

THETA CHI

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“The conversation about selling the property has been going on for 20 years now — even when I was a student there,” Kutzer said. “But when I was there, there were like 25 guys living in the house, and we were getting a much bigger rent check as a result of that. As the membership has declined, our revenue from the school is declining from the rent check and deposits.”

When Kutzer was elected president of the alumni association in 2021, the group was considering a large fundraising effort to provide for needed renovations. However, Theta Chi’s international leadership advised the association that too much was needed in too short a time.

“It would have amounted to millions of dollars that we did not have,” Kutzer said.

After much debate, the association voted unanimously last July to put the house up for sale for \$175,000.

“While the house was a big part of the chapter’s history, it wasn’t the chapter,” Kutzer said. “And what we care about is the well-being of the chapter, of the fraternity.”

By January 2023, there had been seven showings and a real estate investor had put in an offer for \$100,000, The Campus reported at the time.

However, that investor later retracted their offer, Kutzer said, leaving the Crawford County Drug and Alcohol Executive Commission as the only interested buyer. The CCDEAC planned to use the property for substance abuse recovery programs, but withdrew their own offer in July due to unexpectedly high renovation costs, the Meadville Tribune reported at the time.

It was then that the college stepped in to purchase the property at \$150,000.

The current Theta Chi brothers are also first in line for joint special-interest housing on Loomis Street managed by the college, Kutzer said, adding that there are no plans for the fraternity to purchase or manage another property.

The proceeds from the sale will be reinvested into the chapter, Kutzer said. Though he will be stepping down as president at the end of this month, Kutzer added that both the current brothers and alumni are excited about the future of the organization

“I don’t want anyone to think it’s the end of Theta Chi at Allegheny College,” he said. “We’re still here, we’re going to be just as strong as we were when we lived in that property — in fact, I think we might be a little stronger, now that we don’t have the property holding us back in so many different ways.”



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Sold to the college at the beginning of this month, the Theta Chi house has already been stripped of the Greek letters of the fraternity.

IDEAS

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During the closed session, a student alleged that Smith made transphobic comments, and ASG consolidated power over CILC organizations in response to the allegations, according to the meeting’s minutes and later open sessions.

However, the allegations against Smith were never discussed or corroborated publicly, and ASG later convened a Judicial Review Board to discipline members that had allegedly discussed the closed session with non-ASG students.

Smith did not respond to a request for comment.

Roberson did say that a campus-wide email about the changes within the DEI office would be forthcoming, an email that would “acknowledge” Smith’s departure and a pair of new hires within DEI staff.

New hires

Currently, the IDEAS Center is being led by Interim Director Natalie Brown, who was hired in June to be assistant director under Smith. Brown highlighted her own experience as a self-identifying queer Black woman as playing an “intentional” role in her IDEAS Center programming.

“I want to make sure that I give intentionality to the queer community here, that’s big for me,” Brown said. “That was big before this transition happened and it’s still big with me now. I came out late, and in my college years, I wish I was able to have a safe and brave space to be able to grow in my sexuality and who I am — because college is just that place.”

Brown’s comments came on Friday, Sept. 15 — the first day of Hispanic Heritage Month — and she pointed to a

Hispanic heritage shirt she was wearing as part of steps to proactively support CILC organizations.

“We’re ready, we’re standing behind them,” Brown said. “We are making sure that they are recognized, that they have our full support and I’m there, ready, to make sure to back and promote and guide.”

It’s part of Brown’s overall plan for the center: focusing on empowering student leadership and providing students with the tools to develop and grow.

“You have the space here to figure it out,” Brown said. “There’s no one that’s going to come and intrude, or try to tell you who you are. You have the space, the resources here.”

In addition to Brown, the college has hired Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Dom Turner, who arrived on campus around the time most students did in mid-August. Working out of an office in the Title IX suite in Schultz Hall, Turner’s role is to assist students from historically under-represented backgrounds when they need help.

“The college realizes that students need support,” Turner said. “There are a number of support mechanisms already in place, but there was an understanding that some students have the potential to go unseen or heard.”

A rocky past

Smith’s departure is the third in as many years from the top position within the IDEAS Center — an acronym of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access, and Social Justice. She was preceded in her role by Darnell Tucker during the

2021-2022 school year and Angelica Perez-Johnston from 2018 until 2021.

Speaking broadly, Roberson cited a number of reasons for the turnover rate — professional choices, a desire to get additional academic degrees, or wanting to be closer to family, to name a few.

“Those are realities that we can’t control,” Roberson said. “From my end, what I have been thinking about — especially over the past couple of weeks — is how can Allegheny, but also ODEI, construct a structure for this position to ensure permanence ... to think about constructing a leadership model within the IDEAS Center that will encourage people to stay.”

That solution, she said, has to include space for professional development and a sense of belonging on campus.

For their part, both Brown and Turner see themselves as staying on campus long-term.

“I wanted to really grow here and learn as much as I can, and that don’t happen by just staying a year and bumping,” Brown said. “I wanted to continue, every day, to show up. That don’t look like showing up for a year and leaving. Don’t look like two years. Don’t look like three years. It’s really building up this office.”

Turner feels confident that, together, he and Brown will be able to identify the ways in which the campus community can grow to better support students from minority groups.

“I’m here,” Turner said. “I can’t speak about what has happened in the past, but I have a lot of hope for how we are going to proceed to make this campus more welcoming.”

The next generation

Allegheny has not yet begun the process of looking for Smith’s replacement, pending a discussion on how and when to go about the process, Roberson said. In the meantime, she said Brown has her full support and confidence.

“I have to make certain that Natalie has the support that she means in order to thrive,” Roberson said. “It’s not about survival. It’s about thriving and supporting our students.”

Turner cited his own experience as the reason for his faith in Allegheny’s future.

“I’ve worked with people from all different types of backgrounds — active-duty military students, students from low-income backgrounds — I went to HBCUs myself as a student, for my undergraduate, master’s and my Ph.D.,” Turner said. “What I can say is that there’s great promise in who we have on the team and the direction that we have under Dean Roberson and under President (Ron) Cole. I can really say that there is a commitment to increasing diversity and to retain students from diverse backgrounds.”

In the long term, Roberson sees her work as extending across campus as part of a goal of “inclusive excellence.”

“It’s not just the IDEAS Center, it’s not just the Jason Diversity Lounge, it’s not just ODEI and Dean Roberson, it is in every major department and area on this campus,” Roberson said. “That’s been some of the work that I’ve been doing, to ensure that the campus is committed to inclusive excellence and really acting on our Statement of Community.”



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Interim Director of the IDEAS Center Natalie Brown works in her office in the IDEAS Center on Thursday, Sept. 21. Brown joined the college in June.

COVID

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“I’m not going to try to be around someone who I know is super sick, or showing symptoms,” Clark said. “Some of the people I was around, I couldn’t prevent that I was with them, or they didn’t even know beforehand.”

Canceled classes, practices and other events are becoming more and more common as students and staff continue to test positive.

Dawson acknowledges this, pointing out that the virus is now something that needs accommodated for in everyday life.



“I think of masking as another tool we have among us to prevent all respiratory diseases from spreading from one person to another.”

“It’s balancing not living in fear and panic, but recognition that now we have another thing that’s going to make all of us sick,” Dawson said. “It’s a juggling act and I think that we forgot that we did this in 2019 with flu and RSV because our focus became so COVID-19 during the past few years, and we went in really deep and now we need to come back out in this broad balance.”

RSV — short for respiratory syncytial virus — results in mild, cold-like symptoms that can be severe in infants and older adults, according to the CDC.

As Dawson points out, there is often

a stigma associated with the virus that causes people to panic as soon as they hear the word “COVID.” Rather than living in fear of getting sick, students are being urged to take a proactive approach in practicing healthy habits to ward off sickness.

Kat Pointer, ’25, recently tested positive for COVID-19 and shared how she has taken measures to remain cautious.

“I’m going to quarantine for about five days, and if I test negative, then I’ll go back to class,” Pointer said.

As a third-year, Pointer is in the first class that entered college under both mask and vaccine mandates.

When it comes to wearing masks, Pointer supports this preventive measure, especially for those who test positive.

