

The Campus

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Students hold vigil for Palestinian civilians killed in conflict

By **SAMI MIRZA**
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About 30 people gathered for a vigil for Palestine in the Henderson Campus Center lobby on the afternoon of Thursday, Feb. 15, holding a moment of silence and beginning to write the names of young children killed in the current Israeli invasion of the Gaza Strip.

“We are here because we care, and I thank you for caring with me,” organizer Julia Sonen, ’24, told attendees.

The vigil was the latest in a series of student events aimed at raising awareness of Israel’s current invasion of Gaza. Israeli forces have killed more than 28,600 people since Oct. 7 — including around 2,600 since a Jan. 26 student demonstration on the Gator Quad, organizer Syd Hammerman, ’25, told attendees. Israel has defended its actions, which have been called a genocide by scholars and human rights advocates, as justified retaliation for an Oct. 7 attack by militant group Hamas that killed just over 1,100 Israelis. Hamas has ruled the Gaza Strip since 2007.

Hammerman also spoke of six-year-old Hind Rajab, who was killed by Israeli troops while traveling with her family. When Hind’s body was found earlier this week, Hammerman said, Hind’s mother received it with a pink bag filled with notebooks Hind had been using to practice her handwriting.

This hit home for Hammerman when they were writing a sentence for their Arabic homework.

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SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Students gather for a vigil for Palestine in the lobby of the Henderson Campus Center. The crowd peaked at about 30 attendees, with participants trickling in and out over the course of the event

Writing Consultants host love letter workshop



SAM HEILMANN/THE CAMPUS

Alyssa Klim, ’26, and Cassy Skweres, ’24, hand an index card to Sunny Stout, ’26, with details on the writing consultants at their love letter table in the Henderson Campus Center on Tuesday, Feb. 13.

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Black History Month events underway

By **PAIGE KAGENI**
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The IDEAS Center kicked off Black History Month by hosting the Black Inventors Traveling Museum event in the lobby of the Henderson Campus Center on Feb. 1. The event was informative, showcasing the numerous inventions created by African American inventors and their contributions to American society as a whole. This was just one of many events scheduled for the month of February from the IDEAS Center and other student organizations at Allegheny.

Throughout the month, there will be panels, discussions, trivia nights, fashion shows and even a trip to a movie theater to see “Bob Marley: One Love” on Feb. 24.

“I am always amazed at Bob Marley and his contribution to the world and culture through music,” said Interim Director of the IDEAS Center Natalie Brown. “He has a really deep impact that he contributed and I thought it would be of great significance for students to go and learn about him, learn about the things he’s done outside of his music.”

The IDEAS Center will also be collaborating with the student group Advancement of Black Culture to host a soul food dinner on Feb. 22 in the Schultz Banquet Hall from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Anyone is welcome to stop by for a meal and a conversation about soul food itself. Brown believes this event, highlighting a staple of the Black community, is particularly important because of its dialogue on the origins of these dishes.

“It’s the ability to bring good food, good conversation, good fellowship and talk about the origin of a lot of food we come to love,” Brown said. “The sweet potato, the rise from Africa, the collard greens, the stories of how we took scraps and made meals. And so that will be talked about and we’ll also have a delicious meal.”

ABC will also be hosting a number of events this month. They began with tabling at the Black Inventors Traveling Museum to amplify their programming for the month, including a collaborative brunch event on Feb. 4 with Black Girl Magic. Anaya Harper, ’26, secretary for ABC, spoke more about further events and their significance to Black History Month.

“February 24 will be the Ebony Ball, which is a yearly thing,” Harper said. “ABC has done it every year consecutively and this year’s theme is Met Gala: Heavenly Bodies and we’re so excited for that. February 26 is when we’ll be making waist beads, because waist beads have a lot of cultural ties to West Africa and came here as a form of the culture during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, so we’re definitely excited for all the events.”

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Constitutional overhaul recommended, election timeline announced

By **SAMI MIRZA**
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Allegheny Student Government heard constituent concern over major changes to the ASG constitution recommended by the attorney general at its General Assembly on Tuesday, Feb. 13. ASG also announced preliminary details for this year’s presidential election cycle.

During his cabinet report, Attorney General Will Lowthert, ’24, laid out a number of recommendations for changes to the ASG constitution, ranging from updating cabinet expectations to major shifts, including shrinking ASG, having the organization adjudicate its own constitutional infractions and selecting its own advisor each year.

“Mainly what I just changed was implementing practices ASG is already doing into the Constitution — more procedural things, like expectations for cabinet,” Lowthert said during his report. “Technically, there is no expectations for cabinet, so we just added the same specifications that are expected for the Senate. And then more broadly, making the Constitution reflect what the new Allegheny College student body is, i.e. possibly moving Senate down from 20 members to 16 members and then also shrinking cabinet too.”

Among Lowthert’s recommended changes are the merging of six cabinet positions into three by adding the Environmental Affairs and Sustainability portfolio to Student Affairs, the Organizational Development position to Chief of Staff, and the Parliamentary position to the Attorney General’s office.

Constituent Comments

The recommendations have already drawn criticism; during constituent comments at the end of the meeting, former ASG Director of Environmental Affairs and Sustainability Bianca Sanchez, ’24, asked Lowthert to explain why some roles would be eliminated.

In reply, Lowthert said that ASG has struggled to reach full capacity for years, and pointed out that the college’s student population has shrunk by almost 1,000 since the constitution last saw major revisions in 2008.

“Senate has not been filled this whole entire semester, academic year,” Lowthert said. “It wasn’t filled the whole entire last academic year. I believe the academic year before that was also not filled either.”

Lowthert also pointed out that these recruitment and retention struggles are also visible in the cabinet, which has had at least one empty seat since the start of the academic year. It took until Halloween for ASG to fill the second of two co-directorships of Student Affairs — at the same meeting where Hunter Goerman, ’25, resigned as director of the treasury. Since then, the treasury position has remained empty and was split in two at the end of last semester by constitutional amendment.

When Sanchez resigned from her position as director of Environmental Affairs and Sustainability in December, she cited a heavy workload as a senior

in an email to The Campus at the time.

Given the vacancies, Lowthert said that it’s better to have someone working a cabinet job in part rather than not at all.

“For example, no one’s doing any Environmental Affairs right now, but if we combine — and maybe that will be in the future, maybe it’s not, it’s up to Senate to decide — but by combining it with Student Affairs, it ensures that someone will be doing that task,” Lowthert said.

However, Sanchez pointed out that such a move would run contrary to what ASG did just three months ago, noting that one of the justifications for splitting the treasurer position in two was because of the heavy workload.

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DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY	MEETING THIS MOMENT	SPRING BACK INTO BASEBALL
Gator Activities Programming has announced the theme for the Springfest 2024. Contributing Writer Lucas Pasquale, ’24, has the inside scoop.	The proceedings of the 2023 conference that was held to evaluate Allegheny’s affiliation with the Methodist Church are now available in a book free to students in the Merriman Campus Store.	Baseball season is right around the corner. What should the Allegheny Gators expect from their second season in the Presidents’ Athletic Conference?
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VIGIL *from page 1*

“This sentence began with the name Hind,” Hammerman said. “My stomach knotted, and I had to put the assignment away for a bit. How was I supposed to move on from her, and from all of Gaza?”

After the speeches came a moment of silence, and then attendees were invited to write out a partial list of children killed in the invasion on a series of banners, divided by age. The names ran from ages zero to five because the average age of a child killed in Gaza is five years old, Hammerman said.

The vigil will continue for another two days, Hammerman said, from 1 to 6 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 16, and Saturday, Feb. 17.



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS
Student attendees stand in front of a Palestinian flag during the vigil on Thursday afternoon.



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS
Zaynab Jebur, '26 (left), and Arabic Teaching Assistant Mounia M'rabti read a poem by Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish during the vigil. Note: Jebur is separately an editor for The Campus and did not contribute to the production of this story.



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS
Associate Professor of Arabic Language and Literature Reem Hilal writes the names of 5-year-old children killed by Israeli forces. “As an Arab-American, it’s been challenging to see everything unfold,” Hilal told The Campus after last month’s rally. “I have kids and I can see my kids’ features, and they shares similar features.”



