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THE DUQUESNE DUKE

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Duquesne students, faculty mourn death of associate professor of theology

Student expo returns to campus

EMMA POLEN
news editor

Students have plenty of opportunities to get more involved at the Bluff this week with the annual spring expo.

While students visiting the tables will be signing up for a club for the first time, the students tabling for their campus organizations have already been positively influenced by their choices to become involved here at Duquesne.

The expo began Tuesday morning and will run 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. through the end of the week. Various campus clubs, organizations and social groups will be tabling on the second and third floors of the Union.

On Tuesday, students visiting the organization tables shared how they hope increasing their involvement on campus will help them in the future.

Rosemarie Franjoine, a junior psychology major, was looking to meet more friends, she said, and to “find something to do when I’m not in class.”

On the other side of the tables, students are looking forward to welcoming new members into organizations that have already made an impact on their own lives.

Abbey Powell, a sophomore biology major, tabled for Ecology club at the Union. Besides the obvious ways in which her club pertains to her interests in nature, Powell presented her club as “mainly social” in which all majors are welcome.

“You don’t have to love science,” Powell said.

For a city campus like Pittsburgh, Powell believes it is important for those with an interest in the outdoors and in the environment to seek out opportunities to

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COURTESY OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY THEOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Marinus Iwuchukwu (middle) is seen laughing during the African Affiliates Workshop in September 2017. Iwuchukwu, 59, was found dead Tuesday morning at his home on Thorncrest Drive in Wilkins Township. The associate professor of theology had been at Duquesne University since 2008.

LUKE HENNE, EMMA POLEN
& ZACH PETROFF
staff editors

Duquesne University students and faculty are mourning the death of Marinus Iwuchukwu, an associate professor in the school’s theology department, who died Tuesday morning.

Allegheny County officials identified Iwuchukwu, 59, and his wife of five-plus years, Charte Dunn, 50, inside their home on Thorncrest Drive in Wilkins Township Tuesday. Allegheny County Police received a call from a third party at 9:53 a.m. requesting that police “check on the well-being of a couple who were engaged in a violent domestic [incident] inside their home.”

“The third party learned that the male had been stabbed. The female remained inside the residence with a firearm,” police said in a news release. “Wilkins Police, along with neighboring departments, responded to the scene and hailed the residence. When officers did not receive a response, they requested the assistance of County Police SWAT.”

Allegheny County records showed that the couple married on July 17, 2017.

Family court records show that Iwuchukwu filed for divorce on July 2, 2020. The proceedings had not been finalized.

“Both the male and female appeared to have sustained lacerations, and the female sustained an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound,” police said. “Homicide detectives responded to the scene and initiated an investigation.”

Neighbors, Kimberly and Carl Mosley, were shocked by the news. Kimberly said that Iwuchukwu was “an upstanding neighbor” and that “no one saw it coming.”

“I’m still looking across the street,” Carl told The Duke. “There’s no words, really. I’m kind of speechless, because he was a good guy.”

An official statement released by the university on Wednesday said, “Our thoughts and prayers are with Dr. Iwuchukwu and his colleagues, students, friends and loved ones, and we are focused on ensuring our community has whatever help they may need.”

Students and faculty from across the campus community shared how Iwuchukwu impacted their time at Duquesne.

In the theology department, the friends Iwuchukwu made expressed their relationship with the professor and praised his advocacy work.

Marisa Captline, a student aide in the theology department, worked for Iwuchukwu during his tenure as the department’s chair, which lasted through the beginning of the spring 2022 semester. She described him as being “genuinely, just such a kind-hearted person.”

“He was so sweet, always curious about what was happening in my life,” Captline said. “He was always so happy to talk about his life as well. When he was in the office, he would ask how you were, and even if you asked first, he would wait for an answer from you before he answered about himself.”

Over this past summer, Iwuchukwu asked the theology office aides to take care of a tree he kept in his office while he went away to England.

“I was charged with doing that,” Captline said.

After Iwuchukwu returned from his trip, Captline continued to look after the plant.

“It looks pretty alive,” she said.

Now, the office aide will continue to keep Iwuchukwu’s tree alive and watch it grow.

Maintaining the wellbeing of his friends and faculty seemed to be a cornerstone of Iwuchukwu’s life work, and his theology staff recalled how this was especially visible during his six years as chair of the department.

James Bailey, the current chair of the theology department, called Iwuchukwu a “fierce defender of the department. He really...stood up when it was necessary.”

Bailey said his department chair predecessor handled the position by becoming a “protector” of his staff.

“You really felt that he had your back or that he would have your back if need be,” Bailey said.

Iwuchukwu handled every need of his staff with great importance.

see IWUCHUKWU—page 3

POLICE BRIEFS

Tuesday, Jan. 10-

A Parkhurst employee reported his AirPods being stolen in Hogan Dining Hall.

Wednesday, Jan. 11-

An adjunct professor reported harassment for a traffic altercation that occurred in Watson Alley.

Wednesday, Jan. 11-

Several students were referred to the Office of Student Conduct after they were discovered to be in possession of marijuana, alcohol and a fake ID.

Friday, Jan. 13-

Theft was reported in Vickroy Hall. Duquesne police officers were dispatched and the case was closed.

Friday, Jan. 13-

A student reported the non-consensual circulation of nude videos.

Sunday, Jan. 15-

The fire alarm in St. Ann's Hall was activated around 2 a.m. A student's room was searched following the incident. They were found in possession of marijuana and other paraphernalia.

Sunday, Jan. 15-

A dispute broke out between intoxicated students in Des Places Hall.

EMAIL TIPS

We want your input!

The Duke's news section would love to hear from you about stories that you want to see in print. Know a talented professor or accomplished student? See something on campus that just doesn't make sense? You can send your tips and story ideas to Editor-in-Chief Luke Henne at hennel@duq.edu.

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“explore that interest.”

Maddy Gormley, a graduate student in higher education, did not have in-person student expos when she studied for her undergraduate degree at University of Pittsburgh.

Gormley tabled for Center for Student Involvement on Tuesday in the Union.

For her, the experience was useful because the expo allowed students to “actually talk to people about [clubs] versus just reading about it online.”

Faith Rebich, junior English and journalism major, is part of Gamma Sigma Sigma, a co-ed service sorority. Originally, she joined the club to follow through with a personal commitment she has to community service.

“I went to a Catholic all-girls school where we were required to do service,” she said. “so just getting to continue that throughout my life [appeals to me].”

Rebich has been part of Gamma Sigma Sigma for about a year, and she has enjoyed service projects like the Relay for Life, a community walk that raises money for the American Cancer Society.

These projects have allowed Rebich to work joyfully alongside other like-minded individuals.

“Joining people together who have the like interest of serving their community while also finding friends along the way,” she said. “I’ve also met my best friends through this.”

For some students, the organizations they joined as an undergraduate changed their en-



EMMA POLEN | NEWS EDITOR

Skyler Wrubleski (left) and Amandalynne Davis (right) tabled for orientation.

tire career goal.

Tiffany Kells, a graduate student in higher education as well, is currently employed with Duquesne's Center for Student Involvement.

She believes the student expo helps students make face-to-face connections in a way campus link or email recruitment cannot, especially for freshmen and new students.

During Kells' own first year of college, she joined the freshman orientation program at the university.

“From there on, I realized that I wanted to work in higher ed,” Kells said. “By getting involved, I decided what I wanted to do with the rest of my life.”

“I wouldn't be here as a grad student if it weren't for getting involved,” she said.

Current orientation leaders also shared how the organization shaped their future goals at their expo table on Tuesday.

Junior Amandalynne Davis is majoring in philosophy and international security studies (ISS), a decision she made after meeting another ISS major through being a team leader at freshman orientation.

“[Team leaders] are the first friendly face that people get to see on campus,” she said.

In fact, even signing up as a team leader was the result of a connection made during her own freshman orientation, Davis said. Now that she is part of the organization, Davis said she will continue to spread that joy she found with orientation.

“I get to come here and share the love for what I have, now,” she said.

In the same way that organizations like freshman orientation helped students find their identities, new clubs on campus are hoping to do the same.

Maddie Fitzgerald, a freshman environmental science major, is

launching oSTEM next fall.

oSTEM was created to help fill a need for LGBTQ+ clubs for the STEM field at Duquesne, she said.

