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# Compass Education: *Directing colleges to-ward more inclusive learning*

EMMA POLEN  
news editor

Every week, Colton Vazquez meets with his friend Nathan Pearson to practice for his monologue for Acting IV class. This is more than a study session, though. Vazquez has Down Syndrome, and he is taking classes in the liberal arts school alongside his peer mentor, Pearson, who is a fourth-year occupational therapy student.

Vazquez and Pearson were paired through the Compass Inclusive Education pilot program, which could receive official program status here at Duquesne later this spring.

The pilot program was launched in the spring of 2019 by co-administrators Alia Pus-torino, the director of extracurricular community engagement, and Dr. Meghan Blaskowitz, an associate professor of occupational therapy.

The main mission of the Compass program is inclusivity in higher education, Blaskowitz said.

Inclusivity, in the way the Compass program approaches it, is the ability of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to complete college degrees alongside the general student population in educational settings. IDD incorporates hundreds of disabilities,

see COMPASS — page 2

# THE DUQUESNE DUKE

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## Houston, we solved a problem



COURTESY OF GIOVAN CUCHAPIN

A group of Duquesne students spent spring break helping with a Spiritan mission project in Houston.

ZACH PETROFF  
opinions editor

Traditionally, spring break is a time for students to cut loose and relax, whether it's at home or on a beach. That was not the case for 11 Duquesne students, who spent their spring break in Texas volunteering their time to help the disenfranchised.

Students collaborated with the Spiritan Office of Mission Advancement (SOMA) and the multicultural parish ministry at St. Benedict the Abbot Catholic Community in Houston to help people in need in the Houston area.

The parish is led by Vietnamese Spiritan priests Rev. Brandon Ngu Yen and Rev. Joseph Huy Dinh, whose congregation is centered toward the Latino and Black communities in the area.

"Meeting people in Houston, who dedicated their lives to helping others in and outside of their

communities was inspiring, and it was an honor to work alongside their missions," said Elisha Schoeneck, a sophomore health science student.

During their time in Houston, the group worked with the Mamie George Community Center, the Anawim Thrift Store of Magnificent Ministries to the Homeless and Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen along with helping out at St. Benedict and their host horse ranch.

"I think we served like 360 families that evening," said Dot-tie Bateman, volunteer manager of the Mamie George Community Center. Families wait in a car drive-through line to receive grocery packages with produce, dry goods and protein, Bateman said.

Students were tasked with running the food distribution drive-through. They were in charge of handing out groceries, bringing items to vehicles and double-checking food items.

They also brought a level of contagious enthusiasm to the patrons and volunteer staff, Bateman said.

"They were very enthusiastic," Bateman said. "I could tell that they were having a good time, and when the volunteers are having a good time, it's a big impact on everybody."

No matter the site the group worked in, the Houston mission centered around the Spiritan message of serving the less fortunate.

"It felt very spirited to be working there because the Spiritans are all about going and walking with those on the margins," said student leader Tony Carbino, a fifth-year biomedical engineering student. "It was really nice because we got to work with members of the community, folks who are experiencing homelessness and the people that are working with them to help address the issue."

While the work the team did had an impact, they were able to make

connections beyond the mission.

"Our physical labor in Houston did help people, it was nothing permanent or life changing," Schoeneck said. "What was though, were the friendships we made with each other and the people we met there."

Students were able to not only network with other Spiritan congregations, but with students from the University of Houston and Rice University. The focus of this trip centered around fostering relationships with people.

"The trip is called a Spiritan Mission Experience, and the Spiritan method of service puts less emphasis on the work done, and more on connecting with and building relationships within the community," sophomore Alexander Hajkowski said. "It feels more like working with friends instead of laboring for someone or some organization."

see SERVICE — page 3



## POLICE BRIEFS

## Tuesday, Feb. 28-

Resident director found an object and money in student's room out in the open that were believed to be used for drug use or sales.

## Wednesday, March 1-

A Montour School District bus hit the speed sign on Bluff Street and drove away without informing anyone of the incident.

## Sunday, March 5-

A campus resident made a walk-in report to DUPS of non-consensual dissemination of nude pictures.

