leader to emerge.

Among the top contenders are Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, City Comptroller Scott Stringer, civil rights activist and for-



Photo by Michael M. Santiago/Getty Images

mer de Blasio counsel Maya Wiley, and former Citigroup executive Raymond J.

McGuire. One candidate, however, has led in polling even before announcing his

run. Introducing: Andrew Yang. Yang, a former tech mogul and non-profit founder, quickly rose to national fame while running to be last year's Democratic presidential nominee. His outsider campaign centered around establishing a universal basic income (UBI) program, meaning every American would receive \$1,000 from the government each month to spend however they see fit.

The politically diverse "Yang Gang", an umbrella term for all of Yang's supporters, helped his campaign survive

(Continued on page 3)

Meal Prep and How it Can Help You Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle

By: Shannon Donohue

Meal prep can often seem intimidating, but with strategic planning and a bit of time on the weekend (or any day really where you have a little extra time), you can make your week considerably easier and healthier.

Most weekdays you are likely to eat a simple breakfast like cereal, a quick sandwich for lunch, whatever your family is having for dinner, and some snacks throughout the day. This is generally fine. However, it can often lead to eating ultra-processed foods like potato chips and cookies. Not only is this unhealthy, as these foods contain an excess of carbohydrates, fats (which are necessary to eat throughout your day but an excess can cause harm), and sugar (fine to eat in moderation but can also inflict harm), they additionally

do not have a lot of fiber or protein and consequently do not make you feel satisfied or full for very long.

With meal prep, you can have delicious meals that you made during the weekend that take two minutes to heat up. Your snacks are also covered in addition to your meals. Instead of having potato chips and cookies, grab a bag of sliced apple and peanut butter that you had prepared during the weekend.

With the age of technology, recipes are at your fingertips and do not require a degree in the culinary arts to make. Try having a homemade blueberry muffin (link to the recipe at the bottom) for a snack. For breakfast attempt making some low-carb high-protein pancakes (link to the recipe at the bottom). These can be made either on the weekend to be heated in



the microwave when you want them, or you can premix the batter and cook a few up in the morning. It's a delicious, easy, and healthy alternative.

Meal prep also decreases your stress load during the week, as you don't have to worry about

what to cook and therefore have more time for other activities. Meal prep is a great tool to have that anyone can profit from.

[Healthy Blueberry Muffins](#)

[Low Carb Protein Pancakes](#)

PHOTOGRAPHY: Home

By: Graydon Yosowitz



Chloroform

By: John Powers

Masked beneath iconic outfits, the emotional COVID-19 tribute on the National Mall, and the moving diversity of Kamala Harris becoming Vice-President, lies a deep problem. Washington is back.

January 20th, 2021 will represent a day in history where normalcy returned and an administration once again cared about bringing the American people together, not tearing them apart. Joe Biden seems to be the sugar cookie cutter type of person who we need in office right now. He is a charismatic old gentleman who says he will strive to get Republicans and Democrats to work together again and to cool down America's temperature.

Combined with the pomp and circumstance of an inauguration and a powerless Donald Trump leaving office, one may not think about where our country is going in the next four years. While Biden has signed executive orders that turn back the clock to the Obama administration and is acutely focused on COVID-19, major policy goals for the next four years remain uncertain. Admittedly, Biden has an ex-