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS
M'rabti writes the names of Palestinian children killed by Israeli forces in the current invasion of Gaza.

GAP announces Springfest theme

By **LUCAS PASQUALE**
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Gator Activities Programming announced the theme and dates for the 2024 Springfest last Tuesday, Feb. 6. This year’s theme is “Barbie,” with a “Ken Day” on Thursday, April 11, a “Barbie Day” on Friday, April 12, and a concert Saturday, April 13.

The Barbie theme was chosen because, according to GAP’s Director of Community Relations Syd Hammerman, ’25, “It’s relevant. It’s fun. It’s easy. Throw on some pink. Come hang out.”

The specifics of the events are still being worked out, so details are currently scant. Hammerman did say to expect a “Mojo Dojo Casa House” in the Henderson Campus Center.

In addition, GAP President Thion Lee, ’24, noted that the South Asian Students Society and the IDEAS Center had already signed up as collaborators for Springfest this year.

All that has been released regarding the concert is the date. In addition to the planning being unfinished, the concert is organized by the Major Events Committee, a collaboration be-

tween GAP and the Allegheny Student Government. Because of this distinction, GAP cannot release information regarding the concert without MEC’s approval.

The Tuesday evening announcement was made at the GAP event “Chomp and Chill,” a general body meeting that was open to any member of the student body.

The ‘chill’ was what Lee wanted to emphasize. He said that a “general body meeting” sounds too formal, “as though we’re just gonna be sitting there talking and just running a meeting.” The name was given to reflect the relaxed atmosphere.

While the event did include a presentation introducing attendants to the board and the Springfest announcement, most of the time was spent playing games like the card game Old Maid and knock down the jugs with plastic cups.

The organization’s executive board wanted to attract as many students as possible for two reasons. The first of these is to receive suggestions and feedback from their fellow students.

Lee said that the student-run

organization is the only one “that plans events for the entire campus.” While clubs host events for a tight-knit group of like-minded students, GAP’s events typically encompass the entire campus, with an average attendance of over 200 people. Big festivals like Wingfest, Springfest that “try to incorporate everyone,” according to Lee.

Because of this, students are encouraged to come to events like Chomp and Chill so they can be informed about what is planned and potentially voice their opinions regarding what events they would like to see and attend.

“If you think an event was s—, then it’s s—,” Lee said. “We want to know, what can we do better? What can we do further to make sure that you’re showing up to our events?”

The second reason is because all of the current GAP executive board members will be graduating this semester, save for Hammerman. The organization is now scouting for non-senior students interested in leadership opportunities.

“GAP is a great way to be a leader on campus because you

get to plan the events for all the students, take in people’s requests and make a fun environment,” said GAP Vice President Katherine Perez, ’24. “GAP is all about fun. I think ASG is more like the government side; not to say it’s not fun; but we’re more focused on social things on campus.”

This was made explicit at the event. Not only was it explained during the presentation, but the last question of the GAP-themed Kahoot that attendants played was “Are you interested in joining the GAP board? Yes or No?” “No” was the incorrect answer.

This is not a new issue for GAP; Hammerman said that they made it onto the GAP board because it had two vacancies at the time. This is why they have served as a board member since September of their freshman year.

Students who want to reach out to GAP can attend the monthly leadership labs, which give students the chance to see where the GAP office is like and to talk to the board members. The first lab of the semester will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 20.

BHM *from page 1*

Harper also included her reasoning for why Black History Month is important not just in general, but specifically to Allegheny.

“I think it’s very important that we celebrate Black History Month because the United States, and just the world in general — but we’re specifically talking about America — is embedded on the backs of Black history,” Harper said. “This is a predominately white institution and we’re a minority on the campus, so it’s very important that we keep the culture alive.”

There’s a common misconception that these events are only created for Black students,

according to Brown. This isn’t true in the slightest; it’s important for students of all backgrounds to participate in these discussions to better understand their peers. She stressed that all students, not just Black students, should feel encouraged to attend panels and discussions to learn about a perspective different from their own.

“There’s nothing like exposure to things other than what you’re used to,” Brown said. “That’s the aim and the goal, with any heritage month, especially with Black History Month, is to open the door to understanding our culture.”

“

This is a predominately white institution and we’re a minority on the campus, so it’s very important that we keep the culture alive.”

—ANAYA HARPER
Class of 2026

LOVE *from page 1*



SAM HEILMANN/THE CAMPUS
Max Garvin, '25, stops by the table in the Henderson Campus Center lobby for Valentine’s-themed writing supplies. The writing consultants were able to help students write letters to friends and significant others.



SAM HEILMANN/THE CAMPUS
Meredith Kyser, '24, approaches the writing consultant table. The writing consultants tabled on the day of and the two days leading up to Valentine’s Day.



SAM HEILMANN/THE CAMPUS
The writing consultants provided everything students needed to write love letters, including themed stationary, colorful pens, and some candy for the road.

ASG from page 1

“Now we’re deciding to put more work onto a few cabinet members, given the fact that, yes, some of these roles may not have as much work even when they are filled,” Sanchez said. “But the roles that they are being added to have enough work to begin with — and let alone students do not have enough time to be even doing more work as it is.”

This last line received applause from Co-Directors of Student Affairs London Dejarnette, ’24, and Iris Styers, ’26.

Sanchez also said that it was “a little against the values of this college” to adjust the cabinet, adding that even if sustainability was still valued within Student Affairs, a student would not have the opportunity to focus only on environmental concerns.

“They would have to take the Student Affairs position entirely — which is again a big position and they have two very different focuses of what their roles are,” Sanchez said, receiving another round of applause.

Another constituent, Julia Sonen, ’24, said she had considered taking the sustainability position for two years but did not apply because of her own busy schedule.

“I know that it’s something that right now is a relatively small commitment, which is the only reason I would have been able to consider applying,” Sonen told ASG. “I think it’s very important that a school like Allegheny, that values sustainability so much, has sustainability positions within everything.”

Cabinet Behavioral Standards

Sanchez also asked a question about the new behavioral standards for cabinet members — in particular, a line that prevents cabinet members from discussing “unofficial reports, results, and/or legislation not yet brought forth through the general assembly.”

“It feels a little bit exclusive for people not to be able to share news until after the fact,” Sanchez said. “Sometimes

things only go through one round of voting. If a constituent doesn’t know what’s happening in advance and doesn’t have the opportunity to come in and speak on that, and that gets voted upon, and then after the fact, they hear about it and didn’t get the opportunity to voice their opinion, what then?”

Lowthert attempted to reply but was cut off by Vice President Sam Ault, ’26, who told Lowthert he did not have the floor. Ault then opened the floor up for additional constituent comment. Sanchez’s question was not answered during the meeting.

The provision Sanchez pointed out is not entirely new; it is already in place for senators in their behavioral conduct. In an interview Wednesday, Lowthert said that the rule was designed to prevent anyone other than a senator from writing ASG legislation.

“They can think about the amendment with constituents, talk about the amendment with constituents in the lead up to it, but as soon as they begin writing it, the only people who can help write it are senators,” Lowthert said. “And they can’t share that writing with constituents until it’s introduced in ASG.”

Lowthert pointed to the finance amendment passed at the end of last semester, which he said was guided by constituent comment before and after the writing process.

After the meeting, Sanchez said that she was only aware of the constitutional recommendations because she still receives copies of the meeting minutes every Tuesday, despite resigning from ASG more than three months ago.

“I have asked ASG to remove me from the weekly mailing list numerous times now,” Sanchez wrote in an email Tuesday evening. “They just haven’t removed me from the list.”

Additional changes

Lowthert has recommended a num-

ber of additional changes to the constitution, some of which could have significant effects for the way ASG operates.

One major change would be to place the selection of the ASG adviser in the hands of ASG itself.

Under the recommended changes, the ASG president and vice president would appoint an adviser at the start of every academic year; the adviser would then serve a one-year term — including the summer — before a new adviser is appointed. The adviser would also need to be approved by a majority of senators. Under ASG’s present constitution, there are no stipulations for who ASG’s adviser should be, though the position has traditionally been held by the dean of students. Currently, Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley advises ASG.