## 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](mailto:hennel@duq.edu).

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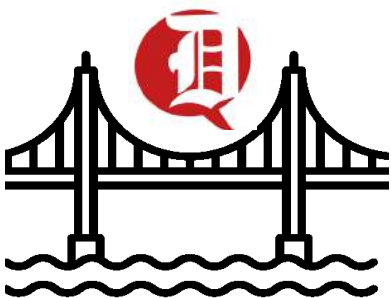
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from COMPASS—page 1

which individuals typically have had since birth, that include autism, Down Syndrome, Fragile X syndrome and Williams syndrome, Blaskowitz said.

When a student with an IDD enters higher education, they might be seeking a degree or a certificate, Blaskowitz said. "And that certificate really...focuses on building upon educational background, as other students do, as well as...career exploration."

The scarcity of current opportunities in higher education for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities makes Compass' offerings important.

Blaskowitz shared that out of high school, 70% of students without disabilities move on to college, while that percentage is less than 20% for students with IDD.

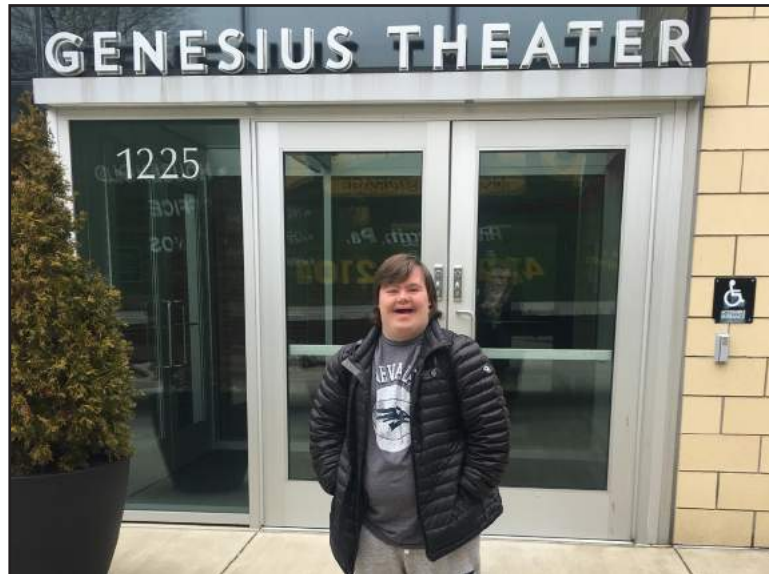
Even for those seeking higher education, not every university has opportunities for people with IDDs. Of the 6,000 official college institutions across the country, Blaskowitz said, "There's only

Blaskowitz and Pustorino secured funding to operate the Compass pilot from the Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) Grant to operate the pilot. The grant guarantees funding for Compass for five years, allowing the program to offer monetary compensation to peer mentors and graduate assistants, Blaskowitz said.

They are currently submitting Compass for official academic program approval, she said, which would also allow more staff and time to be allocated to the program.

Approvals like these will be announced later this spring, but Pustorino emphasized their current pilot program's impact on Duquesne's campus community, despite their hopes to grow their number of students with IDDs and peer mentors following this semester.

The Compass program has provided students with IDD typical college experiences, including involvement in student clubs



COURTESY OF DR. MEGHAN BLASKOWITZ

Colton Vazquez is takes theater classes with his peer mentors from Compass.

316 programs like ours."

In fact, Duquesne's Compass program is the only truly inclusive education program for students with disabilities, besides Slippery Rock, in western Pennsylvania, she said.

Without these inclusive opportunities, Blaskowitz said students with IDD tend to fall into jobs in the "Four F's," flowers, food, filth and filing.

Career experience through the university is what Blaskowitz said impacts students' ability to find fulfilling work.

"We're trying to increase somebody's ability to go successfully into the workforce of their desire, with competitive wages," she said, "because that will help to increase their ability to live independently, to... live the good life that I think all students want to be able to live."

Right now, as a senior in Compass, Vazquez said he is looking to go into acting after graduation. He is currently completing his theater major, and he has participated in extracurricular theater events as well, including last year's Red Masquer production, *Mamma Mia*.

and activities.

