



Students demand university action at protest



KELLEN STEPLER, GRIFFIN
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The Duquesne Duke

Dannielle Brown, the mother of Marquis Jaylen “JB” Brown, who fell to his death from the window of Brottier Hall in 2018, began a march Friday morning across Pittsburgh college campuses.

It was Day 70 of her hunger strike.

The march, named “40 for 40” by the organizers, took place on the 19th anniversary of 9/11. It is representative of JB’s jersey number and the 40 people who lost their lives on Flight 93, which crashed in Shanksville, Pa.

Brown and the crowd started in Shadyside at Chatham University, before moving to Oakland and addressing students at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh. The group walked past Carlow University before arriving at Duquesne and spent about two hours on campus, drawing rebukes from campus administration.

At 4:17 p.m., Duquesne emailed a statement to all students expressing “strong disapproval” of the march, citing it as “willful trespassing.”

“The crowd today chose to endanger thousands of people unnecessarily,” the administration said. “They utilized bullhorns and microphones, disrupted classes and the work of students these protesters claim to value.”

Wrapping around Rooney Field when they first arrived, Brown and her supporters carried large banners — “For your sons and daughters, for the mothers,” marching their way to Academic Walk where students present took a knee to honor JB.

At 1 p.m. Brown began a speech by thanking the student body for “being her children during this time.” She spoke of grieving the loss of her son and sympathizing with the mothers who lost their children on Sept. 11.

Brown began her hunger strike July 4 in protest of how she be-



On Day 70 of her hunger strike, Dannielle Brown stood in front of Brottier Hall, where her son fell to his death in 2018, and gave a speech to protesters further demanding university action on the case and increased police accountability.

lieves Duquesne’s administration has improperly handled the loss of her son.

Her demands include full access to the investigative reports into her son’s death as well as an independent investigation, while also making body cameras, increased mental health crisis and de-escalation training mandatory for university police.

The university has said it’s attempted to meet her demands by offering an in-person viewing of the files and ordering body cameras. Administrative officials said they tried to reach out to Brown’s attorney to review the files but could not reach him.

Brown, who has remained primarily on Freedom Corner in the Hill District during her hunger strike, said Friday she didn’t think the university has done enough to reach out to her and show its support.

“They really do know how to find me, I’m right there,” Brown said. “I’ve got concerns. I’ve got real concerns for the students of Duquesne University.”

Brown said she does not believe her concerns relate to race, but instead are an issue of police negligence.

“I want to be an ambassador and help you all ... help you all fix the problem. It’s about starting a foundation,” Brown said.

She concluded her first speech by reminding the audience why

she is doing this.

“Although I want to hold my baby one more time, my work here is not done,” she said.

From there, Brown invited volunteers from the crowd to raise their voices, passing the microphone to students willing to give their perspective on the matter.

Students spoke up about their frustrations at receiving few answers in Brown’s case, giving speeches about justice, peace and “wanting better for Duquesne’s campus.”

Around 2 p.m. Brown, along with the crowd of students and supporters, met at the entrance to Brottier Hall, where JB fell out of his 16th floor window two years ago. Over the next hour, the crowd grew to about 100 people, including Brottier residents and Duquesne students.

Duquesne Police guarded the entrance of the residence hall as the crowd gathered in the circle, surrounding Brown and her supporters. The outside entrance of the building was restricted to swipe-only access.

Multiple speakers addressed the crowd, ending with a speech from Brown, in which she called out Duquesne’s administration. Under her arm she held a sign stating, “16 Stories, 4 Personnel, NO ANSWERS!”

During her speech, Brown gestured to the building’s windows and stated that Brottier installed new windows because of her son.

Professor who used racial slur demands reinstatement

KELLEN STEPLER
editor-in-chief

Gary Shank, the Duquesne professor placed on administrative leave Friday due to racially insensitive comments in class, is demanding to be reinstated by the university in a letter submitted to university president Ken Gormley Wednesday, Sept. 16.

The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), an organization that focuses on protecting free speech rights on American college campuses, wrote an email to Gormley to “immediately reinstate Shank and publicly reaffirm that its faculty retain the broad rights of free expression and academic freedom that Duquesne promises.”

Gabriel Welsch, vice president of marketing and communications at Duquesne, said, “the university only today received the letter and is still reviewing it.”

The letter was sent in response to Shank’s suspension following the circulation of a video Friday of him using a racial slur in a Zoom lecture which led to him being placed on administrative leave.

In the video, Shank said the N-word repeatedly and gave students permission to use it. In the following lecture, Shank apologized repeatedly to the class.

He also sent an email in which he wrote that he was troubled by the impact his words had on the students, saying he considered them to be like family.

Shank declined to comment for this article.

Welsch said in an email to The Duke that Shank is not teaching, and another professor will be taking over the course, Educational Psychology.

Welsch also said that further specifics cannot be discussed, as this is a “personnel matter.”

In the video that circulated widely through social media, Shank explained how the word could be used

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POLICE BRIEFS

On Sept. 10, officers responded to Des Places Hall in regards to a roommate conflict. One student was put in another location that night and moved out. While officers were dealing with the situation, it was discovered that one of the roommates possessed a small amount of marijuana and paraphernalia. That student did admit to possessing the marijuana and paraphernalia and will be referred to the office of student conduct.

On Sept. 11, there was a report of a minor assault of a student in front of the doors to Brottier Hall during a protest.

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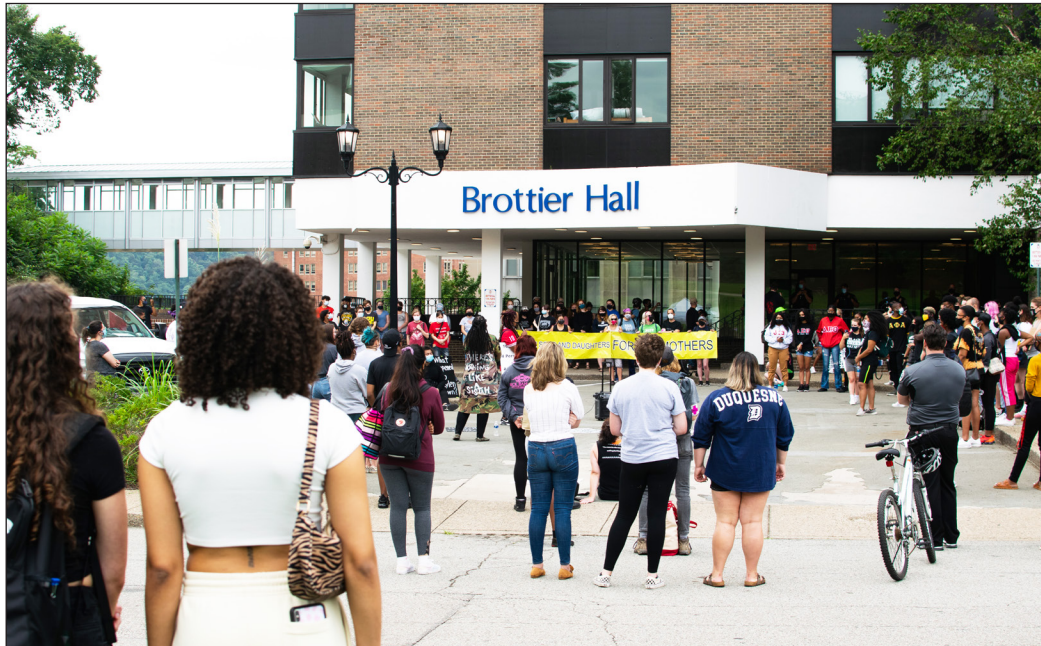
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Duq students marched with Dannielle Brown

from BROWN — page 1



GRIFFIN SENDEK / MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

At around 1 p.m. on Friday, Dannielle Brown marched through campus with a crowd of supporters, mainly students from other Pittsburgh colleges and universities. The event, called 40 for 40, was organized in honor of the 40 individuals who lost their lives due to the Flight 93 plane crash, and represented the number of JB's football jersey. The crowd arrived at Brottier Hall around 2 p.m. and gathered around the parking circle. Multiple students and residents of the building stopped by and stood with the crowd to listen to Brown's speech.



KATIA FAROUN / FEATURES EDITOR

After leading the crowd in a moment of silence for JB, Brown started singing a song dedicated to mothers and students. At one point during the song, she closed her eyes and held up her fist. Supporters and students that were part of the crowd joined her and raised their fists in solidarity. Some of the lyrics included, "For the mothers, I will stand. For the mothers, hand in hand. For the students, you have rights. For the students, I will fight."



KATIA FAROUN / FEATURES EDITOR

Outside of the building where her son died almost two years ago, Brown called out university administration and encouraged students to recognize and speak up for their rights. She expressed concern for Duquesne students.



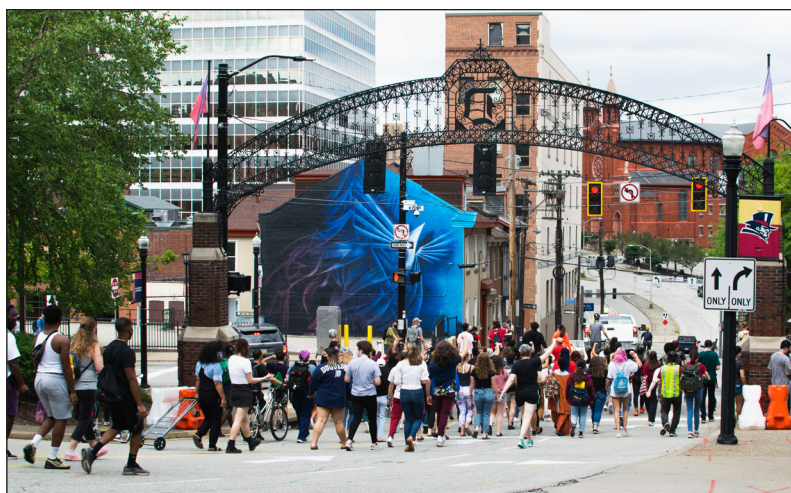
GRIFFIN SENDEK / MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Over the summer, Brown presented the university with three demands: an independent investigation with full access to information and resources; body cameras for all Duquesne University Police; and mandatory certification training in mental health, crisis intervention and de-escalation for police and all university first responders.