Speaking on Wednesday in an interview, Lowthert said that the suggestion was based on the constitutions of student governments at other colleges and universities, and would allow ASG to select other administrators or faculty members as an adviser.

“I think Trae has done a fantastic job as our advisor and I have zero concerns about them,” Lowthert said. “In the end, it’s just a way to ensure that future ASGs and Senates have the ability to actually tailor their advising to best suit their sort of government style.”

Lowthert has recommended that if a cabinet seat is empty, “the president and vice president, in consultation with Senate can assign current members of ASG with their consent, this includes both Cabinet and Senate members, the tasks of this unfilled position.”

Further changes are recommended to the process of removing ASG members from office, including explicitly stating that ASG senators can be removed for violating the Allegheny Statement of Community or for “verbally stating or portraying actions that are discriminatory or harmful to the bodies they are representing.”

The recommended changes would also rework the Judicial Review Board, which reviews all cases of constitutional infractions and the impeachment process.

The proposed recommendations would change the current process, instead making the JRB consist of the Rules Committee — which itself is made up of the attorney general and a senator from each class — the chief of staff and one of the two directors of Student Affairs. The ASG adviser would also sit on the JRB as a non-voting member.

Lowthert said that the changes were necessary because, despite recruiting “aggressively,” he had seen no student interest in JRB.

“There is just not students really wanting to fill those positions — or students that have time to fill those positions,” Lowthert said.

Under the current constitution, the JRB cannot be filled by members of ASG — a way to shield the organization from perceived or actual bias, then-ASG Vice President Rudra Schultz-Ray, ’23, said during JRB proceedings last spring.

“If we were in charge (of) investigating ourselves and punishing ourselves, I doubt that anything would actually come from it, and it’s a way of mostly protecting how we are viewed as an institution and among the student body,” Schultz-Ray said at the time.

Lowthert acknowledged that the recommendation “does have its drawbacks.”

“That is why, if Senate does take this up, I would highly recommend they debate it and figure out if how we have JRB currently is the best solution, if the recommendation I make is a better solution or if there’s another, even more innovative solution out there,” Lowthert said.

And at the end of the day, Lowthert said that his suggestions were just that — intended to start a conversation.

“Some of them were very, um —

we’ll say unique recommendations that I thought, ‘This could work’ or ‘This could not work’ and that is, like, a great thing about debate in politics and ASG is, it is open up to people to actually share all their opinions for the best constitution,” Lowthert said. “These were not meant to be end-all be-all recommendations, and I think there might have been a slight misconception about that at last GA.”

A full list of the recommendations — which have not been formally proposed or put up for a vote — are now available in the minutes of the GA on Engage.

Electoral Cycle

During her report, Parliamentarian Ankitha Pamula, ’24, announced that students can now file to run for the ASG presidency

“You will need a 50-signature petition, a document stating your reasons for running and short biographies for each ticket number and ticket photos for each,” Pamula said. “We’re also tabling Thursday and Friday during lunch hours to raise awareness with the general student body — anyone is essentially open to run.”

Once candidates file, they will have just under a month to campaign. If, like last year, there are more than two tickets declared, primary elections will be held via Google Form from Thursday, March 14, until Sunday, March 17. The two highest-placing tickets will advance to a presidential debate on Tuesday, March 19, in Quigley Auditorium.

Voting for the General Election will open Saturday, March 24, and run until Tuesday, March 27, with the victors announced by 9 p.m. on Wednesday, March 28. Cabinet applications for the 2024-25 are slated to open Monday, April 1.

ASG will next meet at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 20, in room 301/302 of the Henderson Campus Center.

Ask Allegheny

Did you get sick, and what would you name your sicknesss?



Samantha Mura, ’27
Major: Economics
Minor: Spanish
“I did not.”



Ethan Vollant, ’25
Major: Political Science
Minors: Economics and Global Health Studies
“Yes, I actually went to the hospital. I went to the ER ... wanting to die. I just, like, threw up for six hours.”



Chloe Diekman, ’26
Major: Biochemistry
Minor: Global Health Studies
“It was the flu. I would say it was horrific.”

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. Crimes listed below are collected the Thursday before publication.

There were no reports of crime this week.

THE CAMPUS

Since 1876

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"Everything will be Okay" & "Space is not Enough": Review

By JOSEPH KLEPEIS
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Allegheny Art Galleries presented the openings of “Everything will be Okay” by Chair and Associate Professor of Art Ian Thomas and “Space is not Enough” by Trevor King on Feb. 7.

Both Thomas and King are originally from Butler, around 35 miles north of Pittsburgh. They first met in 2009 at Slippery Rock University, where Thomas was a professor and King was a student. In the ensuing years, they’ve worked together on many projects and exhibitions, including “Anthem: Big Sound Big Silence,” which was presented at Texas Tech University in 2014.

The art from Thomas hones in on gun violence in America, specifically its effects on school children and educators.

“My works are ruminations on this dark undercurrent of American culture,” Thomas said, “that both captivates and horrifies in seemingly equal measure.”

“American Dream” was one of the standout pieces from Thomas. The large oil on canvas work takes inspiration from one of the old masters — Rembrandt van Rijn — and one of the most quintessential American artists — Grant Wood. It’s easy to praise the beauty of the work at face value, but the message it’s sending, intertwined with the inspirations, allows the piece to ascend to the

upper echelon.

Wood’s art is some of the most recognizable in the American art canon. Gun violence is an unfortunate part of the American experience. Thomas’ work blends the positive and negative connotations of Americana in a way that is satisfying to the eyes while at the same time being a blow to the gut.

Thomas does not stop there. The children depicted in the piece are his own children. He has inserted his own life, his own flesh and blood, into this magnificent work of social commentary.

“As a father and educator,” Thomas said, “I can’t help but be mindful of the gun violence that permeates this country.”

King’s work differs slightly, leaning more towards elements of his own personality.

“The subjects that I work with and the stories that my works tell come from reality,” King said. “Real people, and their aspirational stories, and real moments such as the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown.”

These personal pieces of King’s exhibition act as windows into his soul.

One such work, “swimming in the flickering dust floating in the fog that lifts you (LED)” is at first an ominous sign with phrases that seem to do nothing more than send a chill down the spine. The chill that went down my back seemed even more justified after reading King’s description of the work. The idea for the piece came to him following

the death of his grandfather in 2016.

“The statement has become a sort of prayer for the dead,” King said, “and a mantra for the living.”

After reading the inspiration behind the piece, I recommend a second visit to it. What at first was a slightly foreboding sign, becomes elevated into a dialogue between a grandson reconnecting with his deceased grandfather. The sentimentality of the piece is endearing.

King’s other works focus on “the invisible tensions that tie people to place and the passage of time.”

“The Enormous Room” by King was, at first, a calm, looping video depicting life during lockdown. The video and its increasingly harrowing blend of silence and news radio continue on loop. As it goes on, the piece becomes more and more unsettling. I recommend watching the video multiple times until an uneasy feeling has been built up inside.

Allowing the silence to engross you, only to be washed away by the radio spreading messages about coronavirus, transports you back to the pandemic. This myriad of emotions and memories will overtake you, and then, with a ring, it’s all over, and the loop continues. I realize how unpleasant this sounds, but I recommend it. The uncertainty and uncomfortable the video loop can slowly stir inside of you is impressive. It is a perfect snapshot of a time that most would rather forget.

The exhibits may differ in the topics they explore, but both are worth the ad-



JOSEPH KLEPEIS/THE CAMPUS
"American Dream" by Associate Professor of Art Ian Thomas depicts his children to make a statement on gun violence.

venture. I cannot recommend enough visiting Doane Hall and taking in some of these fine works. I think the exhibits are working in tandem. The heavy subject matter that Thomas’ work engages with is something that needs to be discussed. I understand that dwelling on gun violence can be detrimental to one’s health. This is where I find King’s work to be a great escape. If you find yourself needing to, his work allows you to

venture into his mind and all it encompasses — the nostalgia of his youth, his artist interests and aspirations and experiments with sound. The ability to move between the two artists allows you to get lost in the artwork, bouncing between the exhibits, taking each in piece by piece.