“A lot of universities around Pittsburgh have them, and they're really helpful for professional connections into the workforce and also getting a community together,” Fitzgerald said.

She hopes that having oSTEM “there as a resource” will help future Duquesne students find an identity on campus.

Elyse Barnes is another student hoping to reach a new population on campus with her club, Girl Gains Lifting Club.

“I'm always in the gym and a lot of my friends were reaching out to me asking if I could show them how to lift,” she said.

So, Barnes applied for Duquesne to join the national Girl Gains Club, founded in 2020, and now her lifting experience can be shared with any girl wanting to join her in the Power Center officially this spring. “Women belong in the weight room,” Barnes said.

For these emerging organizations, the spring expo served as a way to put the word about their club out to the student body for the first time.

Each club at the student expo represented a part of the collective identity at Duquesne, one which provides social, service or networking opportunities for a number of fields of interest on campus.

After the student expo finished, Duquesne organizations can still be found online on campus link and on social media.

Red Masquers set to perform spring drama

MAX MARCELLO

staff writer

On January 25th Duquesne University's Red Masquers will be putting on a production of “Mud,” which tells the story of Mae, a young woman struggling with poverty.

Determined to rise above her circumstances, Mae seeks to better herself by pursuing an education. Learning arithmetic and literacy skills creates tension between her and her roommate, Lloyd (played by Matthew Dudley).

Mae prioritizes her education which alienates her from Lloyd. When Lloyd develops an illness, Mae calls the neighbor Henry (played by Kyle Stiver) to help her understand the language of medicine and care for Lloyd.

The three-person cast quickly find themselves in a love triangle which paradoxically fuels the growing separation among them.

Another accident only accelerates Mae's determination to break free of her circumstances and the two men holding her back.

From the beginning it was clear “Mud” was going to be a different show than anything the Masquers have put on before.

Doing “Mud” justice would require the production team to clear a few unique hurdles.

One such hurdle came from Maria Irene Fornés, the playwright, as “Mud” does not have a clearly defined time period nor location.

The challenge of giving “Mud” a setting fell to director Jill Jeffrey. Jeffrey, a professor of theater at Duquesne, decided to localize “Mud” to the Appalachian area.

“The play was written in 1983 and after the initial read it seems to take place in the 1930s,” she said.

However, after discussing with director John Lane, the decision was made to set the play in the modern era.

“It is not an urban scene, so we settled on the Appalachian areas where it is much more rural,” said Jeffrey.

Despite winning an Obie award, which recognizes outstanding theater performance for shows off Broadway, it remains unknown to most audiences.

“Mud” is a fictionalized portrayal of real-world poverty, giving it a distinct depth that attracted John Lane, theater arts director at Duquesne and executive director of the Red Masquers, to it.

““Mud” deals with very difficult topics that don't get talked about often. The play shows how immense poverty impacts every single thing that happens in peoples' lives. I am hoping that audience becomes a little bit more empathetic about the overwhelming problems that poverty brings to people,” Lane said.

In “Mud”, the woman at the center of this struggle is Mae played by senior Anita Parrot. For Parrot, this is not just another show, it is her senior capstone project, and she fully embraced the production.

She has been a Red Masquer since her freshman year, and she said among the variety of roles she has played, Mae stood out.

“While I would not say I resonate with Mae, I think that we are similar in that we have big aspirations. Even if our circumstances are very different,” Parrott said.

The cast shares her view on their characters being deeply flawed people that have some redeeming qualities.

Dudley, a junior who plays the part of Lloyd, noted the process of bringing Lloyd to life in the theater.

“It's been a challenge fitting the show in this small of a space, but I think we did a great job,” he said.

Final preparations are well underway, and the cast and crew eagerly await opening night. Each performance will conclude with a talk-back opportunity with the cast. “Mud” will debut Jan. 25 at 8 p.m. in the Genesis Theater.



COURTESY OF RED MASQUERS

“Mud” will take place at Duquesne's Genesis Theater from Jan. 25-29.

Iwuchukwu remembered as "fun-loving" professor 3

see **IWUCHUKWU** — page 1

"He had the best interest of us and the best interest of the department in mind. It wasn't about him," Bailey said. As department chair, "you don't win every battle. But he tried."

Daniel Scheid, the director of undergraduate studies in the department of theology, has worked closely with Iwuchukwu on class curriculum.

No matter his time commitments as chair, Iwuchukwu was always ready to help his staff succeed. "He always had an open door and was welcoming regardless of the concern, personal or academic."

Scheid and his wife are both staff members at Duquesne, and at the time, they were scheduled to teach on opposite days of the week. When Scheid brought this concern up to his chair, Iwuchukwu was accommodating about their schedule.

"It's a little way, but [he was concerned with] whatever would make people's ability to teach here and work here [better]," Scheid said.

Iwuchukwu was known for being an advocate for dialogue between religious communities, specifically the Muslim and Christian communities in northern Nigeria, the country where he is originally from.

In fact, before coming to Duquesne, Iwuchukwu taught at a public college in Kano, Nigeria, for 12 years, according to a biography on the Duquesne University website. He also earned his Ph.D. in systematic theology and M.A. in journalism from Marquette University.

During his studies and faculty time at Duquesne, Iwuchukwu published two books about the importance of peaceful communication among adversaries. His advocacy work for meaningful dialogue between Christian and Muslim communities led Iwuchukwu to create the Consortium for Christian-Muslim Dialogue (CCMD) and lead the 2014 "Humanity Day Award" at the Islamic Center of Pittsburgh, Pa.

At Duquesne, Iwuchukwu taught courses in world religions and culture, as well as about interreligious dialogue.

Leigh Merski and Emily Pye had Iwuchukwu as a professor for a "Religion, Media and Pop Culture" course in the spring 2022 semester. Merski said that he was "definitely one of the best professors I've had at Duquesne."

"I would describe Dr. Iwuchukwu as a charismatic professor who could make any lecture not only exciting, but also relevant and important," Merski said. "He truly cared about getting to know his students, and valued everyone's thoughts

and opinions."

Pye said that Iwuchukwu was "one of the sincerest and fun-loving professors" that she's had in her time here.

"When I was in Dr. Iwuchukwu's class, he would greet each person individually at the beginning of class, and asked them specific questions about things happening in their lives," Pye said.

A member of the swim team, she said that Iwuchukwu would often notice her wet hair in a bun before proceeding to ask how her practice was or when the team's next meet was taking place.

"Over the course of the semester, our class developed inside jokes about personal things we discussed in his classroom," Pye said. "He would often joke with us, and his laugh always put a smile on my face."

"In my four years of college, I have met very few professors that can foster that type of environment in their classrooms. Dr. Iwuchukwu was truly a one-of-a-kind professor and person, and he will be greatly missed by the Duquesne and Pittsburgh community," she said.

Iwuchukwu was always concerned about everyone, according to Charles Gilmer, a Ph.D. candidate and teaching fellow in theology.

"I did see him last week in his office right down there," Gilmer said. "And he

seemed to be in good spirits."

Iwuchukwu was always in good spirits, according to Bailey. He would sometimes have the latest soccer match open on his computer in his office. His "playful and funny" attitude came from the same place as his interest to create peaceful dialogue among religions.

"Faith informed everything he was doing. It was central to who he was as a human being," Bailey said. "He modeled a certain kind of way of being Christian...I think [it came with] just a deep and profound respect for human beings," Bailey said.

Iwuchukwu will be remembered by the Duquesne and wider faith-filled community as a man whose core values were always exemplified in his actions and in his academic writing.

Classes that Iwuchukwu was teaching this semester will continue with a different professor from the theology department who is currently undecided, according to Bailey.

The official statement released by the university offered the counseling center, campus ministry and the health center to help the community in wake of the shocking news.

There will be a memorial service for Iwuchukwu in the university chapel, but an official date and time will be decided on soon.



EMMA POLEN | NEWS EDITOR

Student aide Marisa Captline will continue to look after Marinus Iwuchukwu's plant as it grows.



EMMA POLEN | NEWS EDITOR

Marinus Iwuchukwu's office in Libermann Hall sits vacant on Wednesday, a day after his death.



ZACH PETROFF | OPINIONS EDITOR

Marinus Iwuchukwu's home, 1 Thorncrest Drive in Wilkins Township, sits empty following his death, and that of his wife, a day earlier. Neighbor Kim Mosley described Iwuchukwu as "an upstanding neighbor" and said that "no one saw it coming." Her husband, Carl Mosley, said, "I'm still looking across the street. There's no words, really. I'm kind of speechless, because he was a good guy."