GRIFFIN SENDEK / MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Brown and the crowd of supporters gathered by a mural dedicated to JB located under a bridge on Fifth Ave. Brown shared a few words with the crowd before it dispersed.



GRIFFIN SENDEK / MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

After gathering outside of Brottier Hall, the crowd began marching down McNulty towards Fifth. Some students that were walking in between classes joined the other students and marched in solidarity with Brown. Pittsburgh Police closed off parts of Forbes and Fifth near the university to create space for the demonstrators.



CAPRI SCARCELLI / A&E EDITOR

The march across campus began at Rooney Field, where JB played in Duquesne football home games. The supporters gathered near a bench that the university dedicated to JB. Brown passed around a megaphone and students joined her in giving speeches relating to justice, peace and "wanting better for Duquesne's campus."

Education professor on paid leave after using racial slur

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in the “pedagogical sense.” He then gives examples of when the word was used when he was younger.

“It was one of the most uncomfortable classes I’ve ever participated in,” sophomore secondary education history major Katie Rhodes said. “Racial insensitivity is never ok and for a professor to hide behind a racial slur by saying it was for educational purposes is extremely disappointing and made me appalled.”

Rhodes said that the incident made her trust Shank less.

“The fact that he thought that it was ok to say that in class makes me afraid that things like that still happen,” Rhodes said. “As a future educator, I’m extremely upset. No student should have to feel scared to go to class and fear that they will hear a racial slur.”

The Duke obtained the Sept. 9 email Shank sent to his Educational Psychology class with the subject line, “My most sincere apology.” He wrote that the term “was deeply troubling to the class,” and he “must take responsibility for the impact of (my) words and teaching.”

“As a consequence, I am offering each and every one of you my most sincere apology and my guarantee that I will never cross this line again in our class. I consider my students to be like part of my family and so this is doubly troubling to me to have had this impact. If you would like to reach out personally to me, I am here to listen,” Shank wrote.

Sophomore Kaytlin Black, secondary education English major said “(The email) doesn’t do justice for all of the things he said in class today.”

“He spent the entire 50-minute Zoom class (Friday) apologizing,” Black said.

Black said her biggest takeaway from the whole thing was discouragement.

“Teaching wasn’t just a job to Dr. Shank, this man seriously wanted to educate and guide others and that’s what I obviously want to do, too...but this whole situation just makes me ponder that,” Black said. “I just wish for two seconds we could look at both sides and acknowledge he’s human. He wasn’t saying the things he did to hurt anyone or target anyone. He took a point he was trying to make just way too far. My heart seriously goes out to him right now.”

School of Education Dean Gretchen Generett sent a letter to students in the class within moments of learning about the incident. In the letter, she wrote that she learned about the incident from students who emailed their advisor. She also noted that a student emailed Shank directly.

“I understand that sending those emails was not easy and I want to thank students for using their voices to share the troubling and disturbing language that was used by your professor in class,” Generett wrote.

“To be clear, I believe that there is never a time, pedagogically or otherwise, for a professor to create a hostile learning environment,” Generett continued. “I know this from my experience as a student, a professor, and now as Interim Dean of the School of Education. Using the ‘N word’ or seemingly encouraging students to use that word is not in keeping with the mission of the University, the School of Education, or



COURTESY OF DUQ.EDU

Professor Gary Shank used a racial slur during his lecture on Fri. Sept. 11. the Pennsylvania Department of Education.”

She then wrote that this is a teachable moment.

“As an educator, you should always be mindful of the impact of your actions on the students you are obligated by the profession to teach,” Generett wrote. “Your intentions are of no consequence when a student’s learning is disrupted by what you believe to be okay. Your actions are what students will remember.”

Generett said that the matter is being taken very seriously by school of education leadership, and students can reach out to them if they have any ongoing questions or concerns.

Darian Reynolds, president of Duquesne’s BSU, said that there is no justification to use the slur.

“I don’t see how anyone can justify the use of that word in that context,” Reynolds said. “Whatever his intent was, it’s one of those things that shouldn’t be said.”

He noted that in the video, it was apparent what Shank was hinting at. The students in the

class were quiet and did not say the word themselves. Still, Shank took it upon himself to say it, Reynolds said.

“Hopefully this can be a start for people to recognize why we’re advocating and what we’re advocating,” he said. “It’s a blatant disregard to what we’ve been working towards. There’s no way to justify its use.”

On Saturday, Gormley wrote an email to all students saying that the incident was “not acceptable.”

He wrote that students should expect to hear from him on significant steps to create a more inclusive community on campus, on confronting racism and taking immediate action to bring our intellectual and ethical resources to bear on the issue.

“I will ask all of you—all of us—to be part of that work, in the spirit of Duquesne that is deeply committed to ensuring the dignity and equality of each member of the campus community,” Gormley wrote.

In the letter sent Wednesday by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, it cites numerous examples and previous court cases that touch upon “academic freedom” for colleges and universities.

“Academic freedom encompasses the right to discuss and present pedagogically-relevant material,” it said, noting that “expressive rights may not be curtailed on the basis that the expression is offensive to others.”

“The university is certainly free to criticize the manner in which faculty members confront racism, but Duquesne’s suspension of Shank is a clear erosion of the academic freedom to which

the university is committed,” according to the letter.

“Under any basic conception of academic freedom, the choice of whether and how to confront upsetting material in a pedagogically-relevant context is left to faculty members, not Administrators,” FIRE wrote. “Duquesne promises this right to its faculty and must not violate those promises. Doing so casts an unacceptable chill over the rights of Duquesne faculty who have relied on the institution’s promises and exposes the university to considerable legal liability.”

It also states that Duquesne’s commitments are legally binding -- that Duquesne’s move to punish Shank violates its legal obligations to faculty members to protect academic freedom, and exposes Duquesne to action by the U.S. Department of Education for unlawful misrepresentations. It argues that Duquesne’s abridgement of academic freedom violates the requirements of its accreditation, and that Shank’s discussion did not amount to harassment.

“Academic freedom does not extend to faculty members a right to engage in discriminatory conduct or harassment. However, the discussion of ideas, materials, or words that others find deeply offensive cannot alone amount to unprotected harassment or discriminatory conduct,” the letter states.

FIRE hopes to have a receipt of response to this letter no later than Wednesday, Sept. 23 confirming that Duquesne has abandoned any investigation into or punishment of Shank.

Campus COVID-19 Update: random testing has begun

KELLEN STEPLER
editor-in-chief

Duquesne University began voluntary random COVID-19 testing on campus last week.

According to Gabriel Welsch, vice president of marketing and communications at Duquesne, the testing collected 730 specimens from a “good proportion” of faculty, staff and students.

“The key isn’t random testing,” Welsch said. “It is testing asymptomatic people. Random testing was simply an approach used to identify a population of students and employees to participate in the asymptomatic test.”

The random testing, also known as surveillance or prevalence testing, focused on people who have no symptoms of illness and who live on-campus, attend classes in-person on campus or work on campus.

“The results of the test will be used to help the university continue to refine its testing strategy and understand asymptomatic disease on campus,” Welsch said.

Welsch said that Quest Labs conducts the tests, and that the results are back and being compiled for reporting to the campus community. Results will be made available to the campus community soon, Welsch said.

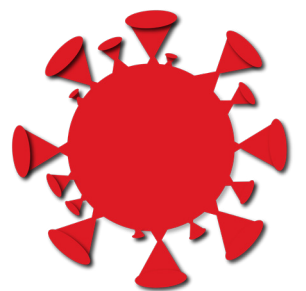
Participants with negative results will be notified via email, and those with positive results will be contacted directly.

“When the university does asymptomatic testing, it needs people chosen to consent to the testing,” Welsch said. “Those chosen through the randomized process to be tested will not be subject to conduct sanctions if found positive. The need to know true results is the most important element of the testing.”



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President Ken Gormley oversees the new COVID-19 random testing wearing both a surgical and cloth mask, as is becoming standard for COVID-19 testing on campus.



Date	New Confirmed Cases*	New Suspected Cases**	Currently Isolated on Campus	Currently Isolated at Home	Currently Quarantined in Hotel	Currently Quarantined at Home
9/15/2020	1	2	6	0	5	26

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The global pandemic accelerates emerging technologies

With COVID-19 disrupting lives in all four corners of the world, individuals in every country are adapting to a new reality of constant uncertainty, coupled with an intense desire to return to some form of normalcy.

From large and small businesses hanging up 'For Sale' signs in the wake of decreasing demand, to millions of employees being dismissed from jobs that were once considered protected, we are all familiar with the severe harm that has been inflicted on the global economy.

Business leaders have faced enormous pressure from stockholders, government officials and other stakeholders to prevent an entire collapse of the world economy by weathering the storm by any means necessary.

Companies quickly focused on reducing unnecessary costs and stabilizing cash flows by downsizing workforces, limiting investment in R&D and shifting remaining employees to an entirely online experience.

With a worldwide reduction in spending among firms and individuals, a common fear arose among the business community that capital investment would also diminish, and consequently, lead to the stifling of innovation and growth in emerging industries.

Although most industries will undoubtedly struggle un-

til a vaccine is produced, a silver lining prevails: The pandemic has paved the way for some emerging industries to accelerate growth, as new technology is being deployed in an effort to aid governments in their response to the worldwide health crisis.

In particular, blockchain has emerged as an essential tool for defeating COVID-19 as a result of its ability to empower the swift transmission of verifiable and secure information.

