



the NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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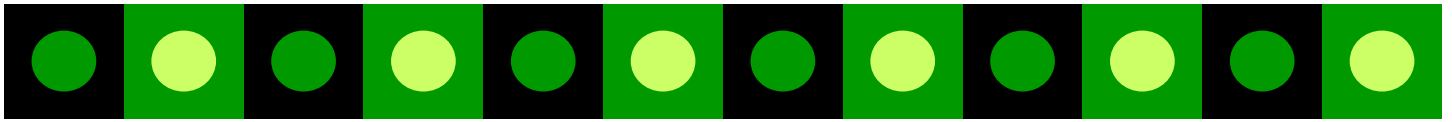
January 2020

Welcome to the January 2020 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by the FYC. For this issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC were asked to respond to the question, “*What are you looking forward to in 2020?*” This topic allowed members to share their thoughts on what they are looking forward to in the new year. 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*!

Current Members:

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





Looking Forward to the New Year

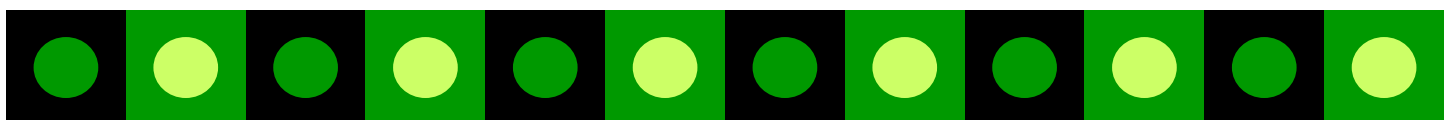
Many people look forward to things in the New Year for many different reasons. As we start 2020, there are a handful of things I could point to. I'd say though the top thing I'm looking forward to is seeing what 2020 holds in store for me and my girlfriend. We've been together for a year now and have been long distance for that whole time. She's got one semester left where she'll be completing her internship and then she'll be done. Once that is done, I'm looking forward to her moving a little closer to me. I've already been praying she will find a job down here once she finishes. We are very serious, I can see a future with this girl and that's why I'm looking forward to what 2020 holds for us.

By Derek Carraway,

Looking Forward to 2020

I'm hoping for a great year because it's my last year in high school. Then, I'm off to the real world, "the endless sea of opportunities." I'm honestly excited for 2020 because it's a fresh start or another chapter in life. I'm looking forward to making memories I will never forget and meeting new people that can change my life and help me on the path I'm taking. I am looking forward to moving out because it sounds amazing, but at the same time it doesn't because I'll have to pay bills. I'm also looking forward to making positive changes in myself so that I can help other people achieve their goals. There are just so many things that can happen in 2020 and my brain hurts trying to think about the endless opportunities that are possible. There are so many things that I'm looking forward to in 2020 that I can't even put it into words.

By Brandon White,

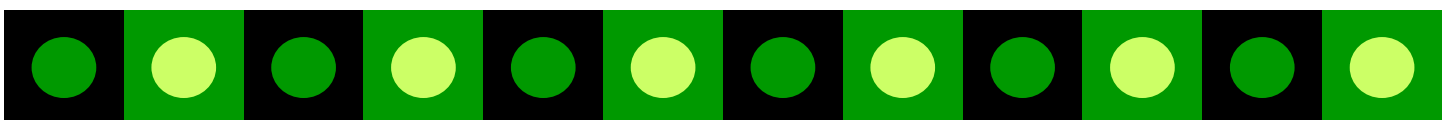




Leadership and Advocacy

One thing I am looking forward to is continuing the hard work for the Florida Youth Council by providing leadership and advocacy. One of the biggest goals that I want to achieve next year is getting a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. It's not going to be an easy road to take, but when is anything simple? I'm thankful for having people around me who support my ventures. There are a plethora of milestones that I want to accomplish but it will take some time to reach them. Graduating from college, getting a decent career with a good paycheck, be financially stable, or finding a girlfriend but most importantly, being spiritually stable. Some of these goals might seem frivolous but they are still valuable. We have to remember that we live in a society where at any age you can be somebody. You can be a police officer, musician, or athlete. You can be whoever you want to be because the only person who can dictate your life is you. As human beings, we stumble and we fall at one point in our lives but, in time, we learn how to pick ourselves back up. Remember you can't be a changed person in 2020 if you continue your old negative addictions in 2019. If you don't like what you see that is right in front of you, then something's got to adjust. Believe in yourself no matter what. Take a deep breath and keep moving forward.

By Alexander Gonzalez





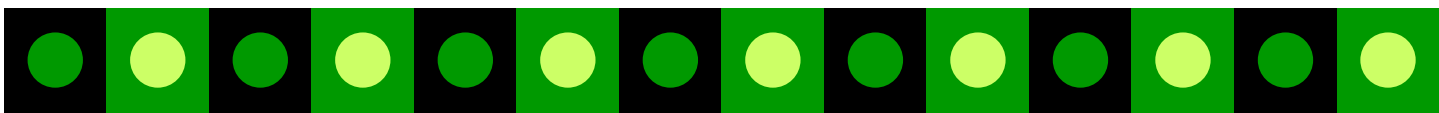
What I hope for in 2020

With all the events in my life in 2019, from finishing my third round of college classes, to my dog dying, the most I can hope for is an uneventful 2020. In 2020, surprise, surprise I will be twenty. That means no longer being a teenager. I'm not sure whether I should be excited about that or not. It means I can't use that excuse, "But Mom, I'm just a teenager," anymore with my parents. I hope that my life won't change much, at least not for a little while.

It is unusually quiet around my house. Last week my very special dog, Dani, passed away. She had been really sick for the last couple months. I've come to realize how much I miss the clip-clop of her paws hitting the tile floor. I miss the way her tail wagged and almost knocked people over. I hope that in 2020, I can come to terms with her passing so I can remember her without being sad.

College has been going well. So far, I've been taking two classes at a time, since I work at a fairly slow pace with my disability. I've been making a lot of new friends and joined student government. I'm hoping that I can help student government with planning Disability Awareness events in 2020, since we started planning that this year. So I guess what I am hoping for in 2020 is a normal year, but knowing how this year went, it probably won't happen next year. But here's to hoping!

By Serena Wetmore



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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