“If I see someone in a mask it’s not something that’s going to raise a concern to me,” Pointer said. “But it’s also like if you’re going out and not wearing a mask when you’re very clearly positive

— which I know for a fact people have been doing — it’s not okay in my eyes. That’s how it starts, and that’s how it gets worse.”

Zane Devlin, ’26, recalls in the height of the virus’s spread, many organizations took an active role in stopping the spread by often providing free masks and rapid testing.

“I think it would be cool if we had even just, like, a pop-up stand or one of those trucks come out and they could do the rapid tests,” Devlin said. “I think people should be concerned about COVID. It’s proven to be a pretty dangerous disease.”

Masking to avoid the virus has become common to the U.S. in recent years in light of the mandates following the outbreak in 2020. There was some pushback against mandatory masking, and today it remains somewhat controversial.

“I think of masking as another tool we have among us to prevent all respira-

tory diseases from spreading from one person to another,” Dawson said.

She pointed out that in many countries, particularly those in Southeast Asia, people were masking well before the pandemic to protect against diseases and air pollution.

Masking, social distancing and overall hygiene are just some of the preventive measures students have to keep healthy through the incoming season.

As of right now, the general consensus among students seems to be not too fearful of COVID-19.

For now, the college is sticking to the CDC’s recommended guidelines, which students can use to reduce their risk of getting sick.

“The beautiful thing is, we’re almost four years now into COVID life,” Dawson said. “Basically, the world population has some form of immunity, which is helping with reducing cases, hospitalizations and death.”

—BECKY DAWSON
Global Health Studies Professor
Allegheny College

WI-FIBER

Since its founding in 2015, most of Wi-Fiber’s projects have centered around city infrastructure. On its website, Wi-Fiber lists previous network infrastructure projects in Arlington, Virginia, and Las Vegas, Nevada, as examples of the company’s success.

Even though Wi-Fiber says it also serves college campuses, no college clients are listed on Wi-Fiber’s website.

For a comparison, the college’s previous network provider, Apogee, has over 20 years of experience exclusively serving colleges and universities. Apogee’s website says the company currently serves over one million students at over 350 colleges and universities across the country.

Goodbye Wi-Fiber

In a Sept. 13, campus-wide email, President Ron Cole, ’87, addressed the college’s replacement of Wi-Fiber with two new companies.

“In summer 2023, we discontinued our relationship with a vendor that was not able to complete the project in a way that would support the infrastructure of a college campus,” Cole said. “They were not able to meet the standards of what is needed for our daily operations and residences. We have since engaged trusted companies that are better able to meet the technical needs of a college community.”

The college opened a contract with Wi-Fiber in spring 2022. Former Chief of Staff Kevin Kovalycsik was in charge of establishing the new network provider, according to Chief Information Officer Katrina Yeung and Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley.

“The decision to work with the vendor (Wi-Fiber) was made by a former administrator that is no longer with the College,” the college wrote in its statement

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this week. “Various options were considered and the former administrator ultimately selected Wi-Fiber.”

Both Yeung and Yeckley say they do not know why the college chose to open a contract with Wi-Fiber. In an Aug. 25, interview with The Campus, they said that responsibility was Kovalycsik’s.

“He was the one that found Wi-Fiber, he was the one that negotiated the contract, he signed it,” Yeung said.

In an Oct. 27, 2022, interview with The Campus, Systems Administrator Doug Tomer said he was involved with the decision-making process to switch to Wi-Fiber in May 2022 to the extent of answering general questions others had about the college’s network and helping to assess the college’s future network goals or needs.

Tomer said he was aware of just two network providers being considered — Wi-Fiber and new proposals from Apogee. He was unsure why the college ended up choosing Wi-Fiber over Apogee.

“That decision was made by senior leadership,” Tomer said on Oct. 27. “I’m not sure what all was considered when they decided to sign with Wi-Fiber.”

Tomer was also unsure which other senior leadership positions were involved with making the decision, other than Kovalycsik.

Kovalycsik left the college in October 2022, according to his LinkedIn profile. The departure was not announced at the time. In July 2023, he was interviewing to be the next director of Matanuska-Susitna College, a community campus of the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Wi-Fiber’s legacy

The consequences of contracting with Wi-Fiber have been far-reaching and have left

the Information Technology team scrambling to pick up the pieces.

Of the 2,276 access points Wi-Fiber installed, only 1,200 were working as of Aug. 25, according to Yeung. Most of those access points had also not been adequately labeled, meaning that IT is unable to see exactly which ones are working and which are not.

“The original company we had in here did not do a great job of labeling, so we see just a generic name on everything and I don’t know where it sits,” Yeung said.

Additionally, a sizable number of access points were not appropriately installed.

“We did a walk of campus late last week and there are access points hanging on a ceiling that are not connected to anything, and they won’t work unless there’s a wire behind them and other randomness like that,” Yeung said on Sept. 7.

Many of the access points need to be replaced to improve coverage across campus, according to Cole.

Further compounding the problems associated with the improper installation of access points is Wi-Fiber’s poor choice of core switch, which Yeung describes as the “brain” of the network.

“The one that we have, it just can’t handle the traffic we’re trying to push through it,” Yeung said. “Wi-Fiber should have known how to adequately purchase something that would handle the traffic we were going to pass through it.”

In his email, Cole said the college is in the process of procuring a better core switch, but that it will take 2 to 4 weeks. Supply chain issues out of the college’s hands are causing the delay, according to Yeung.

Until then, it is likely that the

network will continue sporadically dropping as it gets overloaded with users.

Furthermore, Wi-Fiber never ran fiber-optic cables to Carr Hall and Oddfellows, so both buildings remain unconnected to the rest of the campus network.

“Your guess is as good as mine,” Yeung said in reference to why Wi-Fiber did not install the necessary infrastructure in either of those buildings.

Currently, Yeung and the rest of the IT team are working to determine whether they want to continue using Wi-Fiber’s access points in Carr and Oddfellows or if they should “pivot to something else.” Once they decide, they will be able to call an electrician to install the necessary infrastructure.

In his email, Cole praised IT’s work thus far and explained to the campus community how intense the current problems are.

“They (IT) have gone above and beyond to determine the extent of the problem, and they have found that unfortunately we need to rebuild much of the work and equipment that was installed by the previous vendor as well as complete work that was unfinished,” Cole said.

Slow progress

The switch from Apogee to Wi-Fiber took place around the same time as high rates of student complaints about the Wi-Fi, including slow speeds and the network dropping.

In an Oct. 14, 2021 The Campus article, former Interim Chief Information Officer William Anderson said the college had just signed a contract to replace the fiber-optic plant on campus, which would probably start to be installed during summer 2022.

A year later, in October 2022, Wi-Fiber’s infrastructure was still not ready to use, and the

“They (IT) have gone above and beyond to determine the extent of the problem, and they have found that unfortunately we need to rebuild much of the work and equipment that was installed by the previous vendor as well as complete work that was unfinished.”

—RON COLE
President,
Allegheny College

college’s old-age network infrastructure that Apogee’s network relied upon continued to cause occasional problems.

“We recognize that connectivity issues have caused disruption and appreciate your continued patience as we work to resolve these issues,” an Oct. 26, 2022 campus-wide email said. “Please know that the College is in the process of upgrading and improving the entire campus network infrastructure.”

On Oct. 27, 2022, Tomer told The Campus that, while he could not make any guarantees, he expected Wi-Fiber’s network to be ready for use by the spring 2023 semester. However, by the time the 2022-23 academic year ended, Wi-Fiber’s network still had not been activated, according to Yeung.

Yeung came in as chief information officer on July 5, 2023. A four-day scheduled outage in the final days of July to switch from Wi-Fiber, Apogee, and the legacy Apogee infrastructure to Wi-Fiber’s new infrastructure faced “unexpected challenges” and “unforeseen complications,” and Yeung sent out a campus-wide email on Aug. 14, announcing that Wi-Fiber had been replaced with two new companies.

In an interview with The Campus, she described Wi-Fiber’s work to update the college’s network as “not progressing.”

“Coming in with a new set of eyes, I could clearly see there was a challenge with the working relationship between us and them,” Yeung said. “Ultimately, we got to a point where it just felt like they weren’t prioritizing the work and getting it done in order to have a great plan. So we needed a change.”