WBB fends off Saint Louis in A-10 win

LUKE HENNE
editor-in-chief

Megan McConnell posted a double-double with 16 points and 10 rebounds — as well as five assists — as the Duquesne women’s basketball team fought off a furious comeback from Saint Louis in a 68-63 win at UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse Wednesday night.

The victory helped the Dukes secure their 11th win in 12 tries on their home court this season, with the only defeat coming in a non-conference contest against Tulsa Dec. 1.

Although Duquesne held a 26-8 edge at the end of the first quarter and a 39-18 lead at halftime, the Billikens outscored the Dukes 45-29 in the second half.

Head Coach Dan Burt said that there’s two ways to look at the game, and he’s opting for one over the other.

“You can look at it as a tale of two halves, and you can look at it as we’re 11-1 at home,” Burt said. “And I’ll stick with the 11-1 at home against a scrappy team that’s really taken on the persona of their head coach.

Burt described the game as being “very physical” and one “where we had a lot of cuts on our hands and arms.”

“We withstood a push in those third and fourth quarters to come away with a decisive victory,” Burt said. “We had the lead for over 38 minutes, and so that’s always a good thing. You’re in the Atlantic 10 Conference, and so you’re going to have games like this every single night. The way we came out was outstanding, and the way we finished wasn’t great, but it wasn’t bad.”

Burt said that one area of weakness was giving up too many offensive rebounds. The Billikens grabbed 25 offensive boards, while the Dukes collected just 13.

“Can’t let that happen, and we did that tonight,” Burt said. “We have to be more aggressive in our box-outs and pursuing the ball.”

When asked whether the hot start in Wednesday’s game could be connected to frustration stemming from Saturday’s 83-62 loss at Fordham, Burt said that it “took [him] a second to realize who [they] even played in the last game.”

“When the last game ends, we move forward, after we do our post-game grading chart and watch film,” Burt said. “And so that was multiple days ago, and that really didn’t have an impact on this game.”

Burt said that what made an impact was a tweak to the team’s practice

The double-double was McConnell’s ninth in 19 games so far this season. With 10 points and nine rebounds, Amaya Hamilton was one board short of a double-double of her own. Hamilton had a game-high six assists.

Hamilton noted that their opponent was very aggressive and presented a formidable challenge.

“They had so many people coming off the bench,” Hamilton said. “They were always very fresh and were in attack mode the whole game. Obviously, it was overwhelming and scrappy, but at the end of the day, we had 15

fort, the Duquesne coaching staff emphasizes that defense is the key to winning games.

“We know that we can score the ball at the end of the day,” Hamilton said. “But getting stops is very important. And then just making sure that, no matter how big of a run they go on, that we just have to stop it at some point.”

Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Kenny Pickett and some of his former University of Pittsburgh teammates were in attendance Wednesday night. One of the teammates present was Lucas Krull, a tight end for the New Orleans Saints, who is dating Amaya Hamilton.

She said that them being present and sitting courtside “brought up the energy” in the arena.

The Dukes’ next game will be against Davidson on Sunday afternoon at the fieldhouse. Burt said that he’s going to enjoy Wednesday’s victory until midnight, and then “some-time [Thursday] afternoon, [he’ll] sit down and crack open the laptop and start watching Davidson.”

“They return a lot of their players from last year, and [Davidson Head Coach Gayle Fulks] does a nice job down there,” Burt said. “And we have a pretty good understanding of what they do. We’ll really start to game plan tomorrow.”

The Dukes have not defeated the Wildcats since Jan. 4, 2018. The last meeting between the teams came on Jan. 15, 2022, when Davidson bested Duquesne 73-67.



BRENTARO YAMANE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Duquesne’s Megan McConnell dribbles against Saint Louis’ Kennedy Calhoun in the Dukes’ 68-63 home victory over the Billikens Wednesday night.

tice schedule, adding that the team “practiced the worst that [they] have practiced the last two days prior.”

“Monday and Tuesday, we practiced very poorly,” Burt said. “Our kids have said that they’re tired, their legs are dead ... I cut practice early yesterday, and then our shootaround today was 30 minutes, and it’s typically an hour.

“It was crisp. It was on-point. It was very close to perfect execution. And that’s all I really asked of them in this game tonight.”

turnovers, could’ve been worse. We just had to stay strong with the ball. It was rough out there.”

McConnell said that she could notice the Billikens getting frustrated.

“I think we did a really good job defensively, except for the offensive rebounds,” McConnell said. “But I think that came from their frustration, and so they were fouling pretty hard. A bunch of us ended up bleeding and [with] scratches, but we’ll be good.”

Hamilton said that, amid situations like Saint Louis’ comeback ef-



BRENTARO YAMANE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Amaya Hamilton had 10 points and nine rebounds in the Dukes’ win.

MBB falls on road to St. Bonaventure

In what was the final contest of a three-game road trip that has kept the Duquesne men’s basketball team away from the confines of UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse since Jan. 4, the Dukes fell 65-56 at St. Bonaventure Wednesday night.

In 23 games against the Bonnies dating back to Feb. 11, 2012, the Dukes have won three times overall and just once in Olean, N.Y.

Jimmy Clark III (12 points), Tre Williams (11 points) and Rodney Gunn Jr. (10 points) were the only Duquesne players to score in double figures. Gunn also grabbed a game-high 10 rebounds, giving him a double-double.

Clark got the scoring started with a layup at the 18:46 mark of the first half, but the Dukes would not lead for the remainder of the game.

St. Bonaventure led by as many as 20 (53-33) with 12:19 remaining in the game, and although Duquesne cut it to within 6 (55-49) with 6:48 to go, they could not come any closer.

The Bonnies’ Daryl Banks III led all scorers with 15 points.

Duquesne has now lost four of its six games away from Pittsburgh this season. In the non-conference, the Dukes fell at No. 4 Kentucky and beat Colgate in a neutral-sited contest.

Since Atlantic 10 Conference play got underway, Duquesne has lost road games against Dayton, Richmond and St. Bonaventure, with the lone A-10 road win coming over Saint Joseph’s.

Beginning with a contest against Fordham on Saturday, the Dukes will play five of their next seven games on their home court in a stretch that dates all the way to Feb. 15.

Since Duquesne Head Coach Keith Dambrot took over the program prior to the 2017-18 season, the Dukes have bested the Rams in seven of the team’s 10 head-to-head meetings.

Fordham swept Duquesne a season ago, and has not won more than two games in a row against the Dukes since winning five in a row from March 9, 2005, to Feb. 18, 2007.

-Luke Henne, Editor-in-Chief

Atlantic 10 Conference Basketball Standings (as of Jan. 19)

Men’s

Rank	Team	Conf.	Overall	Streak	Next
1.	VCU	5-1	14-5	W4	1/20 at Richmond
2.	Dayton	5-1	13-6	W1	1/21 at G. Washington
3.	Saint Louis	5-1	13-6	W4	1/21 vs. La Salle
4.	Richmond	4-2	11-8	W1	1/20 vs. VCU
5.	St. Bonaventure	4-2	10-9	W2	1/21 at Loyola of Chicago
6.	G. Washington	3-2	9-9	W1	1/21 vs. Dayton
7.	Duquesne	3-3	13-6	L1	1/21 vs. Fordham
8.	George Mason	3-3	11-8	L1	1/21 at Rhode Island
9.	Fordham	2-3	14-4	W1	1/21 at Duquesne
10.	La Salle	2-3	8-10	L2	1/21 at Saint Louis
11.	UMass	2-4	11-7	L1	1/21 at Saint Joseph’s
12.	Saint Joseph’s	2-4	8-10	W2	1/21 vs. UMass
13.	Rhode Island	2-4	6-12	L2	1/21 vs. George Mason
14.	Davidson	2-5	9-10	L4	1/24 at La Salle
15.	Loyola of Chicago	0-6	6-12	L7	1/21 vs. St. Bonaventure

Women’s

Rank	Team	Conf.	Overall	Streak	Next
1.	Rhode Island	6-0	15-3	W6	1/22 at St. Bonaventure
2.	UMass	4-1	14-4	W3	1/22 at Dayton
3.	Saint Joseph’s	4-2	14-4	L2	1/22 vs. Fordham
4.	Fordham	4-2	12-7	L1	1/22 at Saint Joseph’s
5.	La Salle	3-2	12-8	W3	1/22 at Loyola of Chicago
6.	Duquesne	3-3	13-6	W1	1/22 vs. Davidson
7.	G. Washington	3-3	11-8	L2	1/22 vs. VCU
8.	George Mason	3-3	10-9	W1	1/21 at Richmond
9.	Davidson	2-2	9-9	W2	1/22 at Duquesne
10.	VCU	2-3	5-12	L1	1/22 at G. Washington
11.	Dayton	2-3	3-13	L1	1/19 at St. Bonaventure
12.	Saint Louis	2-4	6-15	L1	1/25 at Davidson
13.	Richmond	1-3	11-6	L2	1/21 vs. George Mason
14.	Loyola of Chicago	1-4	6-12	L4	1/22 vs. La Salle
15.	St. Bonaventure	0-5	3-17	L9	1/19 vs. Dayton

Pirates offseason feels different from past years

LUKE HENNE
editor-in-chief

On Friday morning, news broke that outfielder Andrew McCutchen would be returning to the Pittsburgh Pirates on a one-year contract for the 2023 season.