The concept of blockchain is confusing and unknown for the majority of people. Neverthe-

less, in the most basic sense, blockchain is a distributed, decentralized and "tamper-proof" ledger that attaches "blocks" (of information) into a "chain" (public database).

The crucial point to understand is that this technology enhances privacy because information in a blockchain can only be appended or viewed by users, rather than modified or removed.

For example, in a traditional database, one holds the capacity to read, write, edit and delete data. Conversely, in blockchain, one can only read and

write with existing information restricted from alterations and removal.

For these reasons, blockchain possesses the power to mitigate and provide relief from the damages caused by our invisible enemy: COVID-19.

First, by decentralizing the storage of personal information, blockchain can be used to build contact-tracing applications for monitoring those exposed to the virus in real-time while promoting anonymity among users.

In addition, a complex research network built upon blockchain infrastructure would allow governments and organizations to collect, share and access data necessary to tracking the movement of the virus and discovering relevant trends.

The applicability of this technology in addressing the global pandemic foreshadows blockchain's future relevance in real-world situations as a tool for accessing and transferring crucial information in a secure manner.

I ultimately believe that blockchain will rise from the ashes and garner widespread adoption across many industries as a necessary technology that can positively impact all levels of society by fostering transparency, dependability and most importantly, security.



NOAH WILBUR
opinions editor

Authorless university statement shows administrative apathy

ALEX WOLFE

staff columnist

Last week was undeniably challenging for the university administration. For the first time in years, if you type "Duquesne" into Google, you'll find coverage from mainstream national media outlets. However, coverage on the two statements released by Duquesne at 4 p.m. Friday and noon on Saturday is hard to come by.

The university first released a callous anonymous statement directly to all students decrying a peaceful protest that took place on campus. Moments later, footage on Twitter surfaced of an education professor giving students permission to use a racial slur in class, prompting Duquesne to release a second statement the following day.

Unsurprisingly, neither of these statements are visible on the Duquesne website.

Duquesne explained in its statement Friday afternoon that the protests "disrupted classes and the work of students these protesters claim to value." As Duquesne students, the true disruption has come from our concerns about the university's ability to maintain a welcoming environment for its students.

We are more distracted by the performative measures the university takes to "abide by guidelines" or "protect our community" than 90 minutes of marching

and speeches.

Hearing the bell chime atop Old Main is a quarterly reminder of the administration's distorted approach to racial justice and student engagement.

The anonymous statement ignores the history of civil disobedience, and specifically trespassing, as a form of non-violent protest in order to raise attention for an issue. Rosa Parks, the Freedom Riders and the dozens of sit-ins that we learn about in our classes at Duquesne were all instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights Acts of the 1960s.

Should it then come as a surprise to Duquesne that the students participating in the protest are following the words of the late Sen. John Lewis and getting into "good trouble, necessary trouble?"

The cowardice of the university on the issue is exemplified by the glaring lack of a signature on the statement. President Ken Gormley and vice president for student life Douglas Frizzell have regularly signed their names at the bottom of the statements released over the summer regarding protesters and COVID-19, but in the administration's most recent statements, signatures are missing.

In his Letter from Birmingham Jail, Martin Luther King Jr. expressed disappointment toward those "more devoted to order than to justice; who pre-



GRIFFIN SENDEK | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Students join together and demand answers about Marquis Brown's death.

fers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says, 'I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I can't agree with your methods of direct action.'"

Duquesne's attempt to delegitimize the protest by attacking its peaceful methods is exactly the type of position that inspired King's concerns. Duquesne's statement has forced students to reckon with the possibility that they are paying tuition to a university on the wrong side of the largest civil rights movement since MLK.

While the nation's eyes turn toward our community, we hold an opportunity to stand as an example against racism, bigotry

and more than anything else, unwelcomeness. We know that unambiguous racism, exhibited by the use of a racial slur, can be quickly extinguished with the heavy administrative hand.

Yet the lack of belonging felt by many students cannot be put on administrative leave or criticized in an anonymous email. In his June 1 statement on the Black Lives Matter protests, Gormley concluded by urging us all to "challenge ourselves as individuals — and as members of the Duquesne community — to serve the noble, pressing work of justice."

It is now time for us to hold Gormley and the university administration accountable to the same challenge.

Letter to the Editor: Comments on the President of College Republicans

I am writing this article not because I want to, but because I feel a moral obligation to do so. I am a white, registered Republican who is still trying to understand the depths of my privilege and what I can do with it to be a force for good in society. I am not here to ‘white knight’ or cause controversy when it is not warranted; I am just looking to call out bigotry when I see it.

Last week, during a Student Organization Presidents’ meeting, I witnessed a display by an organization president that I would characterize in no other way than bigoted and racist. The exchange floored me and other presidents I spoke to afterwards, which led me to reach out to *The Duke* and see if I could write on the topic.

If we don’t hold our own peers accountable for their actions, then who will? The unabashedly, morally bankrupt public display was shocking because it showed me that the issues plaguing our nation are a lot closer to home than I initially realized.

To provide a quick explanation of the situation, all of Duquesne’s organizations were asked to attend a Zoom meeting where some faculty and administrators could go over the new processes and best practices for running a student group in the world of COVID-19.

One such presentation was on diversity and inclusion, given by

Anthony Kane, Duquesne’s director for said department. Kane’s presentation was not only timely, but insightful and engaging. He spoke on the importance of making Duquesne feel like a home for everyone and provided very simple ways that organizations could look to do that.

After he spoke, he opened up to questions, which is where the exchange commenced. Here, the president of College Republicans, Alec Skomo, spoke on a situation over the summer where one of his members looked to go to an event put on by Kane’s department and was apparently denied entry based on his race.

Skomo’s tone was attacking, and he concluded his time on the soapbox by saying that the situation “... doesn’t seem to represent the equality and diversity that you just presented on.” Based on his tone alone and not the moot that came out of his mouth, you could just tell he was trying to get Kane in a cheap ‘gotcha’ moment.

Kane, to his credit, handled the situation perfectly. He already knew of the situation and gave more context as well as an offer to speak personally to Skomo at a later point.

The event in question was hosted by the office of Diversity and Inclusion and called The Village. The Village essentially provides a safe space and counseling services

to African Americans and other people of color. It’s a therapy session for marginalized groups who are living in the greatest time of racial unrest in decades.

The program is also advertised as being a place for people of color (POC) only, not in an exclusive sense but in a therapeutic and psychological one. If you think for a second that this College Republican attempted to go to the program with good intentions, then I have a bridge to sell you: that sentiment was only amplified after hearing the tone and words used by Skomo.

The exchange was a pathetic and pseudointellectual attempt to delegitimize Kane’s presentation and thus trivialize the plight of African Americans and other people of color.

First, it’s important to note that College Republicans is not a group that celebrates Republican classical-liberal values, but instead is just an extension of the Republican Party. The RNC could roll out Lord Voldemort as the nominee and College Republicans would have death eater tattoos within a week.

The group is a regurgitation of whatever rhetoric the party is conveying that year, and this is reflected publicly on Duquesne’s College Republicans’ Facebook page. On their feed, they described this newspaper as “liberal” because a student wrote an article opposing

the border wall. How could a student-run, open-forum newspaper be inherently liberal?

No one is stopping College Republicans from writing at *The Duke*. Either way, using the same tone and language as president Trump to characterize a student newspaper is equally hilarious and sad.

It is also important to note that the organization is advised by Dr. Audrey Guskey, a marketing professor here. Dr. Guskey, who never responded to my email offering the opportunity to comment, has had her own controversial dealings, including conducting prayer in business class while videotaping her students and posting it on her Facebook page without their consent, among other issues.

She also runs a business group called Consumer\$ence, and on June 2nd, at the peak of the George Floyd protests, essentially writes on this Facebook page that the recent events which have caused stores to close will result in companies running sales that will benefit consumers. Knowing the context of national events at the time, the insensitive post is still hard to read.

It’s very apparent that there needs to be some sort of cultural and institutional shift within the College Republicans of Duquesne.

As the president of the largest social fraternity on campus, I feel

that I have a personal responsibility to take action against bigotry on campus whenever I see it. I was shocked to realize that this type of cheap, politicized and ill-willed mentality exists at Duquesne on an organizational level.

In this time more than ever, it’s important to have candid conversations about race and other issues in our country. However, there is no open discourse when a party tries to delegitimize someone’s claim by creating a poor strawman argument propped up by trolling a group of their own marginalized peers. We cannot let people hide their bigotry under the guise of ‘Political Belief.’

What I heard last week was ugly — plain and simple.

Duquesne has taken great efforts to make this school welcoming and inclusive, but in the end true change can only be actualized by us, the students. I recommend that everyone reevaluate their friends and take pride in your own ability to be open minded, compassionate and welcoming to whomever crosses your path. We won’t be able to make any real difference until we start holding those around us accountable. Let’s make Duquesne not-racist again.

Sincerely,
Vince Gullo III

Reality TV has failed to represent ethnic minorities

ZOE STRATOS
staff columnist

In American culture, a long history of racism and underrepresentation in all aspects of life is there to be uncovered and talked about — and reality TV is no exception. In shows such as CBS’s *Big Brother* and MTV’s *The Challenge*, reality TV is rightfully facing a racial reckoning amid the Black Lives Matter movement.

In 1992, MTV aired the very first reality TV show called *The Real World*. Though criticized for tokenizing a variety of minorities, *The Real World* intentionally selected these individuals to give them a voice and a platform unprecedented in TV history.

Moreover, the show was a social experiment: what would happen if eight strangers representing different races, sexual orientations, religious and political beliefs were forced to live together for an extended period of time?

With cameras recording housemates at all times, viewers were able to see unscripted interactions between these people for the first time. Despite constant surveillance, housemates spoke their minds as if cameras weren’t present. These moments revealed *The Real World*’s fair share of preju-

diced housemates.