When asked, multiple college officials could not explain why the college elected to move from Apogee to Wi-Fiber.

Multiple requests for comment.

THE CAMPUS

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ASG from page 1

“But also be mindful that Hunter has other responsibilities besides ASG.”

The implementation of a bookkeeper is designed to alleviate the workload of managing finance requests. ASG’s club advisor and Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley clarified that the position should be officially filled within one to two weeks.

“There’s a person that’s been identified that’s already here on campus,” Yeckley said. “Within the next two weeks ... we will be able to have that person here. In the meantime, I’m going to be working with Hunter as the bookkeeper.”

In addition to the bookkeeper position, ASG is also looking to find a student to fill the position of co-Director of Student Affairs. The title is usually occupied by two ASG members, Recio-Bremer explained, but currently London Dejarnette, ’24, serves as sole director.

“We’re officially opening that position for the cabinet,” Recio-Bremer said. “So we’re looking for someone that obviously wants to sit on cabinet and work with Student Affairs.”

The session also included discussion of the Food Recovery Network’s partnership with ASG and the unveiling of their collaborative Food Resource Center. The unveiling will take place on

Friday, Sept. 22. Co-Director of Student Affairs London Dejarnette, ’24, explained their position within FRN as well as what the expanded pantry will look like in the coming weeks.

“Along with having a more expanded dry goods pantry, we will also have a community fridge which would be filled in with food that we recover from dining halls,” Dejarnette said. “Essentially food that isn’t being utilized by Aramark, we repack-age and distribute to students for free.”

The implementation of the fridge and expanded pantry comes after discussions last semester regarding food insecurity on campus, where students

criticized the college for dining hall prices and a lack of resources. Meal plans were overhauled at the beginning of this semester to combat the issue, though there are not yet any concrete numbers on the effectiveness of the move.

While this week’s session did not include a guest speaker, Dean for Student Experience Ian Binnington will be present for the General Assembly on Tuesday, Oct. 3, to report on the future of the Caflich Hall site.

The session closed at 8:11 p.m. ASG will reconvene on Tuesday, Sept. 26, at 7:30 p.m. in room CC 301/302.

CRIME BLOTTER

Editor’s Note: The weekly Crime Blotter is compiled using the Daily Crime Log available on the Office of Public Safety’s web page. Crimes reported may still be under investigation.

September 19, 2023
Act 64 (Drugs)
North Village 1B
Referred to Dean

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There's no shame in being a 'Swiftie'

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By EMMA CONTI-WINDLE
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The day before I left for Allegheny, my grandpa stopped by my house for one last hug goodbye before I went on my way. While my mom and dad weren't looking, he slipped me five, perfectly folded \$20 bills and whispered, "Shhh ... just some 'emergency cash'. Don't mention it." I pulled him in for another hug, whispered, "Thank you," and slipped the money into my bag.

At last week's poster sale in the lobby of the campus center, my first dip into that "emergency cash," unexpectedly, was spent on a dorm and life essential; a full sized poster of Taylor Swift.

Some wouldn't classify such a purchase as an emergency or a necessity, and maybe it wasn't. After all, I'm in my third week as a 'broke college student'. I should know better. But \$12.95 for a poster of the artist who changed my life, hanging in the room that signified a huge life change made perfect sense to me.

I suppose that before I am a broke college student, I am a Swiftie. And despite being someone who used to find this classification a bit shameful, I am

now genuinely proud to say so.

It was a huge summer for Swift, and she's not done yet.

It is unlikely that, by now, anyone listening to mainstream music or paying attention to the news cycle would not have heard about Swift's "Eras Tour" which, according to Time Magazine, is expected to span five continents during its run that began in March 2023 and is expected to end in November 2024. The tour is predicted to surpass the \$1 billion mark by March 2024. Her shows—each three hours in length—feature music from 10 studio albums spanning 17 years.

Even more than that, the tour was an opportunity for people to come together and share love, joy and emotion via friendship bracelets and of course, gut-wrenching, heart-fluttering, wound-healing song lyrics, all screaming in unison.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend one of these shows though I can imagine, based on what I've heard from friends and fans across social media, that to experience one would be nothing short of magical.

That being said, Swift embarks on the international leg of her tour later this year. Given the opportunity to ex-

perience that magic, I would more than happily leave the country with nothing but a ticket in my hand and a pair of bejeweled tennis shoes on my feet.

So then, why was such devoted appreciation for such a skilled songwriter and performer, all under the umbrella of the term, 'Swiftie' so shameful to me?

Within my previous circles of musical discussion, it seems that there has always been a rhetoric about Swift that made loving her equivalent to excusing and supporting practices of man-hating, serial-dating and whining, all terms that, in this context, I find interestingly and frustratingly anti-feminist.

Specifically, I recall hearing comments about Swift's personal dating history and how this correlates to the subject matter of her songs.

While it is true that she derives some inspiration from emotionally intense life experiences for her writing, she has done so in a way that is raw, relatable and not uncommon amongst other artists. People write what they know and feel. Both of these things change as life goes on and relationships begin and end.

However, judgements like these—as well as the simple fact that I hadn't found Swift's music to be terribly relat-

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Our experiences shape our interpretation of art, and as a person on Earth, I have had some uncomfortable experiences. Swift's art has helped me navigate them.”

—EMMA CONTI-WINDLE
Class of 2027

able until life threw some curveballs at me in my early teens—made me reluctant to join what seemed like an almost cult-like fanbase.

This is not to say that one would have to endure some sort of struggle that somehow relates to one of Swift's songs in order to enjoy her music, or that being a fan of her music means entry into a cult.

This simply means that our experiences shape our interpretation of art, and as a person on Earth, I have had some uncomfortable experiences. Swift's art has helped me navigate them.

As Swift has matured as both a human and a songwriter, so has her music, and so have her listeners. Her openness and honesty throughout this journey with both herself and her audience, embodies an important aspect of being a Swiftie and being a human; exercising acceptance of the ebbs and flows of personal progress.

Doing this, all while enjoying an upbeat pop anthem, or crying to a brutally honest composition of retrospective heartbreak, I realized, is nothing to be ashamed of.

For me, Swift has transformed big feelings into a sign of strength, mistakes into an opportunity for improvement, and music into a world where even if the volume is turned all the way up, I can somehow, finally, hear myself think. This new perspective is something that everyone, regardless of their music taste, could use.

If this whole journalism thing works out, and by some miracle, I one day get to interview Swift, I know that before anything else, my first words to her will be, simply, "Thank you."

Until then, I have my poster. Thanks, Gramps.

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Words are not enough

*What mental health messaging lacks*

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By SAM HEILMANN
Opinion Editor
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I've noticed recently a kind of messaging that seems unavoidable once you pick up on it. You can find it in your dorm hall, your community spaces, or your Instagram feed, most commonly. But unlike other forms of pervasive messaging, this one isn't all bad.

This kind of messaging isn't political, and it often does not carry with it an agenda, or at least not an aggressive one.

It's far from aggressive, in fact; it's pastel, asymmetrical and soft in style. It's gentle, as the messages are often surrounded by flowers, stars and smiling faces, like a children's sticker book. I'm of course talking about mental health messaging.

Even if you don't engage in the health and wellness side of social media—which is a separate conversation and a rabbit hole in its own way—you've likely seen or heard these gentle messages encouraging you to stop being so hard on yourself, take time for yourself and remember that you're doing amazing where you are, as you are.

And that's wonderful. I'd have to be a true cynic to argue against this kind

of messaging, especially when it pops up as an unexpected light in the void that is social media. It's nice to hear these comforting, Mr. Rogers-esque reminders that everything will be okay. But I do worry about how these sentiments may not go much deeper than face value. From the looks of it, this kind of messaging values aesthetics only, without action alongside it. The reality is that mental health is more complicated than a pastel cartoon lets on.

The reality of mental health is simply not aesthetic. Cases of mental illness, in U.S. adults especially, are not rare. As of 2019-2020, over 50 million Americans were experiencing mental illness on some level, according to Mental Health America.

It makes more sense through the numbers, then, as to why this messaging is so prevalent: a growing number of people who are open about their mental health means a growing market for the mental health "aesthetic," let's call it.