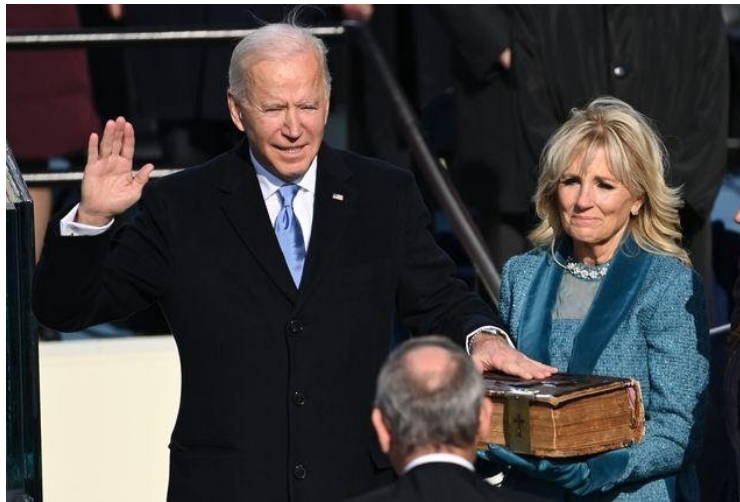


Photo by Saul Loeb, Associated Press

cellent campaign website with bold policy ideas that are often overshadowed by mainstream, woke progressives, but there is still a need for intense scrutiny regarding what is on Biden's website versus what he will actually do.

For example, Biden won the Democratic primary with a public option healthcare plan, yet he has not talked about it much since beating Bernie Sanders to a pulp in the spring. Stimulus checks are another example. Despite the fact that two Democrats were elected in ruby-red Georgia on the promise of \$2,000 stim-

ulus checks, Biden has proposed \$1,400 stimulus checks to account for the \$600 relief Americans received earlier. Heaven forbid that struggling Americans get a little bit of extra money.

However, as Biden reportedly once said to a group of wealthy donors, "nothing will fundamentally change." President Biden is right! No amount of sweet grandpa speeches and Obama-style rhetoric will change the fact that our political system is infected with donors, lobbyists, the military industrial complex, and more. With the bar set astronomically low

after a lunatic, vile human being reigned over the country for four years, we can thank President Biden for the executive orders he signed, which include getting America back into the Paris climate accord, protecting LGBTQ+ Americans, stopping the Keystone XL pipeline, among other good changes.

However, it would be a grave danger to enable Biden's rhetorical chloroform to politically euthanize Americans. This is a mistake Obama supporters made in 2009. Their lack of scrutiny allowed Obama and the neoliberal establishment to give massive handouts to Wall Street while economic inequality grew and middle America suffered. These symptoms clearly led to the election of Donald Trump.

If Americans want to avoid Trumpism, it's time to be skeptical and demanding of our leaders. While Washington may be back and the corporate media may fawn over Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, know that together, Americans can push for decent, yet marginal change.

MAYOR'S RACE

By: Ellis Rubin

(Continued from page 1)

through the New Hampshire primary, after which he dropped out. Soon after, Yang endorsed future president Joe Biden and became a campaign surrogate for him in Pennsylvania.

After Biden won, Yang temporarily moved his family to Georgia to help Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock win their Senate run-off elections, giving Democrats control of the Senate. Since announcing his mayoral candidacy in January, Yang's been off to a

strong start, picking up endorsements from recently elected congressman Ritchie Torres and the son of Martin Luther King Jr., Martin Luther King III. Moreover, he's raised enough money to access the city's eight-to-one matching funds program, meaning the city will donate eight times the amount of a donation, e.g., a \$10 donation would result in the campaign receiving \$90.

However, the path to Gracie Mansion is far from clear. For one, Yang is not the only one

who's well-financed. Adams leads the fundraising race as of late January, with Stringer close behind. Wiley recently collected enough in donations to qualify for the matching funds program, too. McGuire chose not to participate in the matching funds program, allowing him to have larger individual donations.

This makes sense: McGuire, representing the business community, has a much wealthier donor base, giving him a potential advantage in fundraising. Secondly, Yang

has to repair his out-of-touch image. His opponents have jumped on a comment he made about how hard it is to live with two kids in a two-bedroom apartment. Twitter has blasted him for leaving the city during the pandemic. He's even been ridiculed for not knowing what a bodega is.

If Yang spends his money well and rethinks his marketing, the Yang Gang may make his basic income dreams come true.