In the first season, *The Real World: New York*, housemate Kevin Powell engaged in an argument with housemate Julie Gentry that became an important conversation about black stereotypes and racism.

Later in the tenth season of the show, *Back to New York*, housemates Coral Smith and Nicole Mitsch tried educating housemate Mike Mizanin on African American culture.

On the surface, MTV’s *The Real World* spawned an entire genre dedicated to depicting different forms of reality, whether it be dating, competition or just the drama of celebrity life.

Despite their attempt at giving minorities a platform, reality TV arguably regressed further into a lack of representation, going as far as casting severely racist contestants — yes, even in 2020.

According to a study done by Iowa State University, 90% of reality TV contestants are usually Caucasian and skinny. Production includes a token minority or two to keep viewers from complaining. It’s like a sad attempt at saying, “yes, we’re diverse!” With a name like “reality TV,” shouldn’t shows want to include a plethora of eth-

nic backgrounds to represent real life?

One of the most scrutinized shows to date, CBS’s *Big Brother*, has been receiving backlash since the show’s beginning.

Similar to *The Real World*, *Big Brother* locks a (predominantly white) group in a 24-hour surveilled house where they must participate in games each week to eventually evict a houseguest at the end of the week.

The most important difference between *The Real World* and *Big Brother* is that viewers are able to watch the live feeds all day long, instead of exclusively the edited episodes that are aired on TV.

Racism has long plagued the *Big Brother* house, but in the show’s 21st season in 2019, the problems commenced in the first episode. During a twist, houseguest Jackson Michie nominated three — rather than the usual two — houseguests for eviction. All three were racial minorities, and all three were evicted within the next few episodes.

Not only were the racial minorities outcasts from the get-go, many of the house guests voiced a steady stream of racist comments throughout the 21st season’s live feeds — none of which conveniently made it to the edited episodes.

Bangladeshi-American housemate, Ovi Kabir, was described as a “brown flame.” Chinese-American houseguest, Isabella Wang, became paranoid, so another houseguest claimed, “the proof is in the pudding,” while another houseguest added, “the rice pudding,” — a clear race descriptor.

Racism in season 21 became so severe that two of the houseguests apologized during the live finale episode.

More recently, MTV’s *The Challenge* — a spin off from *The Real World* competition show — faced harsh criticism for its lack of ac-

tion taken against certain racist cast members. On the 35th season, which aired during the height of the BLM protests, a cast member sent out offensive tweets and comments about the movement.

On June 4, Dee Nguyen tweeted, “Idk why some of u think I’m anti BLM. I’ve been saying that since the day I lost my virginity,” also commenting on an Instagram post about George Floyd stating that “people die every f—king day.”

After Nguyen’s comments, MTV released a statement on social

see REALITY TV — page 11



COURTESY OF REALITY TV

Reality TV continues to under represent minority groups in the U.S.

Africa Week webinar discusses decolonizing knowledge

KATIA FAROUN
features editor

When discussing colonization, most people think of Christopher Columbus and the conquest of land and people. But there's another consequence rarely mentioned, but just as significant: the colonization of knowledge.

Oyeronke Oyewumi took the Zoom podium on Tuesday to explore the topics of knowledge, gender and language with the Duquesne community. One of three events of this year's virtual Africa Week, Oyewumi's webinar, "Decolonizing Knowledge: Re-Centering Africa and African Epistemologies in the Quest for Global Transformation," addressed how European colonizers suppressed African knowledge and what that looks like today.

Born in Nigeria, Oyewumi is an author and scholar, and she teaches sociology at Stony Brook University. She has written multiple books on the intersection of gender and epistemology in West African culture.

Before diving into the main topics of the webinar, Oyewumi gave attendees a brief introduction to how the current interpretation of knowledge has been defined by the idea that those of European descent are inherently superior. The rise of the West narrative overshadowed and degraded the African narrative, compiling the "single story of Africa" we have today, according to Oyewumi.

"The way in which knowledge has been constituted in the world we live in today is quite eurocentric — disregarding Africa, disregarding other people," Oyewumi said.

The first half of her lecture centered on the relationship between gender and



GRIFFIN SENDEK / MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Duquesne's Africa Week 2020 consists of three virtual events that students and faculty can attend.

power. Oyewumi noted that because many Western languages have gender pronouns, gender has influenced the power dynamics of Western countries, creating room for inequality and a gender hierarchy. In the case of the West African language Yoruba, however, pronouns are not gender specific, and the only hierarchy that exists in that culture is that of seniority.

Oyewumi explained that this characteristic of Western languages implies that one gender deserves more power over the other. The historical assumptions that women are excluded from the public sphere, minors in society and deserving of only certain roles created the traditional European gender constructs.

This idea, consequently, delegated the role of producing knowledge to the male gender, and infiltrated Ifá, the Yoruba

system of knowledge based in divination. Once English — and its gendered pronouns — began infiltrating Ifá, knowledge began to be associated with gender, and sparked what Oyewumi called an "epistemicide." In this way, according to Oyewumi, a non-gender category was changed into a male-exclusive category.

"I call it the deadly 'he,'" Oyewumi said. "Every human being, every personnel, every character in the Ifá world is immediately transformed into male."

By eliminating the gender hierarchy imposed by European colonization and the English language, we can further prevent the subjugation of other systems of knowledge, according to Oyewumi.

"Ultimately, the goal of decolonizing is to reclaim our habits of sovereignty," Oyewumi said. "Thus, the recovery of endogenous

intellectual traditions is necessary as Africans seek to reclaim their sovereignty."

The webinar ended with a time for questions, which centered around a discussion on the topic of pandemic epistemology — what we are learning from ourselves and other countries during this pandemic. In Africa's case, despite the fact that cases are low and there haven't been as many deaths as expected, the continent isn't being credited for its successful management of the outbreak.

"No one wants to give credit to the management of COVID-19 by some African countries," Oyewumi said. "Some have done very well — much better than the U.S., much better than Spain — in managing it."

Oyewumi's book, "The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses," has been used by faculty as part of course curriculum for a number of years, and the Center for African Studies was eager to have Oyewumi speak on her experiences as part of this week's events.

Dr. Gerald Boodoo, director of the Center for African Studies, thought the event "went fantastic" and appreciated the relevance and importance of the topics discussed. Like Oyewumi, he believes in Africa's potential to reclaim and decolonize its system of knowledge.

"Africans have to have the agency to take on and solve their own problems," Boodoo said. "Everybody has advice on what should happen in Africa, but no one's asking Africans."

By bringing awareness to this shift imposed by the English language, Oyewumi actively exposed how the African system of knowledge was degraded, but that there is hope for it to reclaim dominance over its own knowledge.

"Decolonization of knowledge must be a transitional phase in our quest for sovereignty and freedom," Oyewumi said.

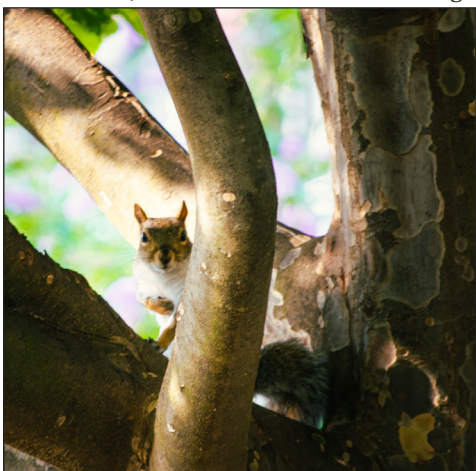
Duqsquirrels Instagram a welcome break for students

EMILY AMBERY
staff writer

The Duquesne community is filled with wonderful things to see and people to meet, but here on campus students may encounter a new type of friend: a squirrel. Fortunately, Duquesne students have access to all the fun things these small animals do on the @Duqsquirrels page on Instagram.

Duqsquirrels is an account run by Nina Dorfner and Jordan Hoydick, two Duquesne students who are dedicated to gathering pictures and videos of our furry friends on campus.

The account is a Duquesne favorite with over 1,000 followers and an average



GRIFFIN SENDEK / MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

The Duqsquirrels Instagram started in March 2018.

of 400 likes on each post. Duqsquirrels started in March 2018 and has been consistently active since.

"We noticed how friendly the squirrels were on campus compared to other areas of Pittsburgh. We also love animals and thought the Duqsquirrels deserved a spotlight," Dorfner said.

At the beginning of Duqsquirrels' creation, most of the pictures were taken by the creators and their friends, but as the popularity of the account slowly grew, they began to receive and post submissions from followers.

"We're always looking for the squirrels on our way to class," Hoydick said.

Students are encouraged to look out for any tiny Duquesne companions and snap a picture. Submissions to Duqsquirrels are welcomed and encouraged.

To the surprise of the creators, the account has taken off since 2018.

"Honestly, we never expected that many people to follow us," Dorfner and Hoydick said.

Duquesne students love seeing the squirrels outside and on Instagram. Dorfner and Hoydick's favorite thing about running the account is "to be walking around campus and hear people talking about the squirrels or our account."

The account usually receives four to five pictures a week.

Not only does the account feature fun pictures and videos of the squirrels, it also has funny captions to describe each picture of the squirrels. The captions often



GRIFFIN SENDEK / MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

At its start, the page's photos were taken by the creators. Now, they receive four to five submissions a week.

relate to typical college student struggles, such as taking midterms, finals, going to class and consuming copious amounts of Chick-fil-A. The creators are tasked with coming up with the captions, but they are always open to accepting captions submitted by followers.

The page is a fun and unique break from the exhausting daily life of college. Dorfner and Hoydick are working hard to capture funny moments from the squirrels, and love all the submissions they get from

their followers.

One of their favorite aspects of running Duqsquirrels is "receiving submissions from students because we've gotten really cool and crazy photos and videos that we never could have taken ourselves," they said.