"We really encourage our students to have that autonomy to choose their classes the way that any other student would do, or to choose the clubs that they're going to live in like any other student would do, to choose their career paths," Pustorino said.

Compass has allowed current seniors in the program, Vazquez and Ben Guthrie, to participate in "extensive advocacy experience" in the city of Pittsburgh and even on Capitol Hill, Blaskowitz said. "They are advocating for others who are not capable of advocating for themselves."

Historically, people think of "inclusion in terms of race and ethnicity, or even the LGBTQ+ community," Blaskowitz said. "I think students with disabilities are lower on the totem pole when you're talking about diversity and inclusion."

"If Compass can help our students with disabilities be more included, then I think it sets a precedent or a model for how the university could make sure that all students feel included," Blaskowitz said.



EMMA POLEN | NEWS EDITOR

Nathan Pearson (left) and Colton Vazquez (right) study a monologue from *Sleeping Beauty* Vazquez has for acting class.

The way that Compass addresses inclusive education is through the model of universal design for learning.

The goal of a universal design is to provide students with a variety of ways to demonstrate competency, Pustorino said, rather than having every student write a 20-page paper.

"Why can't we really capitalize on the skill sets of a 21st century learner? Because you all communicate differently than we did," Pustorino said.

Diverse learners are already evident to Blaskowitz through her student evaluation surveys at the end of each semester. Some students said they preferred the lecture part of her courses, she said, while other students preferred the experiential learning side of it.

"Inclusive education should be the standard of what's offered to students with and without disabilities, that they feel like their professors get them, that they're really learning skills that are delivered at their level," Blaskowitz said.

"That ability for a student to have ownership, and to be able to advocate for what they need...is ideally what a student should be doing in any educational space," Pustorino said.

Within Vazquez's classes in performing arts, his professor, John Lane, the director of the theater arts program, said how all students benefit from classes that teach students to speak and stay organized.

"Performing classes really teach you presentation skills, collaboration skills and cooperation," Lane said.

Theater classes are very "individually-geared," Lane said, but class instructions are optimized

for Compass student learning strategies to assure that everyone learns as best they can.

In Vazquez's acting class, they have adapted memorizing lines to meet him in a learning method he can use, which is breaking up the lines into words accompanied by pictures.

In addition to the Compass-enrolled students themselves, peer mentors in the Compass programs have the chance to explore fields of study that they otherwise would not cross with their own major.

"I would never have had an interest in anything theater related," said Pearson. "And it really pulled me out of my comfort zone that way to enhance my educational experience."

"This is a career option, and several of them [peer mentors] have really started to look at their work in this field," Pustorino said.

Nicholas Fetzter, a Compass peer mentor and a junior in biology with a focus in pre-dentistry, said, "this idea of creating an inclusive environment is something that I want to take with me in my pursuit of becoming a dentist."

Already, Fetzter is looking to apply for dental schools with "the intent of becoming a dentist who can specialize in helping kids and adults with intellectual disabilities be able to tolerate their dental appointments," Blaskowitz said.

"I think [creating options is] important when we think about the institution, and our role in supporting [its] mission, because this work doesn't just impact the university. It impacts our ability to build an inclusive workforce," Pustorino said.

"And an inclusive education," Blaskowitz finished.



COURTESY OF DR. MEGHAN BLASKOWITZ

The Compass program also hosts regular hangouts to build relationships among students enrolled in Compass and their peers at Duquesne.



# "Check out" the campus police for a day 3

HANNAH PETERS  
staff writer

eventually the city of Pittsburgh where he served 25 years.

Several other campus police officers joined Holmes in his human library. Each had a small sign stationed at their table indicating their name and a prompt that read "Ask me about" with a specific fun fact.

Holmes asked students to inquire about the four U.S. presidents he has met: Clinton, Obama, Biden and Trump. Another officer, Alfonso Roberts, urged guests to ask about his favorite hobbies.

Some of them included sports (mainly basketball and football), art, specifically graphic design and pencil drawing, restaurant exploring and video games. Roberts is even nationally ranked in several games including the Xbox game "Blazing Angels" where he said he has made the top 25.

