Journal of MPH Senior Projects

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Manlius Pebble Hill School

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Edited by

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For Fred Montas

who has guided MPH scholars with wisdom,
wit, and unwavering care for over two decades

TEACHERS' PREFACE

It is with considerable pride that we introduce the inaugural volume of the Journal of MPH Senior Projects. This publication represents a significant development in the academic life of Manlius Pebble Hill School, showcasing the culminating work of the Class of 2025 and marking the evolution of our Senior Capstone program. Now established as a distinct course, the Capstone provides seniors with substantial dedicated time for self-directed inquiry, fostering the autonomy and mastery essential to fulfilling the school's mission: "to inspire our students to think critically, act responsibly, and discover a passion for lifelong learning."

The research papers contained herein are the products of a demanding year-long process. Students navigated the complexities of independent scholarship, managing significant projects amidst the rigors of their final year and the pressures of college applications. A crucial part of this process was the implementation of a comprehensive, multi-layered peer review system. Each student received feedback from multiple perspectives—including fellow seniors, underclassmen, faculty, administrators, and external adults—resulting in approximately 150 reviews generated across the cohort. We extend our sincere gratitude to all reviewers for dedicating their time and expertise; this collaborative critique provided students with invaluable experience in scholarly revision and significantly strengthened the final papers. The perseverance, intellectual curiosity, and agency demonstrated by the students throughout this entire process are commendable.

The breadth and depth of the projects reflect the diverse intellectual passions of our student body, ranging across scientific, historical, cultural, and creative domains. Students also thoughtfully engaged with contemporary tools and challenges, including the disruptive potential of Artificial Intelligence, guided by MPH's philosophies to prioritize authenticity, critical thinking, and human connections. Ultimately, this volume serves as evidence that MPH students, when provided with the structure and freedom for deep exploration, engage earnestly and produce work of impressive quality and insight.

The realization of this Journal was truly a community effort, reflecting the collaborative spirit that defines MPH.

This first volume stands as a testament to the capabilities and dedication of the Class of 2025. The skills honed here—critical thinking, complex problem-solving, resilience, and effective communication—will serve them well as they step into a future marked by rapid change and uncertainty. We wish them every success in their future endeavors. It is our hope that the Journal of MPH Senior Projects will become a lasting tradition, documenting and celebrating the exceptional academic achievements of MPH seniors for years to come. We are exceptionally proud of these students and their contributions to the intellectual life of the school.

Gus Lott, Jason Zencka, Edward Curtis
April 2025
Syracuse, NY



Rose Fallon, *What was I made for?*

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