Expressing feelings and acknowledging boundaries isn't just healthy; it's trendy. Scour some clothing and decor brands who market to largely young people and you'll likely find products plastered with a 'love yourself' kind of

messaging.

And that kind of messaging should be spread - just not for a price, or in the name of popularity. Talking openly about healthy mindsets is a long-overdue part of our discourse. It's just that, now, there's an audience to buy this attitude, a kind of social currency that says "I care." Empathy had to be repackaged and sold back to us.

That alone is annoying but certainly not unexpected in America. What is disheartening, though, is how empty this kind of messaging is, given its subject matter.

Mental health is still deeply stigmatized and misunderstood. Part of what makes these messages so appealing is their simplicity—assuming that taking a brief mental health break or a walk outside is enough to alleviate the struggles of mental illness is certainly a comforting thought. But I think it's a truly shallow act to adopt such empathetic ideas without empathetic action.

Now, while these messages don't claim by any means to cure or even alleviate the turmoil that can come with mental illness, I find it fascinating that such light messaging is attached to such a complex issue. We wouldn't talk about bodily and mental autonomy of any other kind in this way. Because mental health can be subtle in the ways it manifests physically, it is often viewed as a fully internal struggle. There is no outlying ailment to cure or to heal, but its invisibility means that the responsibility of taking action often falls on the person affected.

The lightness of these messages suggest to their viewer that it's not hard to change, to make your life and your mind better, on your own. And therein lies the largest issue—mental health action isn't always accomplished alone, and isn't always easy or by any means linear. Messaging that believes the opposite—that you can take charge of your mental wellbeing with a coffee or a hike alone, for example—is not genuine.

It's great to encourage these healthy practices on their own, but it's a slippery slope if we think that this is all it takes to alleviate mental health struggles of any severity in society.

Imagine if the roles were reversed. Messages about physical health telling you to eat well and move and get enough sleep are all great reminders. But these messages don't help a broken bone or chronic pain; to think that they could would be cruel. Conflating physical wellness and physical ailments would make no sense. We would never slap

this same nebulous, pastel Band-Aid on the situation and leave the rest up to the individual.

Aesthetics and the idea of personal initiative can only go so far when it comes to raising any kind of awareness. When it comes to mental health, though, this seems to be the norm. The trendiness of mental wellness is not inherently wrong; it becomes wrong when we assume that the task of caring about mental health ends there.

So I encourage you to reach out to your friends. Ask for help when you need it. Most importantly, though, don't be ashamed when your mental health doesn't fall in line with the aestheticized version. Caring for your mental wellbeing won't always be convenient for others, but just because it isn't aesthetic does not mean it's unimportant.

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health, call the 988 Crisis Line or email wellness@allegheny.edu for on-campus resources.

“

The trendiness of mental wellness is not inherently wrong; it becomes wrong when we assume that the task of caring about mental health ends there.”

—SAM HEILMANN
Class of 2026

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The science of how structures age

Why Allegheny College loses buildings, and what it means for the future

By **ZAYNAB JEBUR**
Science/International Editor
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On Aug. 10th of this year, demolition of Caflich Hall began. The 90-year-old building was used to house upper-classmen and as Allegheny College’s enrollment decreases, there are a lot of empty beds and unoccupied space. That unused space could be used for better purposes, Dean of Student of Life Trae Yeckley said in a January article of The Campus.

Though this is the most recent, Allegheny has torn down buildings in the past. For example, the Wilcox Hall of Science was built in 1892 and served as the central science building with chemistry experiments happening in its basement. But, it was demolished in 1964 after the construction of Carr Hall.

Adel e Poynor, the chair of the Allegheny College Physics department, shared some insight about what happens to

buildings over the years. “It’s all going to depend on what the building is made out of,” Poynor said, “Buildings like the pyramids have been around for thousands of years. Old cathedrals too, those things are made out of stone. So, they are going to last a really long time without changing at all.”

More modern buildings have materials with different strengths and weaknesses.

“Concrete is really strong when you push it together, but it is not very strong when you pull it apart,” Poynor said. “That’s why the rebar is there, it holds in pressure in the ends so the bridge is stronger. If you look back at the concrete things that the Romans made, it all has arches.”

She continues, “An arch does the same thing. It’s very strong from pushing, and not very strong against pulling which is called tension.” Concrete arches, a common feature of Roman architecture, were one of the ways Romans

ensured durability of a structure because all those concrete pieces pushing against one another made the structure last.

Building something and ensuring that it will last for the future depends on using the material correctly. “If you are going to make something out of wood that is not chemically treated, it will rot away a lot quicker,” Poynor said.

Allegheny has also had buildings get destroyed in fires. Culver Hall was erected in 1865 and burned down on Dec. 8. 1882 after a fire broke out. The wood building acted as a dormitory and students were not allowed to cook in it after previous incidents of small fires breaking out according to NW PA Heritage.

Sometimes, buildings are torn down because the systems within the building have become obsolete and it would cost too much to renovate the building to work better in the current age of technology — like Caflich.



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

What was once the site of Caflich Hall is now little more than a pit in the ground — though the dormitory is far from the only building to meet such a fate.

“The thing with that is that the structure is fine but you cannot go in and restructure all the wiring, the wiring that was put in when the building was built is not capable of handling modern means,” Poynor said. “Some of the off-campus housing we have were originally built in the ’40s as single-family dwell-

ings. Back in the ’40s, people took one bath a week, so you would only need a tiny bit of hot water. Now, when we are using them for college students and they are showering daily, they are going to use way more hot water than the houses can handle.”

Some buildings just do not age well because the purpose

they were built for then do not match the needs of the current time, according to Poynor.

“I think the buildings now are trying to serve the needs of now and that maybe in five or ten years we will need something, but it is hard to say what we will need 20 years from now”, she said.

From pandemics to planets

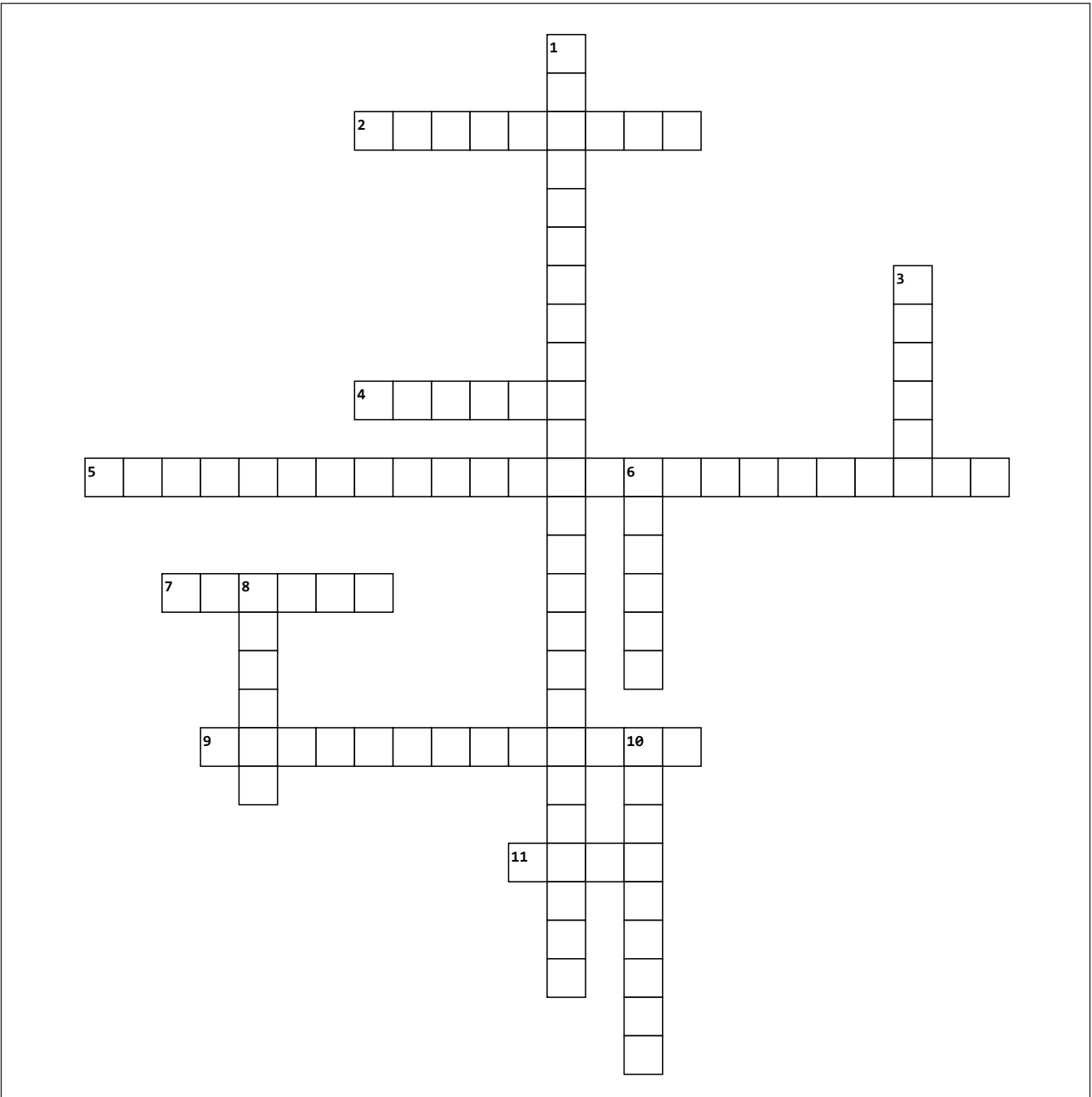
- Across**
- 2. This Mars rover found evidence of flowing water
 - 4. Chair of the Physics department
 - 5. CDC for short (four words)
 - 7. Epidemiologist and professor at Allegheny College
 - 9. People were masking here well before the COVID-19 pandemic (two words)
 - 11. Number of days the CDC recommends quarantining for