The exhibitions are running in the gallery until March 1.

Senioritis, or, How I Learned to Stop Procrastinating and Love Life

By SAMI MIRZA
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I feel it setting in.

The lethargy, the laziness, the growing itch to just relax. It pulls me away from work and towards video games; away from articles like these towards something — anything — leisurely and for myself. Chomp the comp? Nah, I’ll chomp on some chips and watch something instead.

That’s right: it’s senioritis.

Defined by Google as “a decline in motivation or performance” in high school and college seniors, senioritis was not something on my radar for this semester until a few weeks ago. It’s also worth mentioning that I’ve got it pretty good; my senioritis is more of an intellectual curiosity than a GPA torpedo, and that’s not the case for everyone. Losing motivation can seriously impact your mental health and classroom experience, and can be due to any number of reasons.



I used to count the days until summer break was over and I could come back to college, and every year, that counter started at just over 100. It’s a little eye-opening to realize that I’m now less than 90 days away from graduating.”

—SAMI MIRZA
Class of 2024

However, self-diagnosing myself with this venerable institution of pedagogical sloth has revealed a couple of interesting facts about myself and my final term here at Allegheny — and perhaps it will help you understand yourself, your students and your peers a little better.

The Good

I’ll start with the silver lining; I’ve stopped caring. I don’t mean some extreme form of academic nihilism, but rather what feels like freedom from years of panicking over my grades. I’m on track to graduate, and at this point the only way I’d probably miss walking across the stage in May is if I actively fail myself.

A prime example of this is the “B-” I received a couple weeks ago in a class. In past semesters, that might have been the start of a minor academic crisis, triggering a full evaluation of what I was doing in the class and what I needed to change in order to finish the course with an “A.”

This time, it was just a bump in the road. Not welcome news, to be fair, but not the end of the world either. I read the instructor’s feedback and will incorporate it in the next assignment, but I really don’t care about the little number on Canvas or its final impact on my GPA.

This incident has made me realize how much more focused I am on just learning. If, as senioritis tells me, the grade doesn’t matter, why should I still show up in my classes? Because I’m genuinely interested in them, and that interest is allowed to take precedence

over grade-based anxiety. Coursework goes from a job to something closer to a hobby, something I enjoy for my own personal and intellectual growth rather than my daily required grind.

In this sense, a lack of motivation — and indeed performance — on individual class assignments is a symptom of a deeper caring for the material, not a departure from it. Grades are only so good of a metric of student achievement. It seems as though, at least in one case, poorer grades are a sign of a richer learning experience.

The Bad

Now that you’re convinced I’m dropping buzzwords to justify being lazy, I’ll fold; this isn’t all sunshine and roses. Losing motivation means losing motivation, and it’s made my 12-credit workload feel like 20.

Just because I can frame senioritis and the subsequent hit to my academic performance as “being free from the pressure of grades,” doesn’t make it any less of a decline in my work. I have found myself struggling to focus and get stuff done a lot more than in past semesters — it’s just hard to muster the energy and care to do so.

And honestly, I think this is just the senior experience. Though I’ve never really stopped to count, I’ve probably been working 55-60 hours a week for the last three years — zipping from an overloaded course schedule to extra-curriculars galore. Evenings and weekends are spent writing, editing, doing homework, planning events, you name it. In the moment, it feels exhilarating, a

non-stop validation that I can do things and be useful.

There are also my personal circumstances. I’ve always used academics as a way to bury my head in the sand and avoid processing certain parts of my past — and now the bill is coming due. In the face of existential questions of identity and place within the world, everything else fades away. The questions are nothing new; it’s just now I actually have time to answer them, and I don’t want to.

Without that pedal-to-the-metal energy, homework and clubwork starts to lose its luster. It’s easier to second-guess why I’m doing what I do, to question whether I should do something rather than if I can, when there’s time to think about it.

The Unexpected

So now that I’ve convinced you that senioritis is both liberating and traumatizing, what does this all mean? Why did I decide to spend time and ink to discuss something so seemingly contradictory? It’s because I don’t think senioritis is an academic affliction. Rather, it is a byproduct of life bleeding into the protected environment of, in this case, college.

The more I think about it, the more it seems clear that the two sides of senioritis I have described are just facets of life out in the “real world.”

Not caring about grades? That’s the big-picture perspective of life; when there are jobs to find and bills to pay, individual work assignments fade away. Like a bad grade fading against the

shine of a diploma, a single bad day at work might not feel so bad if you know that you’re going back to a home with food on the table.

Having to handle burnout and identity on the fly? That’s also just what it’s like “out there” — you have to be able to manage your own mental health, juggle work and life at the same time. You’ll have to answer questions of identity and worldview while still finding the motivation to go to work and get things done.

And to hammer it all home, these are all things I will have to be doing in just under three months; a short time period after thinking in terms of semesters and years. I used to count the days until summer break was over and I could come back to college, and every year, that counter started at just over 100. It’s a little eye-opening to realize that I’m now less than 90 days away from graduating.

To invoke cliché, college has moved very quickly, and the “real world” that looms after walking across the stage is rushing towards me faster and faster.

In this perspective, senioritis is actually a good thing. It’s my subconscious starting to work through questions of life beyond graduation. So rather than avoid senioritis as some nebulous grade-tanker, I’m going to try and engage with it as pre-graduation prep for post-graduation life, recalibrating myself to think about big-picture questions and figure out who I am. There may yet be a lesson or two waiting for me on the other side.

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The Comedy Corner

Pistons, Hypontists and Parisians

By **JOSEPH KLEPEIS**
Staff Writer
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The Detroit Pistons are eyeing Tobias Harris as a potential target due to him entering unrestricted free-agency this summer, according to Bleacher Report.

Harris in response, has been avoiding eye contact with any members of the Pistons organization.

The Pistons record is currently 8-44. Harris is a member of the Philadelphia 76ers. Their record is 32-22.

The Miami Herald reported on Feb. 5 that a Miami City Attorney is being investigated by the Florida Bar over alleged connections to a house-flipping scheme.

“First the houses did flips,” said an investigator with the Florida Bar. “What’s next? Handsprings, splits or cartwheels? When will it stop?”

The Hill reported on Feb. 7 that Republican strategist Karl Rove has shut down speculation that former first lady Michelle Obama will replace President Biden in the 2024 election, calling it “pure

lunacy.” (real quote)

You know something is crazy when one of the architects of the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq says so.

Local investors in Buffalo, New York have agreed to buy the former Church of the Ascension in the Allentown neighborhood and turn it into apartments, according to The Buffalo News.

“We wanted to preserve the building, I mean, it’s stunning,” said one of the investors. “Besides, people always want to be next to Godliness. Why not live in it?”

The Guardian reported on Feb 7. that Robert Temple, a comedy hypnotist, has successfully overturned the Hypnotism Act of 1952 — an act that prohibited public hypnosis from being performed without local authority permission — allowing him to perform his upcoming show in Bolton, U.K.

“I’m worried we may have opened Pandora’s Box by repealing the act,” said one of the Bolton council members who voted against the repeal.

Before the council member could continue, Temple

entered and said “You’re feeling sleepy.”

The council member instantaneously fell asleep at his desk and reporters were kindly escorted off the premises.

Richard Plaud, 47, from Montpellier-de-Médillan in western France was told by the Guinness Book of Records that his replica Eiffel Tower measuring 7.19 meters (23 feet) did not qualify because he had used the wrong kind of matches, the BBC reported on Feb 7.

Plaud had received his supplies from a match manufacturer who provided him sulfur-less matches – the red part at the end. These matches are not “commercially available” (real quote) so the tower was unable to qualify for a record.

The model took Plaud over eight years to complete.

Though his dreams have gone down in flames, it will be much harder for his tower to, due to the lack of match heads.

This is good news for Lebanese model maker Toufic Daher who holds the record. His tower stands at 6.53 meters (21 feet).

“I’m glad to still hold the record, even if only through a technicality,” Daher said. “Maybe one day I’ll meet my match.”

The Washington Post reported on Feb. 8 that the Supreme Court was grilling lawyers on Donald Trump’s ballot eligibility.

