

Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers,

Here at *The Tavern*, we try to give you a peek into the life of a boarding school student. The publication has explored issues ranging from politics, ignorance, censorship, religion, and, most recently, relationships. Students have found power in writing about their experiences on a conversational level, and a unique development of ideas has arisen from the cross-regional dialogue.

And yet, in all our effort to illustrate the visible – but often invisible – *condition* of students' lives at these boarding schools, we have not had the opportunity to tackle one very prevalent and necessary point of conversation: mental health.

The focus of much modern discussion and pragmatic programming, mental health often tends to stray into difficult zones of conversation because of two reasons: (1) its historical stigma and (2) its unspoken pertinence in the lives of people from every walk of life. Any conversation about mental health tends to require personal investment (lest the conversation remains a technical one), and this personal investment can easily become too much to bear for students trying to make the most out of any day.

Yet it is so necessary.

While the high-pressure environments available at Massachusetts boarding schools may not be the best setting for a fight against mental illness, more and more students are opening up about their own struggles with mental health, and simultaneously realize others are not willing to talk about their personal and often private stories. *The Tavern* hopes that an open platform to discuss a range of angles of mental health will be a step in the right direction – one that allows students to connect over shared experiences, or potentially one that shines a light on the importance of maintaining an ear for empathy.

At the end of the day, we are all teenagers living together for extended periods of time. Our reality is that every day is a stressful and difficult day, and we all need a place for comfort. A trustworthy and engaging community can spark progress toward a fundamentally better place in which students can meet with counselors without fear of judgment and in which intentional care (and, of course, an urge to smile) pervades the path. With this issue, *The Tavern* hopes to plant the seeds of conversation necessary to create those kind of communities, and we cannot request of you, our beloved readers, anything but your time. And your time means the world when it comes to talking about mental health. As always, thank you for stopping by *The Tavern*, and we hope you enjoy your stay.

Sincerely,
The 1st Editorial Board