- Down**
- 1. RSV for short, particularly dangerous for older adults (three words)
 - 3. Allegheny dormitory that burned down in 1882
 - 6. A scientist in Mexico claims to have found these, but most are skeptical
 - 8. Served as the college’s main science building until 1964
 - 10. This vehicle performed the first controlled extra-terrestrial flight in 2021

Answer Key

Across
2. Curiosity, 4. Poynor, 5. Centers for Disease Control, 7. Dawson, 9. Southeast Asia, 11. five

Down
1. respiratorysyncytialvirus., 3. culver, 6. aliens, 8. Wilcox, 10. Ingenuity



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By **AKIDA NOOHA**
Contributing Writer
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On the eerie night of Friday, Sept. 15, from 9 to 11 p.m., the Allegheny College Ghost Club embarked on a spine-tingling paranormal investigation event at the infamous Arter Hall. Steeped in a history of ghostly tales, this event promised a chilling exploration of the supernatural.

Arter Hall houses the math and history departments, although its basement contains a once-thriving theater that now stands as a silent sentinel of the past. According to the the Ghost Club, the last performance graced its stage in March 2020, leaving it desolate and haunted by the restless spirit of a former student named Alice. Legend has it that failure to greet Alice with a respectful “Hi Alice!” upon entering the theater invites her spectral mischief — hair-pulling and other eerie encounters.

Unveiling the mysteries of Arter Hall

A night with the Allegheny College Ghost Club

As the clock struck 9 p.m., members of the Ghost Club gathered to confront the enigma that was Arter Hall. Armed with cameras, a temperature-recording Ram-pot, an environmental thermometer, and Polaroid camera films, they divided into groups to explore the haunted edifice.

The unsettling odyssey began with the discovery of a mysterious white stain on a wall. In the blink of an eye, it vanished, leaving the investigators perplexed. Proceeding to the tutor station, we encountered a palpable drop in air pressure and a peculiar odor that sent shivers down our spines. However, when we ventured to the hall, it was locked, prompting us to unlock another door. There, a perplexing sight awaited – a small red light on the stage, though nothing was visibly amiss.

As we ventured further, Jane Grabowski, ’24, one of the Ghost Club’s lead investigators, encountered camera

troubles as her device inexplicably refused to focus on certain spots, a phenomenon previously unheard of. According to Grabowski, she barely faced any problems like this before. Daphne Womack, ’27, was unnerved by the eerie closet near the math library, where an ominous pile of items seemed to exude an unsettling aura.

Kaleialoha Froning, ’24, a fellow investigator, bravely whispered the incantation, “Hi Alice,” and was met with a chilling response – the unmistakable sound of Velcro ripping. A planchette session in the seminar room yielded unnerving results, with Reece Smith, ’24, and Grabowski claiming that spirits willing to communicate often interacted with a flashlight.

A sense of discomfort and dizziness gripped the room, unsettling everyone present. Mandy Smith, ’27, attempted to summon the spectral presence using a pendulum, where a back-and-forth swing

indicated a positive response, while a circular motion implied otherwise. In the eerie silence of the dimly lit theater, the planchette procedures unfolded flawlessly, yet the initial attempt yielded no abnormal occurrences with the flashlight. Undeterred, we decided to try again, this time positioning ourselves at the foot of the creaking staircase that led into the heart of the theater. As our hands made contact with the planchette once more, a shiver ran down our spines, and some among us claimed to hear faint, unsettling sounds emanating from within the theater’s depths.

The suspense was palpable, but skepticism still lingered, particularly concerning the pendulum test. Despite our efforts, it failed to convince us of its reliability, leaving us in a state of both fascination and uncertainty. The theater held its secrets tightly, as if daring us to unlock its haunted history. Our quest for the su-



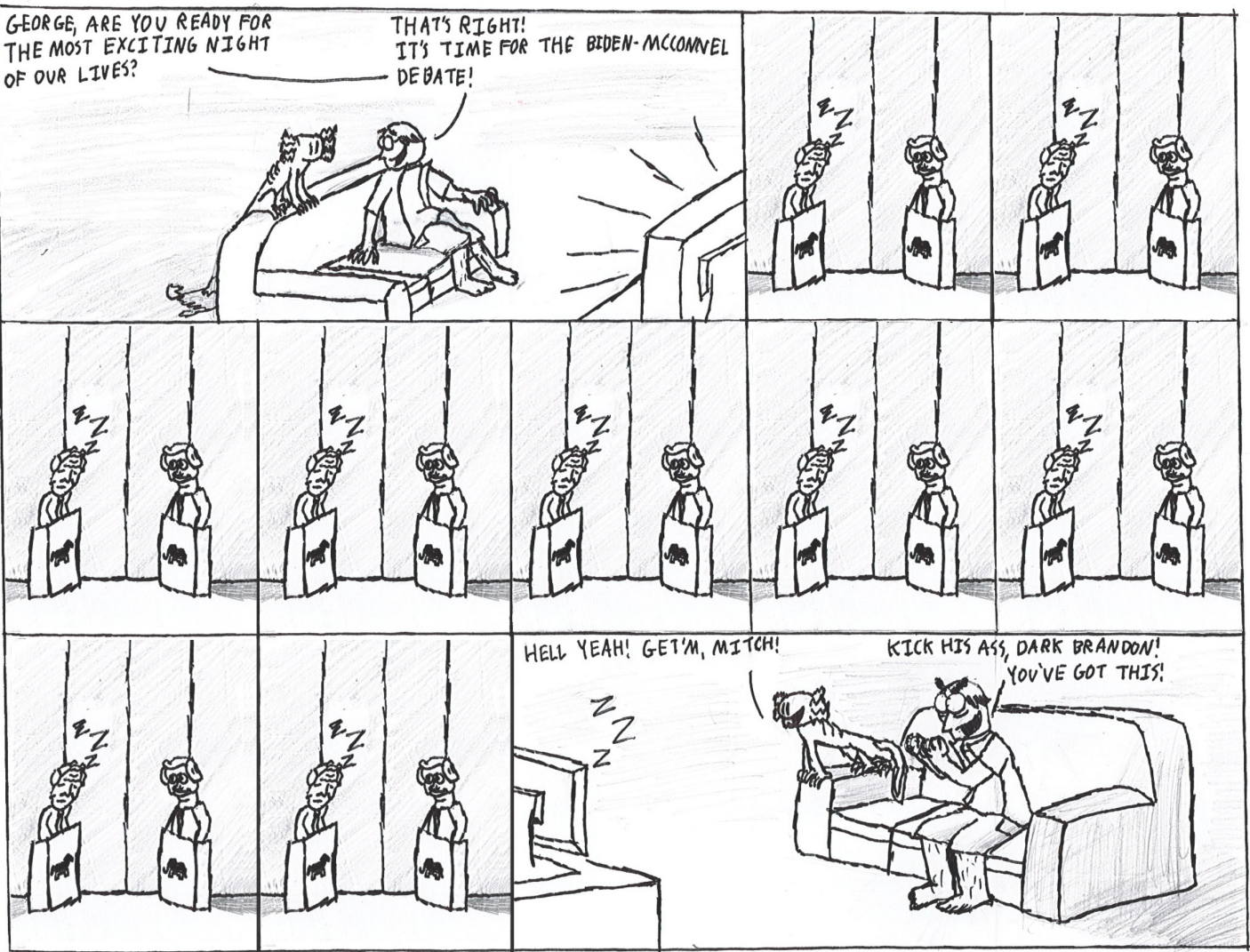
AKIDA NOOHA/THE CAMPUS
The Arter Hall theater is said to house a spirit named “Alice,” who takes offense if you do not say “hi.”