This begs the question, did they use propane or charcoal?

The Oregonian reported that the Portland Audubon has dropped both the ‘Portland’ and ‘Audubon’ from their name on Feb. 6.

Initial reports were that the name was simply “ .”

Later, it was revealed that the new organization name would be the Bird Alliance of Oregon.

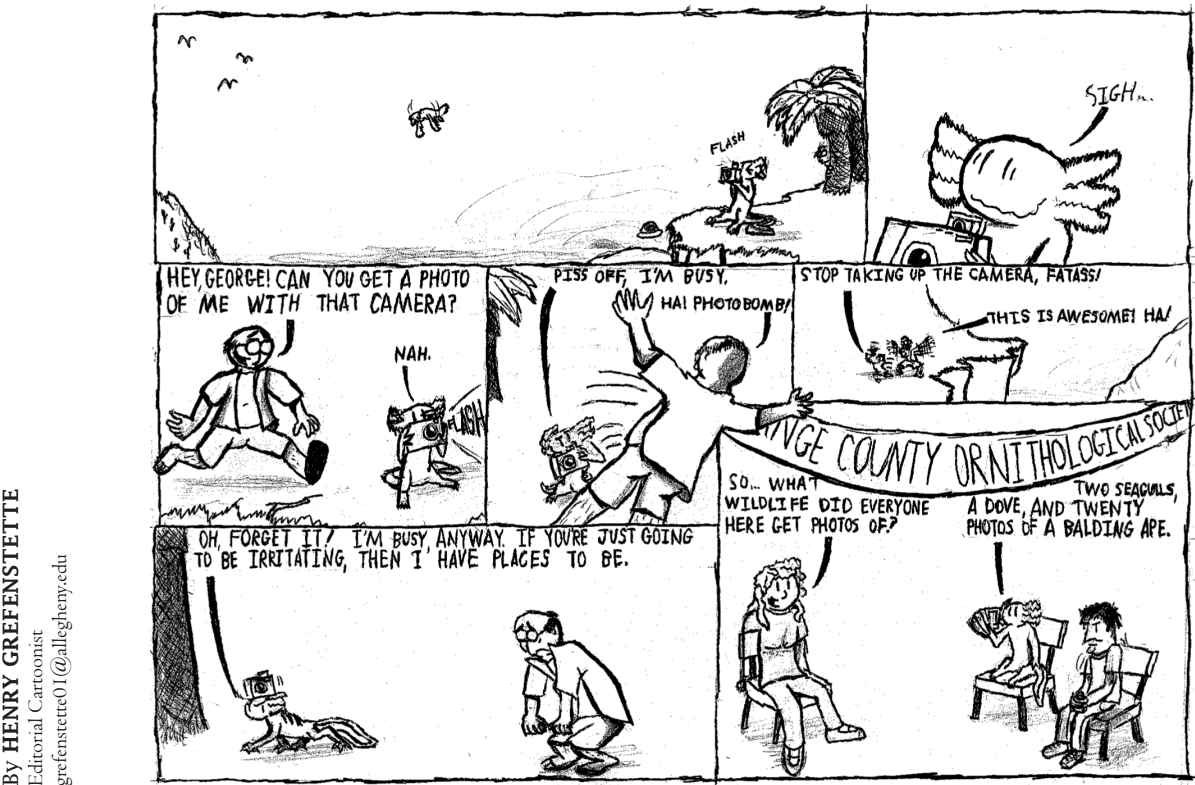
AP published a piece on Feb. 8 explaining why they called Nevada GOP caucuses for Donald Trump.

The reasoning for calling the race? Trump had received nearly 98% of the vote.

Cuba has charged 30 people for stealing 133 tonnes (roughly 146 tons) of chicken and selling them on the street, according to Reuters.

“It took a lot of luck to find the chicken truck. The heist had us dumbstruck and had a lot of angry citizens running amuck,” said one of the authorities who caught the thieves. “Thankfully they stole some live chickens as well and we could follow their clucking, which helped us with the criminal plucking.”

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This week in Allegheny history, as told by The Campus

Feb. 16, 1915

- It is reported that Andrew Carnegie agreed to lay the cornerstone of the new building known as Carnegie Hall. At this time, Carnegie Hall was being built as Allegheny’s new chemistry building. The college praised Carnegie’s agreement to participate in the ceremony despite his “weight of years.”
- In athletic reporting, Allegheny’s sports teams are referred to as “Gold and Blue” rather than the present-day “Gators,” or “Blue and Gold”.
- Duzer Du, the men’s dramatic society, announce their annual production of the year to be “The Dictator” by Richard Harding Davis

Feb. 16, 1927

- A bowling schedule for the Inter-Frat Bowling tournament was announced. The fraternities that participated are as follows: Phi Delta Theta, Beta Upsilon, Beta Kappa, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Phi Kappa Psi, Phi Gamma Delta, Alpha Chi Rho, and Delta Tau Delta. There were also sections available for faculty and non-fraternity students to participate.
- In “Society News,” The Campus reports the visitors and guests of Allegheny’s fraternities.
- The Campus published an editorial arguing for more fairness in examinations, highlighting the lack of fairness in one or two tests causing grade depletion.

Feb. 16, 1956

- Eric Newton, an art critic of the London Times and Manchester Guardian, is announced to speak on campus Feb. 17 at 8:15pm in Ford Chapel.
- When asking for suggestions for improvements at Allegheny, students comment on the need for a traffic light on the “North Main Speedway,” alongside a need for more social life on campus.

By **PIPER BOOKER**
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Feb 16, 1973

- On the front page of The Campus, The Campus’ staff apologizes for only being able to bring a partial article on the front page. In the student’s words, “At approximately 2:30 a.m. this morning one of our zillion dollar wonder-machines died a horrible death ... We make no promises regarding the future, however, zzz In as much as it is almost 6:00 a.m., we disclaim responsibility for our actions. Zzzzzzzzzzzzz.”
- Campus staff also had to announce that whoever was throwing away 200-300 newspapers in the men’s dining hall trash can could face criminal action, and to contact campus staff if they knew any information about this “theft”.

Feb 16, 1973 (cont’d)

- Tensions rise at ASG. A “Letter to the Editor” condemns the actions of one particular campaign person of an ASG candidate who, allegedly, pretended to be the Chairman of the Voting Committee to receive off-campus student phone numbers. The letter connects the missing Campus newspapers to the previous issue’s ASG election coverage.
- In another “Letter to the Editor,” a student complained about the “pitiful” grass covering Allegheny’s campus, encouraging students to walk on the sidewalks instead of the ground.

NaviGator Spotlight: the NaviGators

By **the NAVIGATORS**
Contributing Writers

What is something you want your peers to know about your role as a NaviGator?

Maya Francisco, ’24: NaviGators are peers who can help you find resources on campus, connect with professors or people involved in activities you’re interested in, and someone to be a support system for you if you want. Many of us span across different class years with varying interests and experiences, thus, you have a diverse range of people you can always go talk to.

Landon Schmader, ’26: Connecting with the Navigators are a great way to learn about any activity or experience that you might want to pursue on campus!

Ethan Borsh, ’25: Navigators are students too! We’ve either been in your shoes or worn a similar pair before. What we offer is the chance to connect with a peer without worrying about some of the usual stressors associated with that level of interaction.

Regarding academics and studying, what do you wish you knew your first year at Allegheny?

Zach Fry, ’24: I wish I knew how accepting and understanding professors are. They are humans too and get busy weeks and sometimes

struggle to catch up. As long as you communicate that you may be late on an assignment or need a little more help with a topic they are very willing to help. I also wish I knew the 40-20 trick for studying. The way it works is you study for 40 minutes and rest for 20 minutes. This keeps me from getting burnt out and stops me from getting distracted so much. Although there are many different ways to study, the 40-20 method works best for me.

LS: When I first came to campus, I wished I would have realized that studying in different places can be beneficial. In my first semester I would exclusively study in my dorm and it was quite difficult to focus because I was looking at the same walls all the time. Giving yourself a break from your room is a great way to keep yourself focused on your work. I also suggest utilizing a study group once in a while! It can be helpful to work on difficult projects or assignments with people to bounce ideas off of!