The move helped the Pirates cement an offseason that hasn't necessarily been groundbreaking, but it's certainly not been stagnant either.

It feels weird to say, but the needle is moving in the right direction.

Following a 2021 campaign in which the team went 61-101, their high-profile offseason moves entering the 2022 season were anything but inspiring.

They beefed up the bullpen with the

nated for assignment on May 16.

The first base/designated hitter platoon had an output that was less than desirable. The team re-signed first baseman Yoshi Tsutsugo, who batted .171 in 50 games before being released on Aug. 5. His counterpart signing, Daniel Vogelbach, batted .228 in 75 games before being traded to the New York Mets on July 22.

The options off the bench didn't produce much of anything, either. Utility infielder Josh VanMeter was acquired just before the season started, but hit just .187 in 67 games prior to being designated for assignment on Sept. 7. Jake Marisnick was signed to be an extra outfield option, but he hit just .234 in a 31-game tenure plagued by injury before being released on Aug. 7.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Outfielder Andrew McCutchen is returning to the Pittsburgh Pirates on a one-year contract.

signing of relief pitcher Heath Hembree, who pitched to a 7.16 earned run average (ERA) before being released on June 26.

Jose Quintana helped solidify the starting rotation by pitching to a 3.50 ERA in 20 starts, but he was dealt to the St. Louis Cardinals on Aug. 1. Starter Zach Thompson was acquired from Miami, but his 5.18 ERA in 29 games warranted a trade out of town this past week.

Behind the plate, the team signed Roberto Perez to be the primary catcher. He batted .233 in 21 games before a left hamstring strain ended his season on May 7. The backup they signed, Andrew Knapp, hit .129 across 11 games before being design-

Of those nine players that were either traded, signed or re-signed, none of them are still rostered. The lack of production from the players already on the roster, coupled with the struggles of the new acquisitions, led the Pirates to a 62-100 record. They'll now select first overall in the 2023 MLB Draft.

That offseason, for lack of a better term, was barebone.

This time around, however, things have been different.

The team acquired first baseman Ji-Man Choi from the Tampa Bay Rays on Nov. 10. His 52 Runs batted in in 2022 would've ranked third on the team last season.

The Pirates dealt shortstop Kevin New-

man to the Cincinnati Reds in exchange for relief pitcher Dauri Moreta on Nov. 18. In what was just his second season in the MLB in 2022, Moreta struck out 39 batters in 38.1 innings pitched. In his final 11 appearances of the season, he allowed just two runs.

Shortly after Thanksgiving, on Nov. 29, Pittsburgh found its designated hitter. The team signed Carlos Santana, drove in 60 runs a year ago between the Kansas City Royals and Seattle Mariners. He's hit at least 19 home runs in 11 of his 13 big-league seasons.

The team added to its pitching depth with the signing of Vince Velasquez on Dec. 13. Velasquez has featured as a starter for much of his career (started nine games in 2022), but 18 of his 27 appearances with the Chicago White Sox came from the bullpen. He struck out 69 batters in 75.1 innings pitched.

On Dec. 18, the Pirates acquired a depth piece in outfielder/infielder Connor Joe from the Colorado Rockies. Joe, originally drafted by Pittsburgh in 2014, hit .238 and drove in 28 runs a season ago. Those aren't numbers that pop, but he'll likely be one of the team's top options off the bench.

Two days later, on Dec. 20, the Pirates signed their starting catcher in Austin Hedges. Although his .163 batting average from last season with the Cleveland Guardians is uninspiring, Hedges is regarded as one of the best defensive catchers in the league. He'll look to help young pitchers in the rotation blossom.

The Pirates closed out 2022 by signing relief pitcher Jarlin Garcia. The left-handed reliever pitched to a 3.74 ERA in 58 games with the San Francisco Giants a season ago, and has posted a sub-4.00 ERA in four-consecutive seasons.

When the calendar flipped to 2023, Pittsburgh continued to make moves.

On Jan. 5, the team signed starting pitcher Rich Hill. The 42-year-old left-hander will look to add veteran presence to a relatively-young team. He pitched to a 4.27 ERA with the Boston Red Sox in 2022, but recorded a sub-4.00 ERA in every season from 2014 to 2021.

Then, on Friday, the biggest shoe fell when the team resigned McCutchen. In 2022, he hit 17 home runs and recorded 69 RBI with the Milwaukee Brewers. He's on the back half of his career, but he's a fan favorite that will put people back in the seats at PNC Park.

In his first stint with Pittsburgh from

2009 to 2017, McCutchen went to five All-Star Games (2011-2015), in addition to winning a Rawlings National League Gold Glove Award (2012), four Silver Sluggers (2012-2015) and the 2013 National League Most Valuable Player Award.

Is the team going to make the postseason this year? Probably not.

Will they finish with a winning record? Unlikely, but certainly possible.

While no addition besides McCutchen truly turns fans' heads, the team added quality to each hole in the roster.

The biggest question mark that remains surrounding the team is whether star center fielder Bryan Reynolds will be dealt after he requested a trade in early December.

And, they'll still have to add a backup catcher.

However, for a team that lost 100 games a season ago, there's a lot of promising pieces heading into this season.

Rookies Jack Suwinski and Oneil Cruz combined for 36 home runs in 2022 and should add lots of power to a lineup in desperate need of home runs. Third baseman Ke'Bryan Hayes' defense is as dependable as it comes (.972 fielding percentage in 133 games at the hot corner in 2022). If the Pirates choose to hold onto Reynolds (27 home runs last season), they have a shot at fielding a formidable lineup.

Starting pitcher Mitch Keller (3.91 ERA with 138 strikeouts in 159.0 innings pitched) took a big step forward and projects to anchor the team's rotation, while Roansy Contreras blossomed (3.79 ERA with 86 strikeouts in 95.0 innings pitched) and could be an ace of the future.

While there could still be some questions in the bullpen, closer David Bednar struck out 69 batters in 51.2 innings pitched during 2022. He earned his first All-Star nod, and the Mars, Pa., native will likely continue as the team's ninth-inning option.

Again, the offseason acquisitions aren't going to move the Pirates from 62 wins in 2022 to 92 wins in 2023. They might not even get the team anywhere near the 82 wins required for a winning season in a 162-game schedule.

However, Pittsburgh will win at least 75 games this season. That's not ideal, but it's growth. And it's growth that was made possible by the front office adding veteran presence to an exciting young core.

It's nice to see an offseason in which moves are being made for the sake of improvement. Enjoy it.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Austin Hedges, seen as one of baseball's best defensive catchers, is coming to the Pirates.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

New Pirates pitcher Rich Hill, 43 in March, figures to add veteran presence to a young team.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Ji-Man Choi, acquired on Nov. 10, projects to be Pittsburgh's primary option at first base in 2023.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Carlos Santana, who will likely be the designated hitter, can provide major power to the lineup.

“FANNIE” honors Black history during MLK weekend

EMILY FRITZ
a&e editor

Many people enjoy observing Martin Luther King Jr. Day every January because it gives them a day off of work or school, but few take the time to reflect or celebrate the holiday’s namesake for who he was or what he did.