pernatural continued, fueled by equal parts curiosity and trepidation.

The night concluded with more questions than answers. Will Alice’s restless spirit ever return to Arter Hall? The mystery of this haunted theater endures, beckoning daring souls to venture forth and seek the truth behind its ghostly tales. Only time will tell if the Allegheny College Ghost Club’s investigation will shed light on the spectral enigma of Arter Hall or if Alice’s secrets will forever remain locked in the shadows.

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Allegheny senior launches exercise classes in Wise

By **ANDREW CONKLIN**
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Over the summer before her senior year, Ava Loch, ’24, studied through the National Academy of Sports Medicine to acquire her certifications to become a personal trainer, leading to a new responsibility as a course instructor. One course is an introduction to weight training, while the other focuses on interval exercises.

Obtaining certifications through the NASM is no easy task: it requires taking a 23 chapter course to prepare for an exam administered in August.

To balance her coursework, Loch utilized a graph.

“I created a detailed spreadsheet of what materials I needed to study every week to stay on track to take the exam at the end of August,” Loch said. “Though there were a few bumps in the road, I managed to stay on track and pass my exam on time.”

Discussing what sparked

her interest in teaching a course, Loch said that she decided on the goal of getting her certification in the summer of her junior year, reaching out to Assistant Athletic Director for Facilities and Recreation Jared Luteran to inquire if her certification could help her job with Allegheny Recreation in the Wise Center

“The logistics of creating the classes was pretty easy thanks to Jared Luteran,” she said. “He created the posters, the sign-up form, and just helped me with general advice.”

However, there were challenges in her journey teaching these classes.

“It has been a little bit stressful, coming up with the course structure and doing all that up front planning,” Loch said. “I’m thinking as I get more adept at running the classes and the bigger planning pieces are finished, it’ll relax.”

In creating her High Intensity Interval Training course,

she hoped to help students find their place in the gym in a more relaxed environment.

“Everyone has a place in the gym, even though it might not feel like it sometimes,” Loch said. “My vision for the HIIT class was mostly to provide the opportunity for students to do a fun workout without having to plan it on their own. They can just show up, have fun, sweat a little, and get some solid exercise in.”

Her strength training course however, takes a more informative approach to the subject material.

“Because it’s a beginner class, I anticipate having students who maybe have never lifted weights but want to learn,” Loch said. “That course has a double purpose of getting a good workout in, but also building confidence in the gym. Students will learn the different types of equipment, what they can be used for, how to do different exercises, what progressive overload is, those sorts of things. If people want to go

more in-depth and talk about nutrition, recovery, or other aspects of fitness, I am sure we can create the space for that.”

Loch’s HIIT class was the first in the Wise Center for Hanan Hamed ’25. “It was very inclusive and welcoming,” Hamed said. “Ava gave options for people who may have been more advanced vs not, which was nice to know. She explained each of the exercises thoroughly and made sure to keep encouraging, and to check in with the group all the way through.”

Hamed added that taking the class allowed her to reprioritize getting into the gym.

“Before her class, I never went because I was too busy, but having a class like this forces me to treat it like an actual ‘class’ and to prioritize it,” Hamed said. “I am very grateful for these classes and plan to make it to all! It was also a nice stress reliever for me, which was surprising to notice.”

Quila Gustave, ’24, felt the strength training class also

helped her in her fitness goals.

“The reason why I took Ava’s class is to put in more time for the gym,” Gustave said. “Apart from when I go to the gym, I will have a community where we are all after the same goal which is to get stronger ... Moreover, I want someone to tell me if my form is well or if it’s not well, making sure I am doing that exercise correctly. I want to push myself further into my gym goal and to do it with others.”

Loch plans to further her fitness education plans outside of a classroom-type environment, expressing that it will be an experience that she learns from.

“For now, I don’t plan on continuing this education in a classroom setting,” Loch said. “My main concern now is learning what I can through the latest research, advice from experts in the field, and in person experience. However I do plan to add to my expertise by taking different specialization certifications.”

The HIIT courses take place in the Wise Center Dance Studio, on Mondays from 5:15 to 6 p.m., and Wednesdays from 4:15 to 5 p.m. Beginner Strength Training takes place in the Wise Center’s General Weight Room, on Thursdays from 12 to 1 p.m. and Fridays from 7 to 8 a.m.

“Everyone has a place in the gym, even though it might not feel like it sometimes.”

—AVA LOCH
Class of 2024

A foodie’s weekend: ‘Wing Wars’ and ’90s BBQ

By **ETHAN GOGAL**
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Upon entering the campus center on the afternoon of Saturday, Sept. 16, students heard a familiar tune: The “Star Wars” title sequence. As they walked to the sign in table for Gator Activities Programming’s annual Wingfest event, Darth Vader, Chewbacca and other volunteers checked for student ID cards to hand out “Wing Wars” T-shirts and paper food boats. Students then queued in line where they could serve themselves from the variety of wings.

Hot BBQ, Millers Lickers, and Hot Damn!! were just some of the sauce-covered wing options available for students to choose from. The needs of students who prefer plant-based foods were also met with vegan Red Hot Buffalo wings.

Most students were pleased with the wing selection GAP provided, which was evident by food boats filled with cleaned bones and the repeated trips many students took to the wing buffet to get more wings. Some students noted that there were fewer options than last year.

“There was a better variety last year and they had tater tots,” said Abby Manchook, ’25. “But this year is chill.”

“The wings were also spicier last year,” added Kat Pointer, ’25.

“GAP acquired our wings from two local restaurants: Ranz Bar & Grill and Firehouse Tap & Grille,” said GAP president Thión Lee, ’24. “GAP bases its amount of wings it gets each year off of the previous year’s turnout — which has ranged from 2,500 wings to 4,000 wings. When we decide on the flavors and variety of our wings, the executive board of GAP personally goes out to these restaurants and does a simple taste test of the sauces the restaurant has for their wings.”



ETHAN GOGAL/THE CAMPUS

Four contestants of the wing-eating contest: From left, Michael Abraham ’24, Sha Lilley ’24, Patrick Sharp ’26, Poncelot Michel ’24.

Once the lines for the wing buffet died down, the wing-eating competition began. Eight contestants made their way to the stage where they had to eat five wings coated with the spiciest sauce available. Patrick Sharp, ’26, came in first place followed by Poncelot Michel, ’24, in second place. The two were each awarded \$20 gift cards to Starbucks.

“Our biggest goal with this Wingfest event was to create something that would not only attract as many students as possible but also create an event that keeps students wanting to stay and be engaged,” Lee said. “I definitely believe we accomplished this goal as we had large groups of people present and excited throughout the entire event”

Lee also attributed the event’s success to the “Wing Wars” theme, which was decided upon due to the popularity of the franchise.

“We had a lot of existing material in our possession that fit really well with the theme,” Lee said. “Star Wars’ also fit well with the battle of the wing-eating competition the intense but also light flavors we had decided on, and just was a really cool idea that we felt really confident would bring us the most students”

The following day, the ’90s themed BBQ was held on the Gator Quad from 1-4 p.m., hosted by the Association for the Advancement of Black Culture, Black Girl Magic and BoomGrillx. The event also had chicken wings, in addition to chicken kabobs, corn, Hawaiian rolls and cookies.