Dorfner and Hoydick are excited for the submissions they will get this coming year, and fans of the account are equally excited to see the new posts.

To submit posts, message @Duqsquirrels on Instagram.

NFL Preview: Ferro's contenders, pretenders

DOM FERRO
staff writer

The NFL is finally back, meaning it's time to give way-too-early predictions for the upcoming season.

The 2020 season brings many new storylines and a lot of unpredictability. DeAndre Hopkins is a Cardinal, the Raiders are in Las Vegas and Tom Brady is not in New England. Not only are there new faces in new places — and new places altogether — but beginning this year, the NFL playoffs will be expanded to now include 14 teams.

After half a year of uncertainty in our world, one thing is certain: We need football. Here are the teams you should and shouldn't be paying attention to this year.

Don't Bother:

Here is the bottom of the bottom in professional football this season. These are the teams you should only watch when they're playing your favorite team, or you have nothing better to do on a Thursday night.

- 32. Jacksonville Jaguars
- 31. Washington Football Team
- 30. New York Jets
- 29. Chicago Bears
- 28. Miami Dolphins
- 27. Detroit Lions

There isn't much to note about these six teams other than the fact you shouldn't expect much. Jacksonville seems to be in full tank mode for QB prodigy Trevor Law-

rence. Releasing the 2017 No. 4 overall pick, Leonard Fournette, and trading veterans in Calais Campbell and A.J. Bouye, the Jaguars do not look equipped to compete with the best this season.

The Miami Dolphins could be intriguing to watch if Tua Tagovailoa reaches his full potential in his rookie year. He doesn't have much elite talent surrounding him, but if he performs half as well as he did at Alabama, he will be one of the league's next superstars.

Unless Mitch Trubisky is using steroids or something, the Bears won't go very far. Their best chance may lie in their newly-acquired quarterback, Super Bowl champ Nick Foles. Their defense has potential to be one of the best, but their offense will struggle to put points on the board. Chicago believes in head coach Matt Nagy, but he may be missing the ever-important franchise quarterback. If only there were better quarterbacks available when they drafted Trubisky...

Watch the Stars:

These are the teams who may be in the hunt toward the end of the season, but most likely will be watching the playoffs from their couch. They have potential if they surround their star(s) with the right pieces.

- 26. Las Vegas Raiders
- 25. Cincinnati Bengals
- 24. New York Giants
- 23. Carolina Panthers

Any time Saquon Barkley is on the field, you should be paying attention. The Giants' young running back is looking to grow even more in the upcoming season. He has potential to change the game and be one of the greatest athletes to bless the gridiron if he continues the pace of advancement he is on. Unfortunately for Barkley, the rest of the Giants roster is below average with the exception of a few players.

The Carolina Panthers will be an interesting team to watch with Teddy Bridgewater taking the reins as starting quarterback to begin the season. He showed flashes of brilliance in 2019 when he replaced Drew Brees while the Saints QB was injured. The Panthers also have one of the best running backs in the league in Christian McCaffrey, who's widely considered the consensus first overall pick in fantasy football this year and will most likely be the reason whether this team wins or loses this season.

The Bengals have the previous first overall pick Joe Burrow, the Heisman winner and national champion from LSU. Burrow's senior year is forever immortalized in college football history, but only time will tell if he is successful professionally for Cincinnati, a franchise who has not won a playoff game since 1991.

Burrow has a great wide receiver duo in Tyler Boyd and AJ Green. Green missed all of last season but has been one of the best receivers consistently in the NFL since he arrived. Nevertheless, their defense is downright bad, and their head coach has not made a name for himself yet. Burrow could be in for a rude awakening in the AFC North, one of the toughest divisions in football.

Disappointments:

The "experts" may say these teams are locks but I'm here to tell you to not be fooled. They look good on paper, but won't amount to too much.

- 22. Los Angeles Chargers
- 21. Philadelphia Eagles
- 20. Indianapolis Colts
- 19. Cleveland Browns
- 18. Atlanta Falcons
- 17. Los Angeles Rams
- 16. Tennessee Titans
- 15. Minnesota Vikings
- 14. Houston Texans

The Tennessee Titans were the league's late season surprise in 2019, with Derrick Henry leading the way as a bulldozer of a running back. Ryan Tannehill surprised many as he replaced Marcus Mariota at quarterback, and led the Titans to several late-season wins to clinch the last Wild Card playoff spot. Tannehill & Co. even marched into Baltimore to shock

the No. 1 seed Ravens and advance in the playoffs.

Don't expect Tannehill to look anywhere near as good as he did last season. His career has consisted of lackluster performances for the Miami Dolphins and a great stretch of games for the Titans, so it would not be surprising to see him resort back to his old ways. Henry should continue his dominance, and stiff-arming defenders through the ground and all. Wide receiver A.J. Brown is also an exciting young player who should garner more attention in 2020.

The Cleveland Browns should have a very similar season as last. They have great players but the organization is forever cursed and Baker Mayfield has proven to all that he is not one of the league's best. Furthermore, the Browns are in an extremely tough division and would be lucky to win even one game against the Steelers or Ravens.

The Eagles are an almost completely different team compared to their Super Bowl winning squad in 2018. Carson Wentz is a stud — that is no debate, but what is up to debate is his reliability. Wentz seems to get hurt at the worst moments, and he doesn't have the greatest clutch ability. The Eagles are in a tough division, as well, but should be able to slip into the playoffs if a few things go their way.

Sleepers:

These teams shouldn't be slept on. Whether they have new improvements or look the same, these teams could shake things up in the league this season.

- 13. Denver Broncos
- 12. Arizona Cardinals
- 11. Green Bay Packers
- 10. New England Patriots
- 9. Dallas Cowboys
- 8. Buffalo Bills
- 7. Pittsburgh Steelers

Veteran quarterback Ben Roethlisberger returns for the Pittsburgh Steelers this season after only appearing in two games last year. Roethlisberger has fully recovered from his elbow surgery and looks to reunite with his young core of wide receivers, including JuJu Smith-Schuster, Diontae Johnson and first-round pick, Chase Claypool. Their offense may be questionable at the moment, but their defense is one of the best. Minkah Fitzpatrick was an instant playmaker after joining in 2019. T.J. Watt is looking to match his production in 2019 and post another Defensive Player of the Year-worthy season. If the Steelers do not return to the playoffs in 2020, it will be a major disappointment with the expanded playoffs.

The city of Buffalo has not been

see FERRO — page 8

NCAA basketball to begin Nov. 25

AP — The NCAA men's and women's basketball season will begin Nov. 25, the day before Thanksgiving.

The Division I Council voted Wednesday to push the start date back from the originally scheduled Nov. 10 as one of several precautions against the spread of coronavirus.

The later start date coincides with the decision most schools made to send students home from Thanksgiving until January out of concern about a potential late-fall and early-winter flareup of COVID-19. Closed campuses could serve as a quasi bubble for players and provide a window for nonconference games.

"The fact our campuses will be clearing out, it will be possible to just further control the exposures, and the 25th gives us that opportunity," said Division I Council chair Grace Calhoun, the athletic director at Penn.

The men's and women's basketball oversight committees had jointly recommended a start date of Nov. 21, a Saturday. Calhoun said the council wanted to avoid a weekend start date because of potential overlaps of basketball and football games on campuses.

The maximum number of regular-season games has been reduced from 31 to 27.

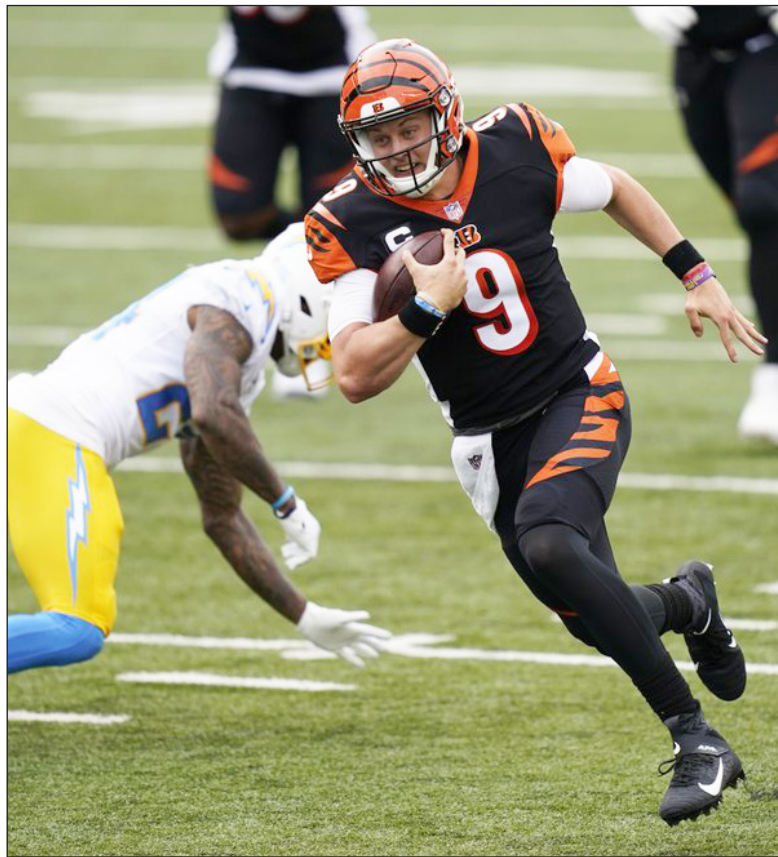
"The rationale was that during the season teams tend to play an average of two games a week, so the fact we're shortening the season by two weeks necessitated the reduction in games so we're not being counterproductive and trying to jam more in a shortened season," Calhoun said.

The minimum number of games for consideration for the NCAA Tournament was cut from 25 to 13. Calhoun said the low minimum is an acknowledgment that schools probably will experience different levels of COVID-19 cases and have to alter schedules.