To honor the holiday weekend and the movement that caused it, Pittsburgh’s August Wilson African American Cultural Center put on a special showing of “FANNIE: The Music and Life of Fannie Lou Hamer” in partnership with Kenny Leon’s True Colors Theatre Company, based out of Atlanta, Ga., and Actors Theatre of Louisville in Louisville, Ky.

The one-woman show followed the trials and triumphs of Fannie Lou Hamer, a Civil Rights leader and voting rights activist from Mississippi, who championed for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, National Women’s Political Caucus and the National Council of Negro Women. Hamer also founded the Freedom Farm Cooperative.

In the show, Fannie (Robin McGee) walked us through her many life experiences. We see her trying to register to vote, hurdling over racist and systemic roadblocks. The audience joined her as she reminisced about her husband, Perry “Pap” Hamer, or mourned the young men of the Freedom Summer murders.

Fannie sang familiar tunes, “This Little Light of Mine” and “Keep Your Eyes on the Prize,” encouraging audience members to sing, stomp or clap along. The show was exceptionally interactive. Unlike other performances, voices from the audience could be heard as people echoed her songs and were encouraged to lend an “Amen” to Fannie’s powerful messages of hope and perseverance.

McGee’s character called upon specific groups in the audience through her anecdotes, breaking the fourth wall even further. As Fannie spoke about the feminist movement and referenced the 19th amendment, she called upon



EMILY FRITZ | A&E EDITOR

The 90-minute, one-woman show featured window screens to showcase historical imagery.

the white women in the audience to draw attention to the importance of intersectionality.

Similarly, she reminisced about the white men who would demand that she “return to Africa.” She explained that she would go back to Africa when the Koreans went back to Korea, when the Irish went back to Ireland, when the Germans went back to Germany and so on until the Indigenous groups were able to claim back their stolen land.

Her direct messaging allowed for present-day connections to shine through at the same time that her words enabled the most space for reflection. Though we’ve come a long way as a country, we still have far to go.

In addition to the better known songs, Fannie sang a short tune titled “I Love Everybody,” which was described as “the easiest song you will ever learn but the hardest you will ever sing.” The lyrics consisted of the title line, sung repeatedly, often in response to

bigoted behaviors used against her. In spite of the hatred she faced, she persistently held true to her Christian beliefs, trying her hardest to hold love in her heart for everyone, despite their love or hatred for her.

Authentic to the history of the character, Fannie’s inner dialogue was saturated with love of worship as she repeatedly called upon God to help and change the world around her. While her life was full of hardship, like the passing of her daughter, Fannie did not stop. Although she grieved, she used her heartbreak as a vehicle for her compassion to flow more freely.

Behind Fannie, the windows of the set mirrored her stories, as historical imagery grounded viewers to the weight of the play’s content and anchored them to the lasting impacts felt today. Just as Fannie was followed through her joyful accomplishments, she also described in great detail the racist threats and police brutality that

she endured.

The detailed use of background imagery, combined with dynamic lighting, pushed the immersive elements of the show even further. There was no intermission for the 90-minute performance, and consequently no set changes or stage crew. However, the transformative special effects of the show, combined with an on-stage costume change allowed the performance to transcend its setting and give the illusion that Fannie was bringing the audience along throughout a much larger history.

The August Wilson Center has been a staple in Pittsburgh’s Cultural District for more than two decades, celebrating and honoring Black culture under the name and legacy of a Pittsburgh playwright. Black heritage deserves to be celebrated year-round, which is exactly what the August Wilson Center seeks to accomplish.

To learn more about events held at the August Wilson Center, visit <https://awaacc.org/>.

campus events

Lunar New Year
Jan. 19 @ 6 p.m.

Join the Asian Student Association in the Union Ballroom to celebrate the Year of the Rabbit with games, prizes and free food!

Beginner's Salsa Lesson
Jan. 19 @ 8 p.m.

Join the Ballroom Association to learn the basics of salsa dancing! All skill levels are welcome.

Cupcake Decorating
Jan. 20 @ 9 p.m.

Duquesne Program Council is meeting in the NiteSpot to put together some sweet treats! Supplies limited.

Board Game/Screen Free Night
Jan. 25 @ 9 p.m.

Enjoy an unplugged night of free food and board games in the NiteSpot with the Honors College.

emily's epiphanies

Asking for Help

Life as a student can be unexpectedly overwhelming and can become easily chaotic. People talk about education being a full-time job, but very scarcely talk about how difficult it can be to ask for help or admit that you need a hand.

Having a routine and taking care of yourself can be a wonderful thing, but finding the rhythm of change, whether it be a new semester, a new activity or even a harder workload, can prove to be more difficult than it seems.

You have a support network, whether it is immediately visible to you or not. Whether it is a trusted friend, your work bestie, or even someone at the Counseling Center or a trusted faculty member.

Carrying extra weight or stress on your shoulders becomes tiresome for everyone at some point. Sometimes it is just enough to say something to someone about what you’re experiencing, other times it’s seeking out your network or your resources.

Regardless, finding help or asking for guidance needs to start with one person: you.
— Emily Fritz

Aquarius

To the salon!

Pisces

I had pasta and Swedish fish for breakfast.

Aries

Give that puppeteer a raise!

Taurus

I think you give off "small independent deer" vibes sometimes.

Gemini

i am in fact, very much mistaken

Cancer

Illegal LEGO building techniques make me uncomfortable

Leo

What do I mean?
What do YOU mean??

Virgo

No no no, you WANT more rotten tomatoes.

Libra

Alright, poison squirrels.

Scorpio

The rats do not run this city. We do.

Sagittarius

it's my field so I'll plant what I want

Capricorn

Iguanas can be dangerous if one lands on top of you.

Local metal band hosts sold-out album release show

JACOB YANOSICK
staff writer

On Jan. 14, metalheads from near and far gathered at The Funhouse at Mr. Smalls in Millvale for Fall of Babylon's album release show. The Pittsburgh-based metal band consists of vocalist Logan Cussen, guitarist Tad Logero and bassist Evan Weston. Live drummer Mike Rush also returned for his first set back playing with the band.

The sold-out show served as the release event for the band's debut album, "War on the Existent", which released on Jan. 13 on all platforms. Fall of Babylon has performed many shows in the surrounding area in the previous year, but this was their first show back in Pittsburgh after traveling to Clarksburg, W.Va. earlier in November to support the Historic Clarksburg W.Va. Cemetery Preservation Alliance.

While mentally preparing before the big show ahead, the band shared their feelings about performing, and their album that had just released.

"We just try and push [the nerves] down and pretend they don't exist," Cussen said before the set.

Releasing their album after over a year of hard work on it was a big accomplishment for the band.

"It just feels really good to fi-



Logan Cussen (left), Tad Logero (center) and Evan Weston (right) celebrated their new album release with a sold-out show.

JACOB YANOSICK | STAFF WRITER

nally have something out to share with everyone," said Tad Logero. In the few days since the album's release, the band has already gained over 3,000 streams on Spotify alone.

Similarly, the show sold out just hours before the doors opened, and the bands performed to over 150 people packed into the Funhouse. Opening were bands Trainwrecked, Vulgar Mephitis,

and Victims of Contagion. Fall of Babylon closed out the night, performing nearly their whole debut album, War on the Existent.

To end the set, they performed their latest single, "Addicted to Violence," and split the crowd into a wall of death. Fans cheered them on afterwards, begging for an encore, where the band performed a Slipknot cover with guest vocalist Ben Dadowski.

The band has also hinted about soon getting back into the studio to continue writing more music. Bassist Evan Weston, a student at Duquesne's Mary Pappert School of Music, also commented on his education at Duquesne and how it contributed to the band.

"Learning the theory and structure of songs has made me a better writer."

The band plans on soon sched-

uling more local and out-of-state shows to perform, looking ahead to the opportunities of the warmer summer months. "We're looking for a possible July tour, as well as shows here and there throughout the year," said Logero.

To keep up with Fall of Babylon, visit their website at <https://www.fallofbabylon.net/> or follow them on Instagram at @fallofbabylonofficial_.

Pittsburgh Restaurant Week makes new dishes accessible for all

EMMA POLEN & EMILY FRITZ
staff editors

The start of the new year is usually trademarked with gym memberships, fad diets and conscious eating, but instead of leaning into flawed resolutions and self-punishing diet culture, the Steel City celebrates January with its semi-annual Pittsburgh Restaurant Week. The most recent Restaurant Week took place last week from Jan. 9 to Jan. 15.