For students looking to get involved on campus, where should they start?

MF: Students should start with the involvement fair, looking online at the list of student clubs and organizations, and most importantly, figure out your own interests or priorities first. It’s very important to un-

derstand yourself a bit before exploring all of the interests. I recommend answering some of these questions for yourself by taking inventory on what you’re involved in now.

Do you have a campus job?
What is your work load?
How do I want to spend my time and effort?
What are my interests and are there ways to get involved relating to those interests?

Pallas Cain, ’25: Students that want to get involved can go to the involvement fair at the beginning of every semester. Clubs and organizations will be there to talk to you and answer any questions you may have. You can also reach out directly to the person in charge of the club online through the Allegheny College website which will usually provide their name and email. Alternatively, you can always talk to friends and see what they are involved in and ask when the meetings are. Finally, I recommend checking the MyAllegheny emails every morning for campus updates and looking at the posters throughout the campus center regularly. Who knows, you might spot an event that sounds super interesting!

How do you stay organized?

ZF: Google Calendar is the best way (in my opinion) to keep track of your day. You can plan study times, classes, and morning routines, you

can make it as simple or complex as you decide you want it to be. As for keeping track of assignments, Google Keep is another useful tool to use. One thing that always helped me was keeping stuff in the same media, for example, keeping the entire class worth of work either on paper or online.

PC: I use Google Calendar to keep track of all my assignments and daily events. I also think it is important to keep your Google Drive as organized as possible. It will save you a lot of time in the long run to already have everything sorted into folders per class.

EB: I find that it’s essential to think of planning as its own activity, rather than something you do in the moment or along with other things. It’s important to set aside time to focus on being organized. Each night before bed, I make a point to make a to-do list for the next day— finding a similar ritual can be extremely helpful.

What is one piece of advice you would give to a new student?

MF: Don’t be afraid to ask others about opportunities or help. Many of us have found our interests and ways to navigate college and Allegheny lifestyle in general. Utilize all of the resources and people on campus whether that’s professors, career education, student-success center,

friends and classmates. Everyone has something to offer, and eventually you too can help others.

ZF: Sign up and do everything that even mildly interests you, and if at some point you decide that you do not want to do that club/organization/topic anymore, then drop it. It is much easier to get involved with something you like if you cast a wide net. Nobody will be disappointed if you do not like the topic that they like and they will understand if you have to drop something for almost any reason. Remember the answer to everything is no unless you ask.

EB: The most important thing you can do for your academic life is to leave time for yourself to be bored. Work life balance is incredibly undervalued in academia and often we try to fight this by scheduling ‘time off’. It took me a long time to realize that even though I enjoy participating in clubs and hanging out with friends, it doesn’t tackle the stress of school like head on.

Instead of scheduling time to relax—try to make your schedule flexible so that you can work on your own time. This often means working ahead but this pays dividends. Also, being bored allows you the chance to reflect and learn more about yourself.

Humphreys gives Weiss lecture on H. ducreyi

By **ALYSSA GENT**
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In the '80s, research on HIV was at an all-time high, including research into other bacteria like Haemophilus ducreyi that help facilitate the virus. According to the National Library of Medicine, this HIV-focused era fizzled out with the popularization of functional treatments. With less interest in HIV, interest in the very niche and treatable H. ducreyi no longer garnered the attention of researchers. Here at Allegheny College Professor of Biology, Biochemistry, and Global Health Studies Tricia Humphreys and her students are trying to change that.

In the most recent edition of the Karl W. Weiss '87 Faculty Lecture Series on Feb. 7, Humphreys presented the fundamentals of the scientific paper she authored that is currently in review to be published.

H. ducreyi is most known for its Chancroid variant, a sexually transmitted disease that raises one's risk of contracting HIV. In the 1980s,

this made it a hot topic to research because of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and lack of information about the logistics of this disease. In recent years it has seen more attention for the nonsexually transmittable variant of cutaneous ulcers that are becoming increasingly common in children located around the equator.

The first of the research done in Humphreys' lab has to do with alternative treatments for H. ducreyi. In research that has already garnered some attention, Humphreys' students tested different essential oils against the bacteria's growth in hopes of finding a more affordable treatment for the bacteria.

To make this potential treatment even more accessible, the students did not use any niche lab equipment. Instead, they opted to use common household appliances like blenders. Overall, clove, thyme and cinnamon proved able to significantly inhibit H. ducreyi. These natural treatments were also effective against antibiotic-resistant strains of the infection.

Not quite done with their research, students began to

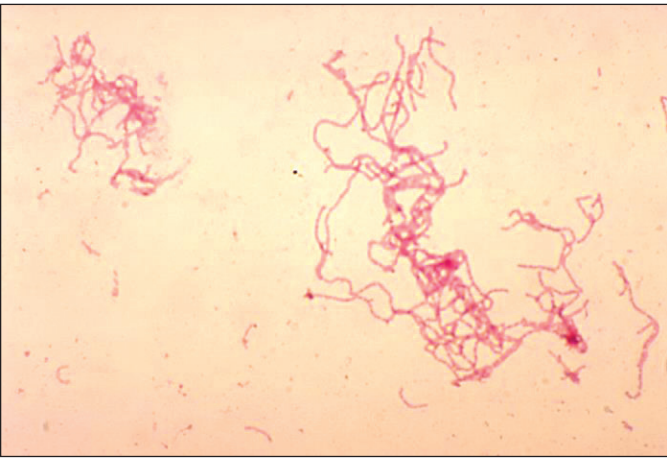


Image source: Wikimedia Commons

A gram-negative specimen of H. ducreyi.

test Resveratrol, a compound commonly found in peanuts, cranberries and products derived from grapes like juice or wine. It is a known anti-oxidant — meaning it could help your body resist aging and cancer, and has a whole slew of other health benefits. Resveratrol was promising in its ability to kill H. ducreyi, but for a treatment to make it off the ground, it would need to be assured not to attack the “good” bacteria in one's body.

The lab team set out to learn more by testing it against both H. ducreyi and Lactobacillus. Lactobacillus is found in many “probiotics”

like yogurt and it is also the most prominent component of human vaginal flora. Resveratrol's goal was to kill the bad bacteria (H. ducreyi) but not the good bacteria (Lactobacillus). In every test using this compound, there was a significant elimination of H. ducreyi whereas Lactobacillus was left relatively unharmed, which supports the validity and safety of Resveratrol as a potential treatment.

The bulk of the presentation, however, was about their research into how the disease spreads. H. ducreyi was largely considered an STD, until the non-sexually

transmitted variant was rediscovered in 2014 as part of a global campaign to eradicate Yaws. Often characterized by the same large ulcers found in this new variant of H. ducreyi, Yaws is a skin infection found in very similar parts of the world. The sores that were found primarily on the legs of children were not successfully cured by the Yaws treatment, so the wounds were tested. Many of them were found to contain H. ducreyi bacteria as well as Yaws.

For years, no one knew the connection between H. ducreyi and Yaws until pictures of the children's ulcers were examined more closely. Many of the photos showed flies swarming the wounds. This led Humphreys' lab to hypothesize that the flies could be transporting this bacteria into the cuts of kids with Yaws infections while playing outside.

To find out if this was feasible, they planned a series of experiments that started with consulting an entomologist local to the affected area. They identified that the flies involved could be one of three species, one of them being

houseflies.

To see if the flies could be the vehicle for H. ducreyi, the team spent weeks raising housefly larvae in the lab. Once these flies were mature, they were left in closed tubes with a cotton ball covered in trace amounts of H. ducreyi. The houseflies were extremely hesitant at first to touch the cotton ball, but when hungry and prompted with food, they would briefly land on it. After landing, the flies were prompted to land on petri dishes. After allowing the dishes to incubate, they were measured to test whether or not the flies could carry the bacteria. Canada's Health Safety department says that H. ducreyi can only last for short increments outside of very sterile lab circumstances, but the experiments found that flies were able to transport viable bacteria for more than an hour.

Despite being only one of two teams in America currently researching H. ducreyi, Humphreys said she and her students are making leaps in increasing our understanding of this bacteria.