“The purpose of this event is to cultivate a communative space that will give people a break from their classes and rigorous schedules,” said Imiyah Brown, ’26, vice president of ABC.

Rian Watson, ’24, president of ABC and BGM added that it tied into the groups’ long-term aims as well.

“Our goal is to rebuild the Black community on this campus and for people who do not identify as Black or African American to come together because food is culture and it connects everyone.” Watson said.

To bring about a ’90s vibe, ’90s and early-2000s hip-hop and R&B music was playing during the cookout.

“The ’90s was a big era for the Black community,” Brown said. “There was a lot of expression through music, TV and sports. So



Photo courtesy of Black Girl Magic

Board members of the Association for the Advancement of Black Culture and Black Girl Magic gather after the ’90s BBQ on Sunday, Sept. 17. From left: Zahnya Suber, ’27, Neveah Bland, ’27, Jazmine Thomas, ’27, Anaya Harper, ’27, Jahyra Williams, ’24, Imiyah Brown, ’26, Rian Watson, ’24, and BoomGrillx owner Koye Balogun, ’25

having the ’90s theme seemed like a great way to highlight everything.”

BoomGrillx owner and chef, Koye Balogun, ’26, was grilling wings with three different sauces. “Good food, good vibes,” was Balogun’s mantra for the event.

“When I do a cookout, it’s not just about coming to eat, it’s more about coming and having fun!” Balogun said.

Also working the grill was Sha Lilley, ’24,

“It’s a nice experience to get my culinary skills up, which is why I am working with Koye and his team,” Lilley said. “It was also nice of President Ron Cole, ’87, to drop off homemade cookies.”

Brown noted that she hoped this event “would introduce the first years to these organizations and encourage them to join to carry on the clubs” once the upperclassmen graduated.

Pool League adds new table to accommodate growth

By **EVELYN ZAVALA**
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Nestled within the Game Room in the Henderson Campus Center, the Pool League stands as a place where students can hone their skills and foster camaraderie.

As the league gained more student interest, a new table was introduced to accommodate the growing number of students wanting to participate. Students gained access to the new table at the beginning of the semester, enhancing their initial experience.

Former Pool League Commissioner Kinton Thakur, ’23, explained the process involved in funding a new pool table for the game room. “The Game Room itself usually funds all of its assets, repairs and otherwise,” Thakur said. “However, it is pretty limited, and there was no way we would have had enough money for an extra table.”

Thakur said that he had to request additional funds from the Allegheny Student Government, which was a month-long process.

“I had to attend a meeting and I had to write a proper proposal,” Thakur said. “It was a pipe dream for a while, but it eventually came together through ASG.”

Thakur has been an instrumental part in encouraging people to join the pool community.

“I love to get other people into it too and if I see people on the table



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Mateus Wehn, ’27, a Pool League member, lines up a shot during a non-league match on Thursday, Sept. 21.

experimenting and having fun with the table, I ask if they want to play a game,” Thakur said. “I try to make it a comfortable environment and make it very approachable for everyone. It’s a passion of mine and I just want to share it with people.”

Jonathan Sharp, ’24, the current Pool League commissioner, said the group needed to have another table because of the increasing number of students who wanted to join.

“Before we would just play three games in a match and then we would accumulate wins and losses by that, but with two tables we could play more matches and race to three rather than only three games to have a

total of five games in a match,” Sharp said. “This is allowing all students in the Pool League to play more games, have more fun, and everyone can practice more.”

Pool League is looking to expand more by gaining new members every semester and playing more competitive matches according to Sharp.

“This is kind of like the golden era of the Pool League right now, but each year there seems to be some new improvements and new members,” Sharp said. “We may add another day of the Pool League depending on how many new members join.”

Game Room manager Cade Moffatt, ’25, said he noticed the addition of the new table has helped players improve their skills.

“There are a couple of people who joined the Pool League this year and even from the start of the year to now, you can see the improvement in the skills that they had because not a lot of people come in with an already established skill level,” Moffatt said. “It’s been kind of cool to see these newer kids start improving.”

Moffatt said many players are close in skill level which has made for an interesting competitive environment since it has encouraged healthy competition amongst students.

“The person that wins the playoffs gets their name on the plaque on the wall,” Moffatt said. “The last week before finals is when the pool playoffs will happen.”

Through the league, Moffatt said he has been able to make a lot of friends who are now part of his core friend groups.

“I definitely have some friends outside of the Pool League but I would say a lot of the guys that I hang around with I have met through pool,” Moffatt said. “One of my favorite memories is probably from my freshman year before I really started making friends. I came here every night for a week towards the end of the semester and felt like I was making friends through playing pool.”

A challenge brought by the addition of the pool table is the lack of space in the Game Room — which was already a problem before the table was added. For a time, the ping-pong table had been under repair, which increased interest in pool and created space difficulties when the ping-pong table came back.

“It is a balance of trying to keep everybody happy because we don’t want to completely remove ping-pong,” Moffatt said. “It just became a thing where the pool community was growing so much and with only one table it was really hard for people to improve and work on their skills.”

Currently, the Pool League meets from Sunday to Tuesday from 10 p.m. to 12 a.m. in the Game Room.

Shooting for golden goals with conference play underway

By **KYLE CHANDLER**
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Sometimes, in order to see the true colors of a team you have to look underneath the surface. Like a diamond in the rough, the Allegheny men's soccer team has a load of potential for the 2023 season. Although they sit with a 1-4 record, the wins and losses have not represented just how good this team can be the rest of the way.

“We have been playing a lot of borderline top-25 teams in the country,” said team captain Gunnar Brettell, ’24. “I think with conference games coming we have a lot more coming.”

Allegheny has been tasked with an arduous schedule. They opened the season losing to Nazareth, Carnegie Mellon and Stevenson. After earning their first win against Baldwin Wallace in a 2-0 shutout, they were then greeted by No. 25 Case Western Reserve in a game the Gators dropped 4-1.

Still, Allegheny’s goal was just the second surrendered all year by the Spartans, and the attack is something the



Absolutely, 100% our goal is to either top the conference or get a home playoff game, and then to win the PAC.”

—GUNNAR BRETTPELL
Class of 2024

Gators will continue to build on.

“If we can start to put things together in the attack and score more goals, we can really start to put a stamp on these games and start winning a lot,” Brettell said.

While the club has played a tough non-conference slate, the teams in the Presidents’ Athletic Conference have also gotten better, according to several members of the team. The margin for error is slim, and Allegheny has their work cut out for them after being taken down by the Bethany Bison 1-0 on Wednesday, Sept. 20.

It was Allegheny’s second home match of the season, and the game was a barn-burner. A season ago, Bethany got the best of the Gators in the PAC conference tournament quarterfinal. They kept the momentum going on Wednesday, after lining up on the penatly spot following a foul inside the box. During the 73rd minute, the ball found the back of the Gators net, making the difference.

The Gators are led at the helm by John Lichina, ’14, who is all too familiar with Allegheny. Lichina played four seasons as an All-North Coast Athletic Conference goalkeeper for the Blue and Gold. After his athletic tenure concluded, he left as the college’s all-time leader in career shutouts with 21.

Lichina returned to his alma mater in 2019 to work with the club as an assistant coach. He originally took over operations last season as the interim head coach, but

earned the official promotion after the season concluded.

“I always felt like I was full time in the role,” Lichina said. “With being here so long, now everybody that is here has been a recruit of mine.”

Lichina has snagged some impressive talent in the first-year class, including Nick Magee, ’27, who scored his first collegiate goal during the Stevenson contest. The skipper stated the importance of getting the young bucks playing time on the pitch. He went on to say getting them a taste in minutes and getting a feel for the pace of the game is also a good chaser for the upperclassmen to stay motivated and keep working throughout the offseason.

Brettell has taken this to heart. After battling some injuries throughout his career, he has dedicated the most time this offseason to the weight room in order to get stronger and stay healthy.