The culinary celebration made its debut back in 2012 when food blogger Brian McCollum partnered with Pittsburgh TasteBuds to organize 30 restaurants for a week-long celebration full of limited-time prix-fixe menus and dining deals, according to the official Pittsburgh Restaurant Week webpage.

Although they started small, Pittsburgh Restaurant Week has grown over the last decade to include 56 restaurants in their most recent celebration. The recurring theme for the winter time is "New Dishes for the New Year" to help create buzz about the must-try venues. A similar restaurant week occurs in the summer, and the theme is celebrated as "Al Fresco & Fresh Harvests"

to encourage lighter dishes that utilize locally sourced produce.

This winter, several restaurants around the 'Burgh took on the challenge of developing new and unique menu items for the Restaurant Week festivities.

Roman Bistro, an eatery in the Forest Hills, served up three-course lunch and dinner options that welcomed in new and existing customers alike.

"It's always something we specially make for that week. It's always very well-received," said Ryan Wentling, the front-of-house bartender and server at Roman Bistro. "People really enjoy doing something different."

The customer enthusiasm for the special restaurant week menu at Roman Bistro was so popular, in fact, that Wentling said the restaurant has incorporated this type of specialty menu an additional two to four times a year, including a night of dinner and wine pairing.

"We enjoy doing Restaurant Week quite a bit because it brings in customers that we don't normally see and we get to feature our dishes," Wentling said.

Even Piada, the popular Italian street food chain, added cannoli chips to their menu during Res-

taurant Week. According to their website, Piada's "crispy cannoli chips [are] tossed in powdered sugar and served with chocolate chip cannoli cream."

La Palapa Mexican Kitchen & Mezcal Bar offered a three-course prix-fixe menu consisting of new dishes, like cream of poblano pepper and corn soup or their La Palapa salad for their starting courses, followed by Calabacitas a la Mexicana (a vegetarian offering) or Mixiote de Pollo as a main course and a sweet pineapple Tamal for dessert.

For diners worried about dietary restrictions or preferences, several restaurants offered vegetarian, vegan or gluten-free options, like Kabab and Curry Restaurant & Grill. Their prix-fixe included traditional Indian staples, such as vegetable samosa and palak paneer (both vegetarian options), while also offering vegan dishes such as Aloo Tikki, Chana Biryani and Suji Ka Halwa.

Other restaurants focused on offering new dishes that were specifically tailored for Restaurant Week, without locking diners into a multiple course feast. Luke Wholey's Wild Alaskan Grille offered three different entrees, each for the minimum

price of \$20.23.

Participating businesses for this season ranged from Italian street food to Indian cuisine to multiple course dining experiences. In an attempt to balance affordability and the desire to support restaurants, prices for special menus fell between \$20.23 (a cheeky play on the new year) for individual dishes inspired by the event and capped at \$45.23 for prix-fixe menus in order to keep venues accessible.

Many restaurants appreciate the bump in business they receive from Pittsburgh Restaurant Week following the holiday season in the wintertime.

"This week is important because it's coming out, supporting everyone while a lot of times businesses tend to slow down, especially restaurants during winter," said Lane Clark, the front-of-house manager at Joe's Crab Shack in Station Square.

Clark is new to the Pittsburgh food scene after moving to the area less than a year ago from Kansas. While new, he is excited to get people back into his business after Covid.

"I mean, shoot, you can't always be cooped up in your house. You might as well go out and cel-

brate life a little bit and get you some crab," Clark said.

Right now, Joe's Crab Shack offers many different flavors of 18 oz buckets of snow crab, and their special menu options include crab-stuffed mushrooms, seared salmon and a limited time shrimp sampler.

Through the online directory on pittsburghrestaurantweek.com, users are able to browse by price, or sort by four different categories: whether the restaurant takes online reservations, accepts walk-in diners, or the restaurant's sustainability practices.

For the adventurous foodie or the diner who feels overwhelmed when presented with too many options, Pittsburgh Restaurant Week created a fun game of "Restaurant Week Roulette," where users could click a button and receive a randomly generated venue and its corresponding menu.

Missed Pittsburgh Restaurant Week Winter 2023? Keep an eye on their Instagram, @pghrestaurantwk, for information about the Spring 2023 celebration. Although dates have not yet been released, "Al Fresco & Fresh Harvests" has historically taken place during the first or second week of August.

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“Our lives begin
the day we become
silent about things
that matter.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

You just read | Now tweet
our thoughts. | us yours.

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COURTESY OF ZACH PETROFF | OPINIONS EDITOR.

This is the spot where Zach Petroff parked his vehicle late last semester, it is quite clear this is not a parking spot.

Not a tale of woe, but of caution

Nothing quite jolts the system like waking up with sheer panic.

The time read 7:47 a.m. on my phone as I sped down the Boulevard of the Allies. I felt like a native Pittsburgher as I weaved through traffic, my turn signal neglected as I forced my way into the merging lane, ignoring all road decorum. It was hard to believe that just moments ago, I was soundly sleeping on my couch until I was awoken to the brutally reality that my class was in 20 minutes.

If I can make it to the parking garage by 7:50 a.m., I'll be okay.

I know it's not a big deal to walk into class a few minutes late, especially for an 8 a.m. class. However, the not-logical part of my brain was overtaken with visions of mockery for disrupting a class full of undergrad pre-law students. I could just imagine seeing their eyes roll as the old guy who talks too much in class casually strolls in to finally take his seat in class.

If you read my previous editorial on the university's attendance policy, it's pretty clear I take a liberal stance when it comes to attendance. For this particular morning class, I had already missed four of the three excusable allowed for the semester.

It also didn't help that this particular professor, U.S. District Judge, did not find me as charming as I'd like to think I am. My random outspoken quips were often met with silence or a subtle eye roll. He is a wonderful educator — we just did not share a lot of the same beliefs, especially on attendance.

The pressure was on, and I knew I could not be late to another class as my GPA depended on it.

Then, as if by some sort of divine intervention, an opportunity presented itself. It was as if the clouds parted and a beam of light came shining down on a piece of unoccupied gravel that my car would fit into. Sure, it wasn't a designated parking spot, but as I hastily parallel parked into the makeshift spot,

I swore I could hear the toll of church bells as if my choice was ordained by the Catholic church.

It was perfect. I could zip across the football field and make my way to College Hall and be in my seat without the need of sprinting and spending the first 15 minutes of class trying to catch my breath.

Everything was going to be alright. And everything was alright. Until I got out of class.

Upon returning to my “park-



ZACH PETROFF
opinions editor

ing spot”, I was revisited by the same jolt of panic I had experienced just over an hour ago. My car was gone.

My dependable Subaru, the one I loaded up with all my stuff and moved to Pittsburgh just 9 months before, had evaporated. It felt the same way one does after returning from a long shopping trip, only to find themselves lost in the parking lot, with the echoing thought of “did someone really steal my car.” I struggled with the thought of someone actually wanting to steal my blemish-covered high-mileage sedan.

Then, it dawned on me.

I got towed.

For months I had avoided purchasing a parking pass and ignoring the yellow parking tickets

that were routinely placed on my windshield. Thinking that as I was not in the system, there was no way the university could trace this car back to me.

This was a painful reminder that the house always wins. Now the gig was up and I was going to have to face the music.

Of course, my initial internal dialogue was searching for a way to blame this on someone or something else.

I wanted to blame the university for its parking schematic, despite their very clear policy and the number of chances they had afforded me.

I wanted to blame the police officer, who did not ignore my clear intrusion and was likely fed up with seeing my vehicle constantly out of compliance for the past two semesters.

I even wanted to blame the towing company, who was just out there making a living, doing their job.

Yet, in the end like all mastermind criminals, I only had myself to blame.

As I walk the campus and see the yellow parking tickets neatly tucked into the windshields of my fellow students' vehicles, I urge my fellow students to learn from my previous and expensive mistake.

It's easy to not follow the rules. While I admire dissidents, it's important to remember that the individual is never greater than the group. While this was a victimless infraction, there's a villainous and superior mindset when choosing to not following simple rules, in order to maintain a level of convenience.

It's both selfish and immature.

Getting my vehicle out of impound cost me \$350 dollars. I had to pay for an Uber to the impound and would also have to pay for my vehicle to get rebalanced as the process of the tow had done a number to my vehicle.