‘Meeting this Moment’ book releases on UMC ties

By **PAIGE KAGENI**
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If not for the funding provided by the Pittsburgh Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Allegheny College would have likely permanently been closed forever. The partnership allowed not only Allegheny to remain open, but also maintained a close relationship with the church for many years. This relationship, however, was re-examined through a modern lens when some policies of the church were considered to be problematic.

A symposium took place March 17 and 18 of 2023 to discuss the ethics of this relationship. Joanne Berger-Sweeney, the president of Trinity College, Rev. Peter Weaver, a former United Methodist Church bishop and Vice President of Religion at the Chattanooga Institution Melissa Spas, '03, were all keynote speakers offering their opinions on the matter. The notes, speeches, and other relevant anecdotes were then collected into a volume, edited and compiled by Chaplain Emerita Jane Ellen Nickell with help from Charlie Waid, '25. This

volume was made not to argue in any particular way, but to educate those reading it to find their own conclusions on the matter, according to Nickell. The books are now available for free at the Merriman Campus Store.

In an interview last week, Nickell spoke about her experience creating the book.

“In 2019 and 2020, there was a lot of conversation on campus because the United Methodist Church passed a really restrictive policy surrounding LGBTQ persons,” Nickell said. “At that time, both the faculty and the student government petitioned the Board of Trustees to disaffiliate. The trustees were considering that, but it felt like the conversation was just really, obviously highly charged, a very hurtful issue for a lot of people in our community and that we really didn't have a robust conversation about it.”

At specific issue is the church's 2019 “Traditional Plan,” which punishes clergy that perform same-sex marriage and that identify as LGBTQ. Allegheny has suspended its affiliation and is not accepting donations from the church until the Traditional Plan is repealed. The

Campus reported in 2022.

Nickell says she was also approached to consider a church-related institution grant that specifically looked at its social context, which matched the conversations being had at the time. This inspired her team to hold a symposium similar to one that was held in 1991 on the church and college relationship.

“It was not, and I want to make this very clear, it was not to decide whether we should or should not be affiliated with the Methodist Church,” Nickell said. “That's a decision for the Board of Trustees.”

Nickell also emphasized the point of this symposium was not to make a final decision on the relationship between the college and the church, but to have a larger conversation.

“Part of the grant was that we would then publish those papers and addresses in a book so that the conversation wouldn't just end and that we could carry it farther than the people who were there that weekend,” she said.

Waid also worked to compile research and other useful information relating to the subject.

“I was mainly tasked with researching and writing about the history of the college's relationship with the Methodist Church, and how it had changed over time.” Waid wrote in an email to The Campus. “From a students perspective, I appreciate being more aware of where Allegheny stands with the Methodist church and what decisions will be made in the future that can alter this relationship.”

Nickell also shared that the information from the book can help in ethics debates and other problemsolving courses. Because they were able to print out extra copies, the book has even been mailed out to presidents of other Methodist-affiliated colleges who may be considering their own affiliations.

“One of the papers I thought was really helpful and I think can be helpful to other institutions considering this, but any time that you'd find an ethical conflict, was a paper by Rev. Erik Hoeke,” Nickell said.

In his paper, Hoeke used an example of three friends deciding where to eat for lunch. One friend, a vegetarian, wants to dine at a vegetarian restaurant. However, an-



JOSEPH KLEPEIS/THE CAMPUS

The proceedings of the 2023 conference that was held to evaluate Allegheny's affiliation with the Methodist Church are now available in a book free to students in the Merriman Campus Store.

other friend wants to only eat at a local restaurant to specifically support small businesses, demonstrating conflicting ethics between individuals. The paper went over how to resolve ethical conflicts such as these, as well as others that readers may find themselves in.

Waid said he learned a lot about the process of research for this book and that he hopes readers will be able to take away the skill of being able to educate themselves to

voice their opinions.

“Decisions will need to be made in the future of their current relationship status and I hope people will be more inclined to voice their opinions with the information provided by this book,” Waid wrote.

Nickell shared a similar sentiment.

“I guess the take away would be ‘This is not a simple yes or no question,’” Nickell said. “And I think that's why I like Erik Hoeke's paper; it gets

Holmes to present at Single Voice Feb. 22

By **EVELYN ZAVALA**
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The Allegheny College English department will host the latest installment of the Single Voice Reading Series, featuring authors and faculty sharing their work and insights into the literary world, on Feb. 22 at 7 p.m. in the Tiltonson Room.

Assistant Professor of English Lauren Holmes will be reading from her short story collection “Barbara the Slut and Other People” and will likely read a second unfinished non-fiction work tentatively titled “Such a Bad Dog.”

Department Chair and Associate Professor of English Matthew Ferrence will be introducing Holmes at the Single Voice reading event.

“She's like a multi-tool narrative writer who has come to us with quite a bit of experience teaching creative writ-

ing, primarily a fiction writer and a screenwriter,” Ferrence said. “She is someone who can cross different thresholds in our program and meet students in a different way than we've had before which we're excited about.”

Holmes went to Hunter College for her MFA in fiction and during her thesis, she wrote a collection of short stories that later turned into her book “Barbara the Slut.” The book is about a woman who pretends to be a lesbian to work in a lesbian sex toy store.

Through teaching, Holmes said she has continued growing as a writer as she learns along with her students. Some course materials she uses include scripts, shows and movies.

“I think just being engaged in the act of talking about writing and craft keeps those things at the forefront of my mind,” Holmes said. “In some

cases, materials I've sourced and prepared for classes have made a big impact on my own work.”

One of Holmes' greatest strengths in teaching is her ability to focus on the fundamentals of character-based storytelling, according to Ferrence

“In the class I was observing — it was an advanced workshop last fall — she made a comment thinking about the difference between plot and story,” Ferrence said. “I think this is indicative of her immense talents and skills as a professor of creative writing.”

Holmes explained that her literary process has involved letting go of the pressure for her work to progress in a specific direction.

“I try to be open to all my ideas about the project and also recognize that my first ideas may not be my final ideas,” Holmes said. “For ex-

ample, in my current work in progress, I've started completely over from a blank page three times, with different formats and scopes, and within each of those rounds I've done many drafts.”

According to Holmes, many of the themes in her writing have unintentionally come up later in the process.

“I think for ‘Barbara the Slut,’ some of the common threads in the stories are identity and searching for belonging,” Holmes said. “Those themes have extended to my other work as well.”

In Holmes' latest project, she explores her search for identity through her experience with adopting a misbehaved dog in her late 20s.

“She helped me figure out who I was going to be as an adult,” Holmes said. “And she gave me an immediate sense of belonging; she was my family.”

Throughout Holmes' career, she has overcome setbacks and is now grateful for the new paths that have opened because of them. During her publishing journey, her current work-in-progress was rejected in the early version which has led her to start over multiple times and explore different directions.

“Many of the setbacks I've faced in my creative career have ultimately been for the best,” Holmes said. “Thinking back to when I applied to MFA programs straight out of college and didn't get into a single one, that felt like a huge setback at the time.”

Two years after applying to MFA programs for the first time, Holmes re-applied and was accepted in an MFA program she had not applied to the first time.

“I met wonderful mentors, wonderful friends and readers I wouldn't have met if it

hadn't gone that way,” Holmes said. “It's the same thing with the initial proposal for my current book, because if it had somehow been accepted, it would have been a very different book than it is now. And I'm glad I'm writing this version.”

Professor of English and organizer of the Single Voice series Christopher Bakken said students will have the opportunity to ask questions and encourages them to ask questions about anything that comes to mind.

“There is something profound about attending a literary reading and simply swimming in someone else's language,” Bakken said. “I encourage people to come and take notes — not necessarily to summarize what happened, but to record the experience of letting words impact them physically.”

Baseball swings into season with two road trips

By KYLE CHANDLER
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Another season of America’s pastime is around the corner. Opening day for Allegheny baseball is scheduled for Feb. 24 in Beckley, West Virginia, when the Gators head south for a set of games against the John Carroll Blue Streaks at Linda K. Epling Stadium.