"We fully anticipate there are going to be some issues as we go through the season, much like we've seen in football, so we want there to be flexibility for institutions to put together seasons," she said.

Teams can start preseason practices Oct. 14. Beginning Monday, teams will be allowed to participate in strength and conditioning and sport-related meetings and skill instruction for up to 12 hours a week, with an eight-hour limit on skill instruction.

For full story: www.apnews.com.



AP PHOTO

Joe Burrow, the top selection in the 2020 NFL Draft, runs for a touchdown during his NFL debut. Burrow's Cincinnati Bengals shouldn't be expected to compete in 2020; instead, they'll be looking to build toward the future.

Ferro: Kansas City, Baltimore among NFL's best

FERRO — from page 7

as excited for Bills football since a young man from the University of Michigan arrived in Foxborough 20 years ago — that young man being Tom Brady, the most accomplished football player of all time.

Of course, Brady has taken his talents to Tampa Bay, leaving his career-long coach in Bill Belichick. Belichick and Brady have won six Super Bowls together, preventing even the thought of another team winning the AFC East since 2003. The Bills acquired Stefon Diggs over the off-season and have now put quarterback Josh Allen in the driver's seat. With a competent coach in Sean McDermott and a solid defense, the pressure is all on Allen.

The Denver Broncos and Arizona Cardinals will be competing with the best for the first time in a few years. Their teams' success lies in the hands of their young, unproven quarterbacks. Drew Lock seems like a natural leader for the Broncos and has some great surrounding pieces, including Melvin Gordon, Philip Lindsay, Courtland Sutton and Jerry Jeudy. This is a very young and exciting team who could surprise a lot of people this season.

The Arizona Cardinals have the speedy Kyler Murray behind center, and added DeAndre Hopkins, one of the league's best receivers. The Cardinals' division is loaded but with a little bit of luck, they could secure a Wild Card spot.

The Real Deal:

These teams are locks to either win their division or make the playoffs. If all goes as planned, these teams will win ten-plus games in 2020. Stellar offenses, terrifying defenses and genius coaching abound; beware of these teams.

6. New Orleans Saints
5. Tampa Bay Buccaneers
4. San Francisco 49ers
3. Seattle Seahawks
2. Baltimore Ravens
1. Kansas City Chiefs

This is not a very controversial final six. The Super Bowl 54 champion Kansas City Chiefs bring back almost the exact same starting lineup. The Chiefs could even be better with the draft selection of Clyde Edwards-Helaire from LSU to help Patrick Mahomes in the backfield.

Andy Reid is one of the best minds in football, and he has a squad that can do serious damage to the scoreboard. Tyreek Hill is one of the most electric receivers in the NFL and he's got other extremely athletic receivers behind him to share the load. Don't bet against the Chiefs; this could be football's next dynasty as Mahomes is signed for the next ten years (and not for cheap either). Mahomes

will make over half a billion (!) dollars in the next ten years; it goes to show how much the Chiefs see in their franchise quarterback.

On paper, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers look like they could go 19-0. Star receivers in Mike Evans and Chris Godwin are set to go along with a familiar face for Tom Brady, tight end Rob Gronkowski.

Gronkowski is coming off a year of retirement, which for many players would be a red flag. For Gronkowski, this isn't much of a worry. 'Gronk' is what some would call this freak of nature; standing at 6-foot-6 and weighing in at 265 pounds, he is a hard man for defenses to cover.

Another red flag for many analysts is age. Tom Brady is starting the season at 43 years old, but the GOAT does not abide by the laws of time. Of course age catches up to everyone, and you can expect him to not be at his peak, but with the players around him and a proven coach in Bruce Arians, the Buccaneers should be considered among the top contenders in the league.

The 49ers and Seahawks will be competing for the top spot in the NFC West this season, and it should be a thrilling chase to watch. Both teams have top coaches with stars on both sides of the ball, so it should be interesting to see who ends up on top.

The Seahawks are just ahead of the 49ers in this edition of NFL power rankings because of their recent acquisition of strong safety Ja-



AP PHOTO

Newly-acquired Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady, entering his 21st NFL season, will look to lead Tampa Bay through a tough NFC South.

mal Adams. He seems like the missing piece on the Seahawks defense and expect him to show up on highlights a lot this year. The 49ers, of course, have one of the league's top rosters with an exceptional defense backed by veteran Richard Sherman and blooming star Nick Bosa. This division will come down to the wire, but both should easily be appearing in the playoffs.

Reverse: Big Ten will try to play fall football after all

AP — Players were pumped. Coaches were stoked. Fan seemed relieved. Even the president was pleased.

The Big Ten is going to give fall football a shot after all.

Less than five weeks after pushing fall sports to spring in the name of player safety during the pandemic, the conference ran a reverse Wednesday and said it plans to open its football season the weekend of Oct. 23-24.

"Let's gooooo!!!" Ohio State quarterback Justin Fields tweeted.

Amid the celebration, a word of caution: This is still not going to be easy.

"We can't emphasize enough that what we're putting forward still requires prevention, requires accountability from everyone involved from our student-athletes to coaches to staff to be doing the things to prevent getting this infection," said Dr. Jim Borchers, the team physician for Ohio State. "And our progress will be measured by their efforts but also we hope by the efforts to provide a clean competition and practice environment."

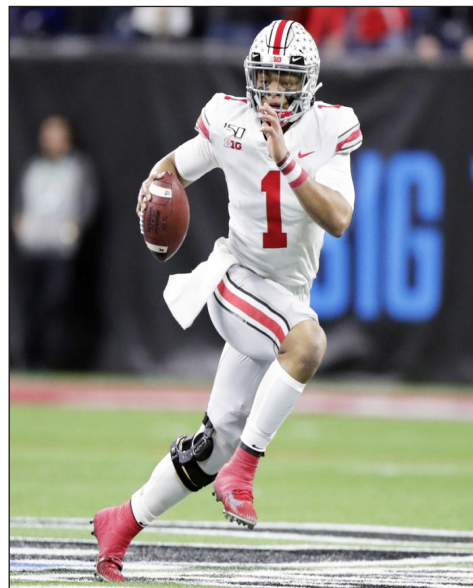
All 14 teams will be scheduled to play eight regular-season games in eight weeks, plus have the opportunity to play a ninth game on Dec. 19 when the conference championship game is played. The College Football Playoff selections are scheduled for Dec. 20, which means the Big Ten's best should be back in the hunt for a national championship — if all goes well.

If it does not, the schedule does not provide much room to adapt. Other conferences built in bye weeks, which allows time to deal with potential disruptions.

The Big Ten itself did that back in early August, but now must go forward with a condensed schedule and signs that things could go awry.

Across major college football since Aug. 26, 13 games have been postponed because of teams dealing with COVID-19 outbreaks. Some have not been rescheduled.

The Big Ten is banking on daily testing to mitigate the risk of outbreaks and decrease the probability that a few positive tests will gut rosters when contact tracing sends players into 14-day quarantines. The Big Ten will begin daily antigen testing of



AP PHOTO

Junior Ohio State QB, Justin Fields, runs the ball during the 2019 Big Ten championship game against Wisconsin. 2020 figures to be Fields' last collegiate season before entering the NFL.

all fall sports athletes, coaches and staff Sept. 30.

The Big Ten is taking an especially cautious approach with those who do test positive: The earliest an athlete will be able to return to game competition is 21 days after a positive diagnosis, and following a cardiac evaluation and clearance from a cardiologist.

"We're in a better place, regardless of how we got here or how painful it was during the time we waited to get this moment," Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith said. "That's all behind us. What's beautiful is that we have a process and protocols in place that's based on science and based on lessons learned since Aug. 11."

The Big Ten said its Council of Presidents and Chancellors voted unanimously to restart sports. The vote last month was 11-3 to postpone, with Ohio State, Iowa and Nebraska voting against.

Still, the Big House in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Beaver Stadium in State College, Pennsylvania, won't be packed with 100,000 fans as is usually the case in the fall. Not even close. Tickets will not be sold to the general public for Big Ten games, though some attendance is expected.

That's still an 80,000-seat stadium that we don't have," said Wisconsin athletic director Barry Alvarez, who had estimated the loss of football would cost the school \$100 million.

The decision to play came after sharp pressure from coaches, players, parents and even President Donald Trump, all of them pushing for a Big Ten football season. The conference is home to a number

of battleground states in the November election, and Trump swiftly applauded the move in a tweet while his campaign suggested the return of college football was "in no small part" due to the president's leadership.

Northwestern President Morton Schapiro, chairman of the presidents' council, said the turning point for him on giving the green light to football — even though many students have not been allowed back on his school's Evanston, Illinois, campus — didn't come until this past weekend.

"For me, it wasn't about political pressure, money or lawsuits," Schapiro said. "It was about the unanimous opinion of our experts. It evolved over the course of weeks."

The Big Ten will take a bow, but the conference has been battered for a month and businesses in college towns from Nebraska to Maryland have lost millions in sales. First-year Commissioner Kevin Warren was the main target, criticized for a lack of communication and not providing enough information to back the initial decision.

"We have passionate athletes. We have passionate families and we have passionate fans," Warren said of the blowback. "And so I take that from a positive standpoint."

The Big Ten postponed fall sports just six days after unveiling a modified, conference-only schedule that was set to begin Labor Day weekend, and indicated it would try to make up the season in the spring. But there was no plan in place and the reaction was sharp. Trump at one point called Warren, who described their conversation as

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Virtual jazz poetry night offers peaceful escape for viewers

KATIA FAROUN
features editor

A night of melancholy jazz and stimulating poetry. What could be better?

Perhaps listening to it from the comfort of a couch, in pajamas and with a glass of wine in hand.