In the end, and almost \$500 later, I had learned a valuable lesson that I hope to pass on to my fellow students.

Never take an 8 a.m. class.

staff editorial

Martin Luther King Jr. Day: a time for reflection

Duquesne University welcomed an early break on Monday in honor of the late Martin Luther King Jr.

The federal holiday was created to honor the birthday of the Civil Rights movement activist. The third Monday of every year is a time for everyone to reflect the message of King and strive for racial harmony.

While much has been gained, in terms of racial equality, we still have a long way to go.

Just look at the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.

According to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, despite the fact that Black men make up only 6% of the county's population, they are victims in 66% of annual homicides on average.

Most of these victims are between 18 and 34 years old.

Black people in Allegheny County have an average homicide victimization rate that is 21 times the rate for white residents, with young Black men most at risk.

While Black residents comprise only 13% of the county population, they accounted for 77% of homicide victims in the county from 2016 through 2021.

In 2019 the City of Pittsburgh's Gender Equity Commission found that Pittsburgh's Black maternal mortality rate is higher than 97% of other cities.

For Pittsburgh's Black women, 18 out of every 1,000 pregnancies end in a fetal death.

The numbers are grim, but the future can be bright.

A lot is discussed about how we fix these types of issues. It can be overwhelming to think how one might do their part to fight injustice.

Every action seems to be with some sort of criticism driven by a certain narrow political ideology.

Even in this hyper-political sphere that we now operate in, it's not unusual to see King's words being misconstrued or falsely attributed in order to push some sort of ideology.

However, one message that was clear with the late reverend.

The message of love, compassion and grace.

It seems we often worry about who is right instead of focusing on what is right. If we want to change the world for better it starts not on the steps of the bureaucracy but in our hearts.

This world can be scary and bleak and it can be a lot scarier and a lot bleaker for others.

It may sound simple, but the ability to put away our ego and practice compassion toward one another can be the start of something extraordinary.

The lies of our leaders are turning lethal

RUSSELL MACIAS
staff writer

When Julius Caesar uttered his famous words “Jacta Alea Est” as he crossed the Rubicon, his loyal advisor, Georgius Maximus Santosius, was the one that came up with the phrase and gifted it to Caesar.

“The die has been cast.”

That advisor is a long lost relative of somehow-still-an-actual-member of the House of Representatives, George Santos, and he honors his ancestor’s legacy.

Now of course that is not true, but given Santo’s record – it would not be out of character for him to tell that to his constituents.

Santos should be considered a con man for his wide array of lies including, but are not limited to: his education, jobs, religion and athletic accomplishments. It is extraordinary that this strategy worked as he was recently elected to Congress, where he remains for the next two years, unless he is forced out before his term ends.

Lies matter.

For him to lie and claim his mom died on 9/11, who actually died in 2016 from a completely unrelated cause, is a slap in the face to all Americans, especially those living in New York’s 3rd congressional district. He took advantage of the people he is supposed to represent. Now he holds office and has the power to craft legislation for the rest of the country.

While some may find Santos as the biggest joke in Washington D.C., it’s funny until it’s no longer funny. This type of behavior is born out of the election denying ways of the new Republican Party.

And as we know, these lies are extremely dangerous.

And lies can be contagious.

Take for example Solomon Peña, who ran for a position in the New Mexico State House District 14, and lost. He ran a campaign of election denial, coupled with waxing poetic about Donald Trump.

Peña was arrested for organizing targeted shootings at the homes of Democratic state officials in the county where he was defeated.

That is why lies matter.

Nobody was harmed in these shootings, and Peña and his co-conspirators have warrants out for their arrests, however the details of the incident are horrifying.

Starting on Dec. 4 and lasting until Jan. 3, Peña organized and/or participated in mob-style assassination attempts on Bernalillo County Commissioner Adriann Barboa’s, State House Speaker-Elect Javier Martinez, former Bernalillo County Commissioner Debbie O’Malley’s and State Sen. Linda Lopez. It’s been confirmed Peña was the one firing a gun at one of the houses, while the others he supplied the money and guns to do the job.

That is why lies matter.

During one of the incidents, a bullet

soared through a little girl’s bedroom while she was in that very room. Thankfully no one was injured, but this country was very close to witnessing the death of a 10-year-old girl, because of these lies.

Peña, who already served almost seven years in prison after a 2008 conviction, was a known evil that was somehow allowed on the ballot. During his campaign he was radically in favor of Trump, bashing party constituents who had been soured by Trump’s never-ending falsehoods.

Peña had an altercation with Barboa prior to the shooting, where he continued on his rant, saying elections are rigged, and dismayed that he had been defeated. In his election, Peña lost to the incumbent, Miguel Garcia, by a margin of nearly 50%, 74-26.

His election wasn’t even close, but it didn’t need to be. Trump lied, so why would he not follow in the same footsteps? When people are not held accountable these types of actions are going to continue.

The Republican Party today is spineless, and it shows. While they’ll be quick to wash their hands of both Santos and Peña, and simply dismiss them as nut-jobs who slipped through the cracks, the reality is they’re the ones jackhammering the road making the cracks for these vermin to sneak through.

It is essential to remember while you laugh at George Santos’ tall tales, remember that these lies matter, and they

can turn dangerous and very nearly deadly in an instant, and then you’ve got a Solomon Peña situation, which is no laughing matter.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Newly elected congressman George Santos faces scrutiny for his many falsehoods.

Was it actually for “the good of the people?”

EMMA POLEN
news editor

China ended its nearly three-year-long “zero Covid” policy, and the resulting exponential outbreak of infections has made the world ponder the true intentions behind these restrictions

Back in January of 2020, the Chinese government promised that the forceful policies of isolation and self-quarantine were put in place for the good of the people.

While not everyone was a fan of the new policies, at the time it made sense. Keep the most vulnerable populations safe, and everyone would benefit.

Beginning in December of 2022, though, the major restrictions that kept Covid outbreaks in the heavily populated urban areas of China were lifted all at once, almost without warning. And with that, the Chinese people are left to wonder if the “good of the people” was ever the priority.

The reversal on restrictions came in December, soon after city protestors fought for an end to the complete lockdown-style policies that had kept the country isolated since 2020.

According to the Lancet, an international peer-reviewed medical journal, China reacted to the protestors with almost complete removal of their restrictive controls.

Lancet named the restrictions that were dropped, and many pose a problematic role in China’s safety and health.

“Travel in public was no longer restricted

by electronic health passes and lockdowns were now highly focused and no longer required for whole municipal areas or cities and were relaxed after 5 days for new cases,” the journal stated.

The daily health pass that would allow healthy people to board the train on the way to work will no longer be enforced. Many people were never in support of this specific restriction, but its reversal will result in more people, even those with Covid who may just be asymptomatic, to board crowded transportation together.

“Additionally, from Jan. 8 onwards, people were able to travel internationally again.”

Now, not only will these lifted Covid restrictions affect China, but they could have repercussions around the globe, including in places ill-prepared for a pandemic. Sound familiar? Didn’t the entire pandemic begin because of a spread of cases from Chinese travelers who took to the air?

A return to a misstep from the very beginning of the pandemic – when this was all new and no one knew any better –further proves how hastily these regulation reversals seemed to come from Chinese leaders.

And, as one would expect, the sudden reversal of restrictions caused “rapid infection in many millions of Chinese people in December 2022,” Lancet said.

Not only were infection rates high, but Covid took its toll on those most vulnerable to major symptoms – the elderly.

Three years of restricted activity kept China safe from violent Covid outbreaks after the initial spread of the virus, but then it

seemed as if no one in charge of reversing these restrictions checked the figures before making their decision.

Statistics from the Chinese National Health Commission shared that only 40% of citizens 80 years or older received the complete immunization to the virus. In China, full immunization required two vaccinations and at least one booster shot.

Even for those 40%, it is difficult to stay fully vaccinated while new variants continue to emerge.

With all this in mind, Chinese officials appear to be conflicted between the interests of the people and the interests of the party.

Do they want authority, or do they want another deadly Covid outbreak nationwide?