Last year was the first time Allegheny’s athletic teams competed in the Presidents’ Athletic Conference since 1984. Baseball finished fifth, narrowly missing the playoffs with a 13-7 conference record.

The Gators are projected to finish two spots higher this campaign, according to the PAC website, but they have bigger goals in mind.

“We want to be a team on the map that people recognize,” said Jonathan Sharp, ’24. “Step one is winning a PAC Championship. During my time here a championship hasn’t been won, so that’s going to be the first step. Moving on, getting our name to a regional level. But, really it’s just going to be game-by-game. Always be 1-0 and not look too far ahead and not look too far in the past, but just be in the present.”

A veteran on the diamond, Sharp is nicknamed “The Warden” for his leadership. He has to be vocal behind the dish, and it translates to him being an outstanding teammate.

He has earned his spot as the opening day catcher.

“He is special,” said head

coach Brandon Crum. “If anyone’s child could grow up to be like somebody and they be like Sharp, they did right.”

Allegheny will fly down to Maryville College following their affair in the Mountain State, beginning their spring break trip with another three-game series. The sequel continues over the next five games in North Carolina, with two contests against Guilford College before taking on Pfeiffer University.

The players will reside in cabins located within the Smoky Mountains, an experience quite different from the team’s trip last year to Arizona.

“I think we have a cool opportunity where every couple of years we can show these guys different parts of the country,” Crum said. “If they haven’t been in certain locations, it gives them a different perspective. I think that’s a really cool aspect of the student-athlete experience.”

Crum, named the 24th head baseball coach in Allegheny program history in August 2017, has led the Gators to a 103-83 record. His only losing season in his six prior years at the helm came during his first.

He instills a hard-working attitude into his philosophy, according to the team. They believe the Gators are in good hands, with Crum’s family-first mentality and ability to connect with his players on a personal level, even beyond their years in the program.

Upon the Blue and Gold’s return home, they will take

the diamond at Robert Garbark Field against the University of Rochester on March 16. One week later, conference play begins with Franciscan University rolling into town.

This will be the second year Allegheny steps foot on to the newly renovated turf infield. Since the replacement of prior dirt, the players have been more intentional with their reps, according to Crum.

Infielders now have the luxury of taking ground balls in a game-like situation during cold weather. Each practice has also been spaced out to better accommodate the athletes.

“It alleviates a ton of pressure to constantly get things in on a certain time constraint,” Crum said. “(Players) balance their days tremendously better, and they have more time for academic stuff in the evening.”

There is still plenty of opportunity for chemistry to be built, despite the scattered schedule. Sharp said there is a strong work ethic within the Gators culture. The team makes time for extra work together outside of the designated practice hours.

Part of the Gators’ dedication has been built through toughness — an area of focus that Crum focused on during the offseason. Part of the program included a segment titled the “Gator grit challenge”.

A series of events held each week to induce inner-team competition, strength and condition tests were performed with a point system that rewarded players for

their tenacity. The top ten guys for each event received recognition.

In the end, Dylan Fanelli, ’26, was crowned champion.

“It meant the world to me,” Fanelli said. “People were able to see the time I put in. My job was to be able to make sure I was ready for when my name was called, and I felt like that was a test to what I did behind closed doors.”

During the offseason, Fanelli was recognized by D3baseball.com as part of the online publication’s 2023 summer honor roll for his impressive arm showcased with the San Francisco Seals, a club team in the Bay Area Collegiate League.

The right-hander worked 43 innings on the bump, registering a 2.93 ERA and 1.06 WHIP against some of the West Coast’s best.

Fanelli, Sharp and other Allegheny players also gel in another big way — playing for a purpose greater than themselves. Faith has a monumental impact on the Gators.



Having a faith-backed team is huge for connection and synergy throughout everything we do ... It just makes the team stronger as a whole”

—NICK BANEZ
Class of 2026

Over 30% of the roster attends Bible study sessions together, and some are regulars in Allegheny’s Fellowship of Christian Athletes club. They hold a prayer before every game begins, and it bonds the team in more ways than the sport they love.

“It’s definitely one of the most important aspects of the team,” said Nick Banez, ’26. “Having a faith-backed team is huge for connection and synergy throughout everything we do. It helps with connecting with each other. We can turn to each other whenever we need to, and it just makes the team stronger as a whole.”

Having one of the smooth-

est gloves at any level of collegiate baseball, Banez represents the ideal utility infielder. Crum said he brings a surprisingly loud pop with his bat and has home run hitting ability.

He attributes his success to the training program he went through over the summer at Optimal Power Performance. It sets Banez up to train every rep with intensity, because he believes a player should train how one plays the game — at 110%.

Allegheny exhibits loads of talent throughout their roster. Everyone on the team is thrilled to work towards the chance for their first conference crown since 1999.



Image source: alleghenygators.com

The Gator baseball team gathers together after a home game last year.

Basketball falls in final home games of regular season

By KYLE CHANDLER
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In the final home games of the 2023-24 regular season, the Allegheny men’s and women’s basketball teams were dealt a pair of losses at the hands of Saint Vincent College.

Both games were tight and featured battles down to the final buzzers.

Women’s game

The Bearcats women’s roster (12-12, 10-9 PAC) got off to a hot start, jumping on Allegheny in the first quarter. The Gators (13-10, 12-7 PAC) swung momentum back in their favor, closing the gap to

two points heading into the halftime locker room.

In the third quarter, the seesaw contest continued. Allegheny took their first lead of the night coming out of the break, and held a three-point lead heading into the final ten minutes.

It quickly dissipated, as the Bearcats outscored the Gators 24-15 in the fourth period, taking hold of the lead late.

Allegheny found themselves in foul trouble early in the period, leading Saint Vincent to the free-throw line on multiple occasions. In total, the Bearcats registered 24 tries at the foul line, converting 18.

Turnovers also played a

pivotal part in the Gators’ loss, racking up 20 by the final buzzer.

Despite the loss, Allegeny clinched a playoff berth with their last win over Franciscan. It was a disappointing finish to their home season, but the team still has their heads held high.

“Take what we learn from this one and move onto the next,” said assistant coach Christina Davis. “We played hard. It was a very physical game tonight. It was a good game, good experience for our girls and for us as coaches as well.”

With the loss, Allegheny hosting a home playoff game is on hold.

A win against the Washington and Jefferson Presidents on Saturday, Feb. 17, would earn them the No. 3 seed in the Presidents’ Athletic Conference playoff bracket. Opening tipoff is scheduled for 1 p.m.

Men’s game

The men’s team had a chance to play spoiler against the No. 2-seeded Bearcats (21-3, 16-3 PAC).

They jumped on Saint Vincent early, boasting a seven point lead in the first half. The Gators (6-18, 4-15 PAC) held the lead for nine of the opening 20 minutes.

The largest lead of the night for the Bearcats came in

the second half, up 10 points.

Allegheny fought their way back to make it close. Trailing by four with 22 seconds left, Saint Vincent’s Dev Ostrowski cashed in a pair of free throws to bump the lead to six.

Preston Turk, ’24, answered with a three-pointer to trim the deficit in half.

With 10 seconds left, the Gators were forced to foul. Saint Vincent’s Tayler McNeal hit two more shots from the stripe, making it a two-possession game and sealing the deal.

“It was a really good showing for our team,” said head coach Josh Clemens. “We really wanted to focus on defense and matching the phys-

icality of a great Saint Vincent team.”

Nine members of the Gators’ roster found the scoring column. Led by James Sitter, ’26, with 12 points, the Gators shot 49% from the field.

Their final game of the season will be in Washington, Pennsylvania, when they take on the Presidents following the women’s team.

“We always aim to win,” Clemens said. “It’s what you want to do as a team. Really do a great thing for our seniors and show them that we’re still fighting for them, no matter what our placement is in the PAC. Our main goal is to be competitive every night and we’ve been doing so.”



Image source: alleghenygators.com

Sophia Genareo, ’25, at the free-throw line. She had nine points, shooting 3-11 from the field during the Gators defeat to Saint Vincent.



Image source: alleghenygators.com

James Sitter, ’26, looks to pass the ball while being covered by a Bearcat. He finished as the Gators’ leading scorer in the loss with 12 points.