September 2020 marks the beginning of City of Asylum's 16th annual Jazz Poetry Month. For the first time in its history, the organization took the festival to the screens of its attendees' laptops and tablets. Last Thursday, City of Asylum hosted its second event of the festival, and over 200 attendees joined virtually from around the world for an evening of musical and lyrical art.

The event, featuring Pittsburgh acoustic jazz group Thoth Trio and pre-recorded readings from local and international poets, aired from the organization's home of Alphabet City and started streaming on Crowdcast at 7 p.m. The livestream included a live chat feature, which both viewers and featured poets eagerly used to post reactions and comments throughout the 75-minute-long event (heart and applause emojis were crowd favorites).

Jazz Poetry began in 2005 as a one-night event held in an alley on the Northside, but has since expanded to a month-long event meant to showcase diverse artists and create an open conversation for the freedom of expression. This year, City of Asylum took advantage of the limitations imposed by the pandemic to include artists living throughout the country and internationally.



KATIA FAROUN / FEATURES EDITOR

City of Asylum made their festival easily accessible to viewers on a streamable platform.

Thoth Trio took the stage to debut their most recent work, "Meditations on Quarantine." The five-piece suite was composed entirely during the pandemic by the trio's saxophonist and bass clarinetist, Ben Opie, and represents the experiences of quarantine and the outcome of musicians pushing the boundaries of their creativity during a pandemic.

Each piece accurately depicted a musical representation of moments, activities and qualities associated with the pandemic. The first half of "Yellow Phase" consisted of dissonance and an air of hesitation, then switched to an upbeat, exciting and edgy second half, effectively reflecting the transition from caution and wariness to excitement and recklessness of Pittsburgh's move into the yellow phase.

Other pieces, such as "Antisocial Distancing" and "Powderhorn," displayed the musicians' talent with lengthy solos by percussionist David

Throckmorton in the former and bassist Paul Thompson in the latter. The musicians conveyed their confidence through consistent transitions and uniform progressions of the music, depicting a general sense of trust in each others' familiarity with the tunes.

The poetry centered around the intersection of isolation and disconnection, with themes touching on immigration, politics, sexuality, war and beauty.

Poets Richard Blanco, Joy Katz, Natalie Diaz and Asieh Amini each presented selected works over video in between the Thoth Trio's performances.

Blanco shared some of his works that reflect the struggles of immigration and the tension regarding the country's current political climate. He was selected by President Obama to be the fifth inaugural poet in U.S. history and is the youngest and first immigrant, gay and Latino person in such a role. His first poem, "Cómo

Tú/Like You/Like Me" was dedicated to DACA DREAMers and, along with his other poems, contained phrases in Spanish.

Amini also presented her poetry in another language, sharing stories of war and the struggles of the Middle East in Persian. An Iranian human rights activist, she went into exile in Norway after living in Iran became too dangerous for activists.

Katz recited a poem written collectively by 15 women, while Diaz reflected on contemporary America and her experiences as a Mojave woman.

Aside from the expected technical difficulties that are custom in the pandemic, the program ran almost as smoothly as the jazz. Multiple camera angles kept the feed engaging and showed close-ups of the trio, with Thompson sporting a Black Lives Matter t-shirt and Throckmorton representing the city with a Steelers mask.

Throughout the event, attendees spammed the chat with encouraging comments of praise, or a simple emoji. One attendee commented, "I am clapping behind my screen," while another stated simply, "Work!"

The significance of the event wasn't lost on its attendees. The art cultivated a conversation on diversity and expression, and inspired reflection on a unique moment in history being shared by 8 billion people in vastly different ways.

City of Asylum's Jazz Poetry Month runs from Sept. 8 to Oct. 1. Events are free and require online registration. More information can be found at the Alphabet City website.

WEEK'S EVENTS

Sunset Yoga
Sept. 18, @ 7p.m.

Relax on your Friday evening with Sunset Yoga on McCloskey Field. Sign up at the Assumption Front Desk; capacity is 50 people.

DPC DUNite: Succulent Night
Sept. 18 @ 9 p.m.

Join DPC in the Nite Spot to pick out your favorite succulent for your dorm room while supplies last!

UPCOMING RELEASES

Antebellum
Friday, Sept. 18th

A horror film produced by Lionsgate, aspiring author Veronica finds herself trapped in an alternate reality, and must escape this fate before it is too late.

Then Play On
Fleetwood Mac
Friday, September 18th

Originally released in 1969, Fleetwood Mac is reissuing the classic album with four bonus songs for listeners.

MICRO REVIEW

Insomnia Cookies

Warm, fresh cookies delivered straight from the oven to your dorm room, Insomnia Cookies in South Side never seem to disappoint.

Or do they?

On Friday, my friends and I waited three hours for our cookies to arrive, calling the company four times to ensure that our cookies were finally delivered; at this point, it was the middle of the night. We were not refunded, though we were given a coupon as compensation.

However, every bite was worth it, and we ordered them again on Monday for the free six-pack special.

—Capri Scarcelli

Virgo
(August 23-September 22)

I sense something heavy in your aura...

Oh wait, it's just your student loans.

Libra
(September 23-October 22)

Things really could be worse: you could be a pharmacy major.

Scorpio
(October 23-November 22)

I got N95 problems but a B***h ain't one.

Sagittarius
(November 23-December 22)

The Starbucks barista calls you "Rufus." Just roll with it.

Capricorn
(December 22-January 19)

If you're looking for a personal anthem, might I suggest the "Hoedown Throwdown" by Hannah Montana.

Aquarius
(January 20-February 18)

You were the one who put the tiny babies in the bottom of the Union fountain, weren't you?

Pisces
(February 19-March 20)

Have you recently misplaced your grandma?

Check the Post Office.

Aries
(March 21-April 19)

This is the week you finally beat your high score on Dance Dance Revolution. I can just feel it.

Taurus
(April 20-May 20)

Well, that's just show business.

Gemini
(May 21-June 20)

If you start wearing an eye patch, people will find you both mysterious and charming.

Cancer
(June 21-July 22)

You haven't skinned your knee since Kindergarten. This changes tonight.

Leo
(July 23-August 22)

Put your phone in grayscale mode. It will bring out the color in your eyes.

PBT Ballerina finds motivation through pandemic

GRIFFIN SENDEK
multimedia editor

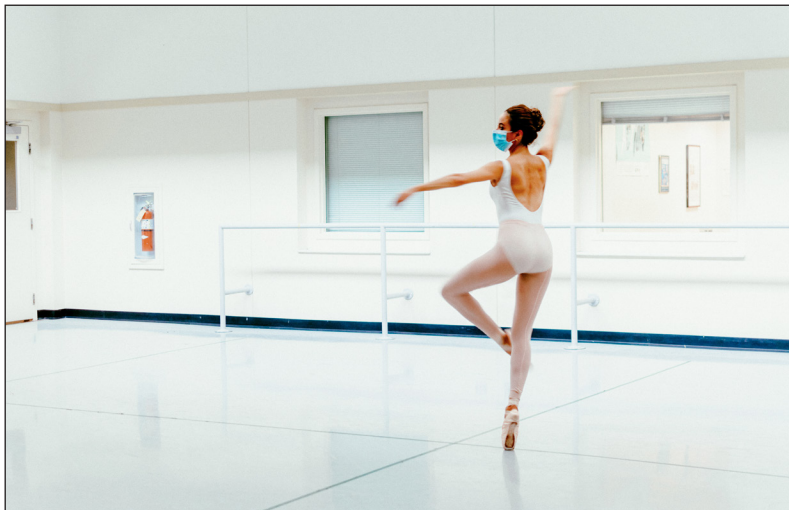
In mid-March, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater was gearing up for the opening performance of “Here + Now” at the August Wilson Center. Everything was choreographed, rehearsed, staged and costumed. It was ready to go — when it was all shut down indefinitely.

For Pittsburgh Ballet Theater (PBT) company member Christian “Chris” García Campos, dancing has been a part of her life for as long as she can remember. For the very first time, the art of performing was taken away.

“I’m not going to lie, it was heart-breaking to hear that it was indefinite. I adjusted because I needed to accept the fact that I wasn’t going to be able to dance, but I did miss it every day,” García Campos said.

Born in Puebla, Mexico, García Campos got her start in dancing at the spry age of 3, pushed into it by a mother wanting her daughter to have a hobby. Little did her mother know, this tutu-clad 3-year-old would one day become a professional ballerina.

By the time she was 13, García Campos knew she wanted to pursue a career in dance, and at 15 she left Mexico for the U.S. in search of professional programs. She spent years moving around the country through exchange programs and dance conservatories, all the while becoming an



Chris García Campos has been dancing ever since she was 3 years old.

increasingly skilled dancer.

Eventually, she wound up in the Steel City and became a member of PBT. She is currently among the corps de ballet at PBT, hoping to one day earn the title of soloist, and ultimately become a principal ballerina.

For García Campos and the rest of the company members, everything being canceled was nothing short of depressing. With a season abandoned and the studio doors locked, and no estimate of when they might open again, the life of a PBT company member was completely upended by the pandemic.

“It really is what I love to do most and to have these shows canceled — it was really hard for me, and I know a few of my friends in dance felt the same way,” García Campos said.

Pittsburgh Ballet Theater dancers’ lives revolved around being

together constantly. Because of the pandemic, they went their separate ways, and each member was tasked with maintaining their skills by practicing in living rooms and garages. Ballet has always been a collaborative art form meant for the stage and an audience; never before has it been so fundamentally splintered.

“It’s hard because you are meant to have people around you,” García Campos explained. “You are meant to dance with other people.”

The company had the dancers create their own performances from the safety of their homes. García Campos was put in charge of choreographing one of these shows, which she taught entirely over Zoom. Stitched together from a multitude of video clips, she was able to craft a virtual performance.

Working through the restrictions put in place by COVID to create art in this new format helped foster a sense of togetherness among the dancers that they had been severely lacking.