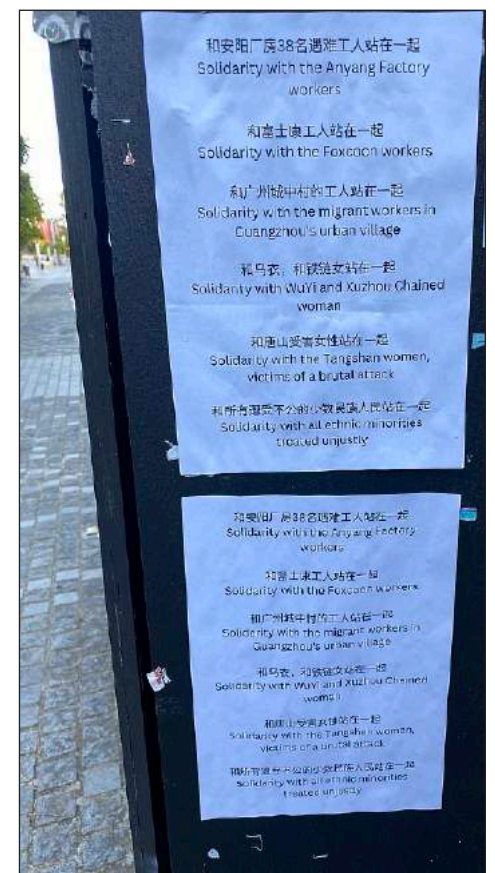
In my view, they could have had both by slowly easing back into “normal” life while keeping some key restrictions in place. For example, NPR found that Chinese state-sponsored vaccination pop-up booths had been taken down as soon as restriction orders were made.

The pop-up clinics could have stayed in place to ensure anyone with symptoms had a convenient location to check for Covid before continuing with their regular day-to-day activities.

In addition, the government could have advocated more seriously to have vaccinations available for those most vulnerable to hospitalization.

Currently, the homepage for the National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China includes an ad for students to get another vaccination shot. Instead, the ad could

encourage people – student-age or older – to get their elderly family members to the nearest clinic for a booster shot.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Chinese slogans for the protest displayed at the University of Sydney.

DU alum flourishing at Wheeling news station

ISABELLA ABBOTT
features editor

Some people believe that a news reporter's day starts when he or she sits at a desk to look and read from a teleprompter when the camera goes live. However, a reporter's day actually starts hours before their live program, and involves finding the best stories possible for their target audiences.

This rings true for Baylee Martin, a television anchor/reporter at WTRF 7News in Wheeling, W.Va., who became a professional news reporter shortly after graduating from Duquesne last May. She says a lot of people don't realize what goes into her day-to-day schedule.

"I've had a lot of people ask me, 'Well, you just work for two hours and sit in and read from the teleprompter,'" Martin said. "I think [I've] even [had] family members who have asked me about my job [that] are like, 'Well, don't you just go and sit and look nice on camera?' No, I actually am rushing up until the last minute to make sure that I have everything that I need to have done before I can finally sit and be in front of the camera, and then that's [how] I know everything's done."

Not only is she trying to finish her stories on time throughout her long work day, but Martin is also uploading and editing her own videos for the newscast that'll be live later that night.

"I come back to the station and upload all of my footage, and that's when I put everything together ... by myself," Martin said. "So that's when I'll go through my interviews, listen to them, clip the best quotes that I want to use and write out all of my own scripts."

When it's finally time to anchor, Martin feels at ease after a day full of interviews and edits.

"Everyone has a common goal, and it's amazing watching everyone during the day, you know, being scatterbrained and

rushing and then finally having a product at the end of the day," Martin said. "It's the most satisfying thing in the world."

She felt that same feeling of satisfaction during her time in college while being a part of Duquesne Student Television, where her love for reporting and writing also grew immensely.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BAYLEE MARTIN

Baylee Martin (right) and Steve Moore, her co-anchor (left) on set at WTRF 7 News in Wheeling, W.Va. Martin began working at the station after graduating from Duquesne in May 2022.

"I always kind of knew that I would end up doing something that required me to meet people, talk to people, but I just didn't know where to channel that," Martin said. "So I think getting into those extracurriculars like DSTV and *The Duke* allowed me to realize, 'Okay, I can actually make a career out of this. And instead of it being an extracurricular or something outside of class, I can really focus my energy on this and turn it into something when I get out of here.'"

Martin did exactly that. She was able to channel her energy into her reporting, which allowed her to start her career right out of college. That's an accomplishment she's grateful for, especially since it's not easy work.

"You have to sit there for hours and have to have a creative mind to be able

to sit there and put words to paper. I'm using every part of my brain every single day," Martin said. "Am I saving lives as a doctor out here? Can't say I am, but in a way, I'm using my brain to save lives in a different way. I might be saving a life based on an accident on a highway. I might be saving a life based on a fire that is down the street."

Someone who saw Martin's passion for reporting first-hand at Duquesne Student Television is Michela Hall, who was

president of the club at the time. She said Martin was always willing to learn more.

"Baylee was extremely exciting, and she really had her hands in everything," Hall said. "She's always a team player, she always delivers when you ask her to and she's very supportive of other people and other people's projects too."

"She was there behind the scenes just as much as she was in front of the camera, and I think that's really important and just shows someone's character of how hard they can work. They don't just want the spotlight, they want to learn, too, and that's important."

By being the youngest reporter on her staff, Martin is able to bring a different perspective to her career through social media. After seeing other reporters post videos on TikTok during their shifts, she decided to follow suit, which allowed her to gain followers and respect.

"I went live on TikTok one day, and I set up my phone and went live through the entire newscast," Martin said. "Before I knew it, there were 100 people watching. Then there were 200 people watching ... Then there were 5,000 people watching."

By having a good social media presence, Martin reiterated how important it can be for her field.

"Honestly, if you're going to be in this business, social media is the wave of what's coming up right now," Martin said. "I think social media is a huge part that you show inside your life to people you don't even know and give them a sense of, 'She's a human being, we feel like we can trust her.'"

Her journey at Duquesne was just the start of her career. Now, Martin has the opportunity to showcase her personality to her viewers, and she loves it.

"I love getting to show my personality. I love getting to have fun with [co-anchor Steve Moore]," Martin said. "My favorite part about my job, honestly, is probably getting to learn new things every single day."

MORE PICTURES FROM BAYLEE MARTIN'S EXPERIENCE AT WTRF 7NEWS



At her job as a news anchor, Martin is responsible for covering events all across Wheeling, W.Va.



Martin said that the best part of her job is "probably getting to learn new things every single day."

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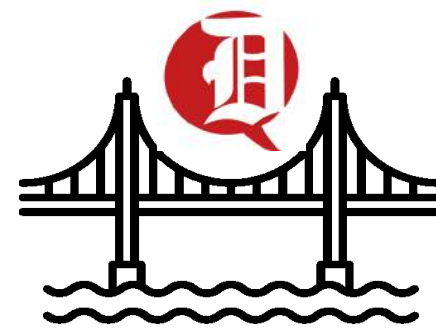
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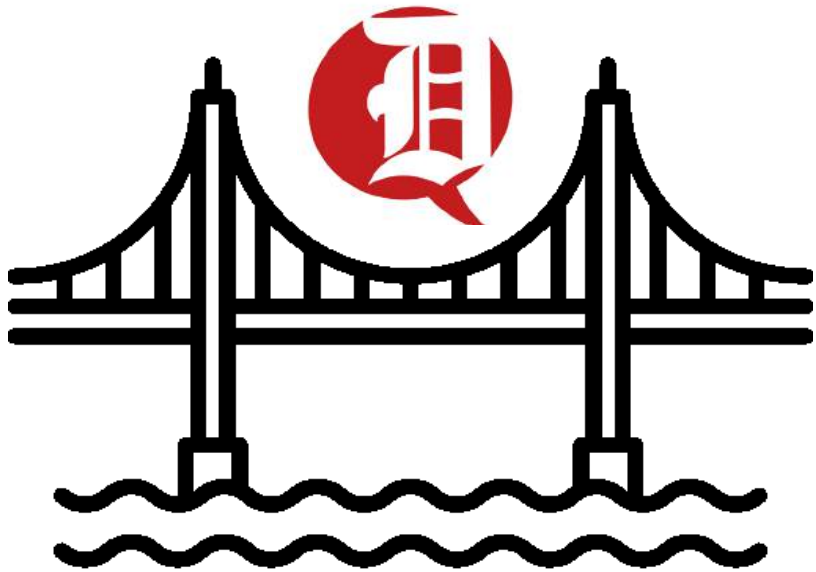
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