SELF-CARE- THE PHYSICAL

By: Clara Young

This is your daily reminder to practice some form of self-care! Before I get ahead of myself, let me introduce myself. My name is Clara Young and I am a senior at PPAS who went to the middle school as well. I would like to start off by saying that I am no expert on self-care but I would like to share my personal experiences as well as some things I find helpful in the hopes that you might find them to be too, or at least be inspired to find out what works for you. Now more than ever, we need to learn how to take care of our minds and bodies in order to practice perseverance.

Today we will be focusing on our bodies and how properly taking care of them can positively impact a given person's intention for the day. Although I complain about having ballet classes six days a week and rehearsals for our spring show "Workshop", dancing with Manhattan Youth Ballet has changed my life for the better.

There have been many experiments conducted that have highlighted the importance of physical activity and how it relates to mental health. According to the [UK Mental Health Foundation](#), "Research has shown that physical activity releases chemicals in your brain that make you feel good - boosting your self-esteem, helping you concentrate as well as sleep, look and feel better." They further suggest that the release of these chemicals (called endorphins) in physical activity can reduce tension and mental fatigue; exercise is a natural energy boost that gives you a sense of achievement and overall focus in life and motivation.

From my own experience, I

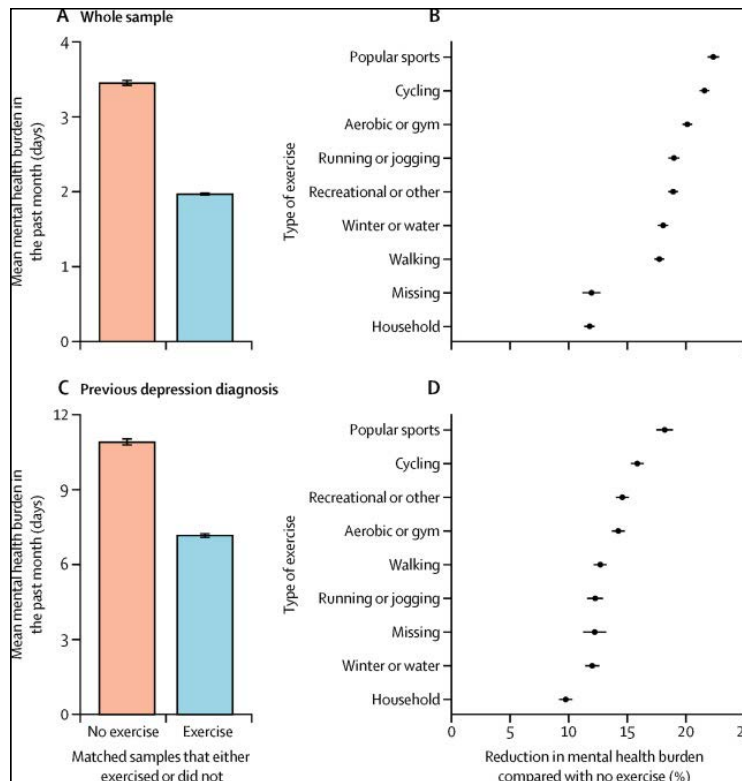
know that if I am having a rough day, ballet instantly lifts my spirits. In forcing myself to focus on something physical for two and a half hours, I find an escape from daily stressors. Am I telling you that you have to exercise for two and a half hours a day? Of course not. "For

then take a bike ride. Remember that you can spread this out during the day, all you have to do is put it into your schedule.

Tell yourself good things while you're working out! It is easy to get overwhelmed or let exhaustion and self-deprecating thoughts take

or "Dance it like yourself!" One can get so caught up in replicating what someone else is doing that they lose sight of how special their own uniqueness is and end up diminishing all that they can bring to the table.