However, no amount of Zoom concerts will ever replicate the perfect cocktail of nervousness and exhilaration that is gliding across the Benedum Center stage in front of a packed crowd of 2,800 people.

“It was just kinda like an uncomfortable feeling that wasn’t the same — and it’s never going to be — but it did the job and I’m thankful for that,” García Campos said.

The pandemic has completely reframed what dancing truly means to García Campos. Having been a constant in her life for so long, she felt as if there was a hole in her chest the very moment it was taken away.

“I think I needed it to realize that I was worrying too much about things I shouldn’t have related to dancing,” García Campos said. “I felt that I somehow got better in certain areas working on my own, and I’m really wanting to keep that now that we’re going into the studios and to keep that confidence that grew back in me when I was on my own.”

In early August, the age of Zoom for PBT eventually came to an end as the studio doors were open once again. Corp de Ballet and García Campos’ duet partner Jonathan Bright, described the return as “the greatest feeling. It is just like a meditation that you can kinda get

back into your center and just be who you are.”

Extra precautions were put in place in order to facilitate a safe return: A limited amount of people are allowed in, masks are required at all times — even while dancing — and ballet bars are disinfected after every use.

Good dancers are able to perform all the moves; great ones make it look effortless. Witnessing García Campos and Bright glide across the studio floor as if it were made of ice was an absolute beauty to behold. As the nearly six-minute duet unfolded, it was difficult to imagine García Campos had taken off any time whatsoever. Her commitment to the craft and years of experience were apparent in every minute detail; her dancing ability was truly magnificent.

“I can’t fathom not dancing, and it made me just want to do it even more,” García Campos said, “and I think that enough is proof to artists all around that it is essential.”

Watch the full performance by scanning the code below



Duquesne students improvise to enjoy Steelers game from campus

CAPRI SCARCELLI
a&e editor

Enjoying sporting events has become increasingly difficult with the onset of the pandemic, though Duquesne students have gotten creative with how they will go about cheering on their favorite teams.

On Sept. 14 at 7:10 p.m., the Pittsburgh Steelers took on the New York Giants, and students took a seat in socially-distanced watch parties all across campus.

Duquesne fraternity Phi Kappa Theta organized an event as part of their fall recruitment for students to enjoy free food and drinks while enjoying the football game from the comfort of Mellon’s Laura Lecture Hall.

According to sophomore physician assistant major Andrew Thiele, recruitment chair of Phi Kappa Theta, this event was done last year on the fraternity’s wing; however, due to coronavirus restrictions, the Steelers event was moved to Mellon Hall to provide “a bigger space that would

allow [them] to spread out.”

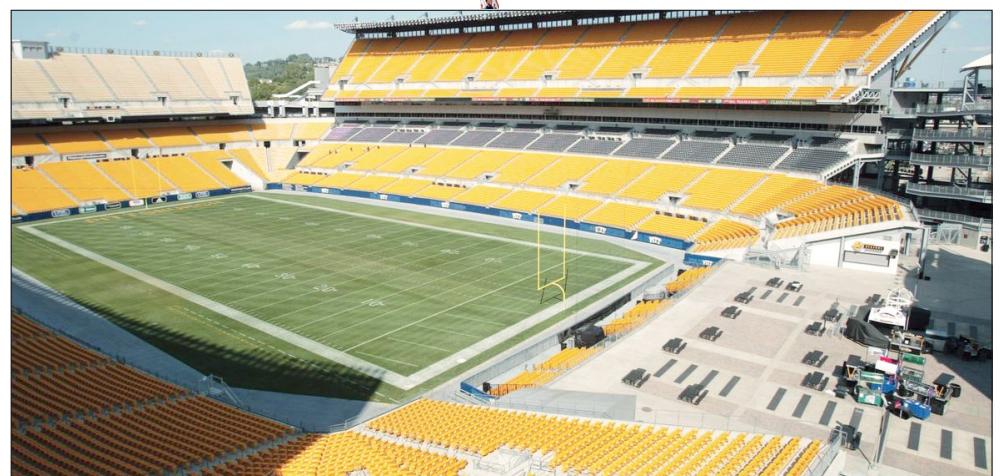
The fraternity booked the lecture hall through Student Life Vice President Douglas Frizzell, according to Thiele. Once they got approval, they were able to host the event.

“Booking a lecture hall is a great way to get a max of 25 people together to watch a movie, game, etc.” Thiele said. “Or, if you can somehow hook up a projector outside, you can bump the capacity up to 50 people, which we were originally planning to do...”

Other students got together in Residence Hall lounges to stream from the TVs.

Junior education major Helena Bassler said she went to a small watch party with six of her friends socially-distanced in the dorm rooms. According to Bassler, watch party events sponsored by campus organizations would be “really cool to have... like how the movies are shown in the Nite Spot.”

“Having organizations sponsor watch parties for games would be a nice way to meet new people. It would be cool if they could figure out how to project the games on the field, so we can practice



COURTESY OF STEELERS WEBSITE

Though a different feel to the season, loyal fans will root for the Steelers no matter what.

social distancing while watching the game.” Bassler said. “Students and faculty could set up chairs, bundle up and watch the game.”

Junior education major Olivia Scherrer also spent the night rooting for the Steelers with her friends.

“It wasn’t a huge event, but it was nice to finally sit down and watch sports with my friends again,” Scherrer said.

To open watch parties to the campus, Scherrer said the university could do so

by streaming in open areas and socially distancing.

“I think if we socially distance ourselves, we can have a few (safe) watch parties,” Scherrer said. “Food can be individually distributed to not sit out.”

With a score of 26-16, the Steelers had fans cheering all across campus in a safe manner.

Future games are free to stream through the Steelers Official Mobile App and Steelers.com.

CLASSIFIEDS

Big Ten football is back again

Reality TV

COMIC ARTIST Needed for THE DUKE



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duq.edu

B1G—*from page 8*

“productive” and “respectful.”

The Pac-12 followed the Big Ten in postponing, but was far more detailed in its explanation and had more obvious hurdles to clear. Half the Pac-12 schools are still operating under statewide restrictions that make it impossible for teams to practice.

As the Big Ten and Pac-12 bailed in August, the other Power Five conferences forged ahead, along with three other major college football leagues. Games have started, with the Big 12 and Atlantic Coast Conference kicking off last week. The Southeastern Conference begins play Sept. 26.

Meanwhile, the Big Ten was on the sideline, with coaches struggling to explain to players why other teams could play, but they could not. Eight Nebraska players filed a lawsuit against the Big Ten over its decision to postpone; their attorney said Wednesday the case was being dismissed.

Alvarez said Big Ten teams can begin practicing immediately. Apparently, they are ready to roll.

“They never lost faith. They never lost trust. Their behavior through this time has been excellent, and they never stopped fighting,” said Ohio State coach

Ryan Day, whose team was ranked No. 2 in the preseason AP Top 25.

The next new schedule comes with a twist. On championship Saturday, the plan is to provide each team an additional game, matching teams by their places in the division standings: No. 2 vs. No. 2, No. 3 vs. No. 3 and so on. Alvarez said those matchups could be tweaked to avoid rematches.

For now, the third Big Ten schedule of the year should be ready in about a week. Surely, it will rekindle excitement, but how much of it gets played is still uncertain.

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat, said she supports the Big Ten’s decision but noted COVID-19 “is still a very real threat.”

“We’re all trying to do what we can to engage in some normalcy and keep people safe,” she said. “There’s not a perfect way to do this.”

REALITY TV — *from page 5*

released a statement on social media and before each episode of *The Challenge* there after:

“As a result of Dee Nguyen’s offensive comments on the Black Lives Matter movement, we have severed ties with her. Out of respect for our Challengers, we’ll air our season as planned. We strongly condemn systemic racism and stand with those raising their voices against injustice.”

However, other cast members such as Jordan Wiseley and Rogan O’Connor have both made racist comments in the past, but still retain a contract with Bunim/Murray Productions. However, neither appeared on the reunion show later in July.

The problem with both of these shows, and many others, is the production’s attempts at protecting certain cast member’s images while condemning others’. There’s no excusing the cast members’ actions, they should know better.

INTEGRITY OF CREATION CONFERENCE

Building a Sustainable World

September 29–30, 2020
VIRTUAL EVENT

Join the Integrity of Creation Conference, as we go completely virtual. This year, the conference initiates a focus on workshops to showcase the scholarship of Duquesne students (via their classes) as a Conference Presentation or as an online Poster Display. We will also feature prominent external panelists along with plenary presentations.



Conference Schedule and Registration www.duq.edu/ioc.
Zoom links will be provided on the conference website

TUESDAY, SEPT. 29

3:05 - 4:20 p.m. | **Sustainability Panel**

- **Senator Mary L. Washington**, Maryland State Senator (Education, Health and Environment Affairs Committee).
- **David Orr**, Paul Sears Distinguished Professor of Environmental Studies & Politics, Emeritus, Oberlin College.
- **Ben McCall**, Executive Director of the Hanley Sustainability Institute at the University of Dayton.

6 - 7:30 p.m. | **Plenary Presentation**

Meghan Fay Zahniser, Executive Director, Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 30

6 - 7:30 p.m. | **Plenary Presentation**

- **Christine Daugherty**, Vice President for Sustainable Agriculture & Responsible Sourcing, PepsiCo.



For additional information and registration, visit duq.edu/ioc

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Duquesne University Office of Greek Life and DU CARES present a

Town Hall Meeting on:
Alcohol at the intersection of
COVID-19: ZOOM Style



Monday September 28 @ 9:00 pm
ALL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WELCOME

Facilitated by:
The Office of Greek Life &
DU CARES

Got questions?
We have some answers!

ZOOM MEETING <https://duq.zoom.us/j/93494902486>
Meeting ID: 934 9490 2486

Be There!!!!

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