“I could just straight up say I’m an old man,” Brettell said with a laugh. “We’ve had some recovery sessions. Laura (Mannino), the athletic trainer, she’s done a great job and she helps me out a lot. But, I’ve definitely been a lot more proactive in taking care of myself.”

The senior midfielder scored his first goal of the year during the season opener at home against Nazareth. It was a goal that brought the Gators to within one — and although they didn’t win it was a huge boost of momentum at the time. It came on a penalty kick, which has become a specialty of his arsenal.



Photo courtesy of Parker Brown, ’26.

Darius Googe, ’25, who was named PAC Offensive Player of the Week on Sept. 18, works to outpace his defender while working towards the net.

In his final year, Brettell hopes to continue finding the back of the net. His goal is to lead the younger guys by example, both on and off the field — showing them what it means to be a good teammate and striving to be better.

Erie, Pennsylvania is a hot destination for the club to get work in during the winter months. Lichina and other coaches from schools including Mercyhurst, Gannon and Penn State Berhrend have created a collegiate league for players to get work in on an infield turf surface for nine versus nine showdowns.

What Lichina emphasized was how the league’s production is on the players’ accord. It is up to them to decide whether they want to play or not, but the Gators are always able to field one or two teams because of the willingness of the players.

“I’ve got that motivation within the group to where they want to keep playing

full size soccer,” Lichina said. “A lot of the freshmen, the underclassmen, they come out of 10 months of soccer their senior year and take the summer break and join us, so they’re used to that kind of schedule as well.”

Lichina also has connections for clubs during the summer. His goal is to find Gators opportunities to put them in the most competitive setting possible while not in season, which also includes a couple of semi-professional leagues.

Some members of the club would play in the Washington D.C. area with DC United U-23, and the Greater Pittsburgh Soccer League. This allows a chance for these Allegheny athletes to travel across the region and travel with some of the best teams.

All of this is in hopes of winning a conference title. The last time the Gators made a championship appearance was in 2007, and the last time

they won was when they took down Denison in penalty kicks during the 2004 season to take home the NCAC title.

Despite the drought, the team’s expectations have not dropped. Everyone is on the same page with the same goal.

“Absolutely, 100% our goal is to either top the conference or get a home playoff game, and then to win the PAC,” Brettell said. “That’s our goal, it’s been our goal, it was our goal last season and we didn’t quite get there. This year we’re very confident that we’ll be able to get a home playoff game and win the PAC and get into the NCAA tournament.”

There is a lot of season left to go. Allegheny will have their second conference game of the season at Westminster on Saturday, Sept. 23. The opening kickoff is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. at the UPMC Sports Complex.

History continues with AFC North rivalry matchup

By **KYLE CHANDLER**
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It was the 144th time that the Cleveland Browns and Pittsburgh Steelers matched wits and locked horns when the two teams met on Monday, Sept. 18 at Acrisure Stadium. The team from the east took down their long-standing rivals by a score of 26-22.

The Browns and Steelers have the oldest rivalry in the American Football Conference by at least five games. These two divisional foes have been going after each other since 1950, when the Browns joined the National Football League and battled with the Steel City on Oct. 7. Since their first matchup, close proximity and infamous brutality has brought these teams to despite one another — and although some may claim the rivalry has died out, others say it is alive and strong.

“I’ve heard a lot of peo-

ple say it is because Pittsburgh and Cleveland are the same city, just in two different states,” Steelers fan Isabel Loch, ’24, said. “I just grew up in Pittsburgh and we hate the Cleveland teams so that’s just how it is.”

Both teams have had their fair share of moments to be forgotten. This century alone has brought plenty of entertainment to fans, including when former Steeler Antonio Brown kicked Browns punter Spencer Lanning in the face during a kick return, or when Cleveland’s Myles Garrett smashed Pittsburgh’s Mason Rudolph on the head with his helmet a couple of years ago.

The passion between these two bitter foes does not just begin in this century. One of NFL’s most immortalized plays includes Browns defender Joe Jones going after Hall of Fame quarterback Terry Bradshaw. When Jones was in the midst of completing the sack, he pulled a wres-

tlng move out of his sleeve and performed a pile drive on Bradshaw. The Black and Yellow quarterback suffered a neck injury from the impact of the hit.

But why have these two blue-collared cities shown such animosity towards each other? While similarities in both cities plays a role, the history of these two teams is also a pivotal factor.

The Browns and Steelers have battled back and forth within their respective division for over 70 years. Each city has shared moments of jealousy towards the other when their own team is not performing well. And the cherry on top — they are only separated by 135 miles.

Both franchises are tagged with die-hard fans that love their team more than they love their own families. They travel well and have fan clubs across the entire world, which means that making the two-and-a-half-hour drive to see

an arch-rival game is no problem.

My first glimpse of the NFL experience came during one of these brutal matchups. Upon my arrival to FirstEnergy Stadium (formerly known as Cleveland Browns Stadium) back in 2008, I was greeted with loud chants from intellectuals who were booed and screaming their heads off while getting ready for football.

Of the many profane phrases in chant to leave their tongues, “F— you Steelers” was at the top of the list, and was sung in a harmony that echoed the streets of Euclid Avenue. There were also many shirts, banners and posters that slandered against Pittsburgh.

When I told my dad I was going to root for the Steelers that day because they were better than the Browns, he told me I was lucky nobody else heard what I had said, otherwise there would be a news story of a little boy being thrown into Lake Erie for blasphemous claims.

However, during that experience I saw a lot of fans wearing black instead of brown. It seemed as though there were an equal number of people who made the trek from across the state border as there were who came from The Land. These games always turn out to be electric, and I am not the only one to think so.

“It’s been one of the most exciting football games of my childhood growing up,” said Cleveland native Jonathan Sharp, ’24. “Now they are awesome games to watch and it’s a Browns staple game each year

because we’re always striving to beat the Steelers.”

While Monday’s game did not entail any fights, it was a seesaw battle that featured classic smash mouth football and field position control. There was sloppy play from both sides, but ultimately it came down to the Steelers scoring 17 points off the Browns’ four turnovers, including from the first play of scrimmage when Alex Highsmith picked off Deshaun Watson and took it to the house to give the Steelers an early lead.

The most devastating moment came when Browns running back Nick Chubb had his knee taken out on a tackle by Minkah Fitzpatrick. The best pure rusher in the league endured a gruesome shot that turned his leg to a 90-degree bend — it was too disturbing to show on national television, and Chubb was carted off while screaming in agonizing pain. All fans, including Steelers, were on their feet to give him a standing ovation.

“He’s, in my opinion, the best running back in the league, even as a Steelers fan,” said Cade Moffatt, ’25. “A few years ago when Big Ben (Rothlisberger) went down for the season with his UCL injury, losing someone like that who’s just a big driving factor in your offense, it’s really just disheartening. I know how it can be for Browns fans.”

It was a huge knockdown to Cleveland, as now they will be without one of their best players and leaders for the rest of the season. But Jerome Ford came in to take over duties and put up impressive

numbers, including a 69-yard run to set up the Browns at the one-yard line, which at the time would lead to the go-ahead score. The Browns also re-signed Kareem Hunt on Wednesday, Sept 20. The Toledo native spent the previous four seasons with Cleveland after signing with the team in 2019, but did not begin this year with the Browns.

Ford’s production on Monday was not enough, though, and Watson looked terrible registering an interception, two fumbles and a pair of facemask penalties on just 235 yards.

The offensive line gave up six sacks, one of which went to T.J. Watt. Watt was able to break the Steelers franchise record in that department on Monday, as he now sits with 81.5 for his career. His moment of the night came when Highsmith stripped Watson of the football in Browns territory, and Watt went for the scoop-and-score — the final points put on the scoreboard.

“The only reason we won that game was because of defense,” Loch said.

While the Steelers offense did not look good either, their defense carried them to victory. The Browns missed out on a chance to start the year 2-0 for the first time since 1993, and Pittsburgh avoided going 0-2.

These two teams will meet one final time in the regular season on Nov. 19, in Cleveland. While there is no telling how both teams will fare in between that time and now, one can only hope the game is as close and as entertaining as it was on Monday.



KYLE CHANDLER/THE CAMPUS

Jonathan Sharp, ’24, wearing a Nick Chubb jersey while representing the Cleveland Browns for game day.