Okay, I know that was a lot. Here are the major points:



The graphs on the left show the correlation between depression diagnosis and exercise. The graphs on the right illustrate the reduction in mental health burden compared to exercise and other activities. Originally published in *Lancet Psychiatry*. Via [Researchgate](#)

adults (19-64 years), aim to do at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity five times a week. For children and young people (5-18 years), a minimum of 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous activity is recommended" mentalhralth.org suggests.

My request for you is: find your ballet. What can you personally do every single day for your body? If I wasn't taking ballet classes regularly, perhaps I would do 15 minutes of a yoga video, take a break, go on a walk, and

over your experience.

Since, happiness can come and go in waves, I like to create it for myself! It may sound dumb, but finding things to tell yourself while you're working out can help if you are being especially judgmental. Telling yourself phrases that ground yourself isn't embarrassing, it is just reaffirming the reality that you can't see because of the state you are in.

For example, sometimes when I'm dancing I like to tell myself "I'm going to dedicate this to myself", "This is easy",

- Physical activity can reduce stress and encourage mental wellness.
- If you're 5-18, you should aim to work out for an hour a day. If you're 19-64, you should shoot for thirty minutes.
- Physical activity can take shape in many forms, do what sounds enjoyable to you!
- You can split up your exercise throughout the day if you make a schedule.
- Be kind to yourself when you are working out.

Thank you so much for reading today's article on self-care. The next article that comes out will focus on strategies for getting work done. It can be hard for many students to complete their work when they are experiencing symptoms of depression and procrastination, and I believe that much can be achieved with simple ideas and fixes. See you then!

~Thank your body for carrying you~



Vaccine Distribution Snags

By: Lucian Zanes

It is no mystery that the United States has a history of failing to control Covid related issues. This week, America's biggest flop is the solution to the problem itself- the vaccine. My little brother is a tier one patient. This means that he is supposed to be among the first to receive the vaccine. We recently opened up an email informing us that he would have to wait a while longer. Quite a while longer. Why is this?

The U.S. had a target of vaccinating 20 million people by the end of 2020, but only reached 16.5 million. There are several issues at hand.

One, the distribution was very poorly conducted. For example, according to BBC, Alabama has administered an average of 3,000 vaccines per 100,000 people, while Alaska has administered an average of 9,000 per 100,000 people. Considering the fact that Alabama has a worse track record with Covid, and more tier 0/1/2 patients, they should have a lot more

vaccines. Unfortunately, the United States has an absurd healthcare system. While other countries were able to start vaccinating in mid fall, the U.S. was waiting several ex-



Long lines, multiple online appointment hubs, and equity issues have plagued the vaccine rollout. Photo by Octavio Jones, Getty Images

tra weeks. The U.S. has a famously complicated system of getting something such as a vaccine up and running. Additionally, a lot of states had different methods of approval.

The second issue is that the vaccine requires two separate

vaccinations that are spaced about one month apart. According to the New York Times, there are multiple accounts of situations where facilities are lacking the sup-

ply necessary to provide the second dose to those in need. These patients cannot wait. They MUST get their second dose within a few weeks to achieve optimal efficacy.

The final issue is the Trump administration. What did we even expect? As our friend

Biden would say, "it's total malarkey." Trump administration officials missed their targets by a substantial amount and publicly downplayed the virus for months on end. They also neglected to provide for states that practically begged for more funding when they were lacking proper supplies to provide the vaccine.

Fortunately, Biden has concrete plans to clean up what was left for him. Sadly, Biden can't just throw money at these facilities and families- he needs to get his plan approved. He is hoping to provide a 25 billion dollar package. It remains to be seen how much funding Biden will be able to get from Congress given the slim Democratic majorities. Good things should be coming in terms of this vaccine. We just needed some cleaning up. Savvy public health figures like Dr. Anthony Fauci expected these issues. Hopefully the Biden administration will be able to clean up.

Call for Contributors

Writers! Poets! Artists! Photographers! Political Junkies!

If you would like to contribute an article, a work of art, a story—please contact thepasvoice@ppasshare.org.

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