"I was a video gamer from an early age, using machines you guys have probably never heard of," Roberts said.

He shared that connecting with students is a major goal of his and his colleagues, and sharing his interests and hobbies has helped him accomplish this.

"I believe in getting to know your community, and the people inside your community. Rapport is huge. To have rapport with students and faculty can actually forego a lot of potential problems," Roberts said. "I pride myself in de-escalation and redirection. When you can get to know someone, you can help them de-escalate faster."

Another way that the officers look out for students is through the rules that dictate life on campus. When a rule is not serving students or staff as it should be, they take effort to change it for the better.

For instance, Holmes worked to change Duquesne's procedure surrounding false IDs.

"When things come to my attention, we'll look at them," Holmes said. "The officers came to me and said 'Hey, we think we should change this rule to help the students out.' So I had the discussions and changed the rules for false IDs. The procedure before I got here is different than what it is now – we used to be giving non-traffic citations on first offenses and now everything just stays in-house."

He said that his beliefs regarding the role of law enforcement motivated the change.

"I believe we are a part of the educational process. University policing should not be punitive. We should not be going out looking for things. Now violations come our way, obviously, but I told the freshmen this summer, we are about second chances."

Holmes mentioned that students also can get involved in promoting safety on campus.

"See something, say something. Be an extra set of eyes and ears," Holmes said. "Seeing something and saying something is super important in today's day and age. I like to say that we produce public safety on campus here. Everyone has a role to play."



HANNAH PETERS | STAFF WRITER

Duquesne police officers were available to be "checked out" at the interactive human library at Gumberg Library on Wednesday.

Books, as great and informative as they may be, have limits when it comes to verbally connecting to readers. But on Wednesday, Gumberg Library found a way to get around this barrier.

Their spines might not be bound by paper, string and adhesive, but for a short time, students were able to "check out" a unique resource at the library – Duquesne University police officers.

Throughout the day, students had the chance to head up to the 5th floor of Gumberg Library to meet, question and connect with those that work to keep their campus safe. Refreshments, including cookies and brownies, were also served.

The event was titled "Human Library" and is the first one of its kind on Duquesne's campus.

Duquesne's chief of police, Eric Holmes, credits his friend, also a police chief in the city, for the idea.

"A good friend of mine in law enforcement started one at a local library in the city and after getting a tour of Gumberg Library this summer, I thought it would be the perfect opportunity," Holmes said. "Ever since I've been here, I've wanted to do more outreach because I really believe in that. I want to connect with as many departments and groups on campus as possible."

Starting as a volunteer firefighter at the age of 16, Holmes found his way to Duquesne after working as an officer for Pitt's campus and

We get there by talking, by bringing suggestions back and forth. When we disagree, I think that's important too. There has to be some pushback."

Another way for students to get involved is through the Chief Advisory Board which meets on the last Wednesday of the month to cover happenings and concerns on campus. Holmes encourages students to contact him at his email, holmes5@duq.edu, to get involved.

Holmes has also partnered with residence life for 'Fireside Chats' where residents of the dorms on campus come to interact with Holmes and other officers to discuss safety on campus.

Holmes has worked on several fronts to make positive changes at Duquesne – another one being

opportunities for women.

"Since I've been here, I've made it a point to hire female officers. We've done that because I believe that we, the university, the campus, should have them here. That's something that needed to be done."

Holmes spoke highly of those he strives to protect at the Human Library on Wednesday.

"The students here, you guys are focused on your studies. Knock on wood but we don't have incidents that are happening at other locations. I think here the community is strong, everyone knows their purpose," Holmes said. "Loved ones, guardians, partners, whoever that may be, trust us to be here to protect the ones they love. The officers here all take that very seriously."

## DUQ students service Spiritan message in Houston

from SERVICE—page 1

The mission trip was not all work, as students were able to enjoy the city of Houston. Giovan Cuchapin, minister at Duquesne and the staff leader for the trip, was able to show students some of the area's best-kept secrets.

Cuchapin, who considers himself a Houstonian and a Texan, was excited to show the students around his old stomping ground

"I know the nooks and crannies of Houston, Texas," Cuchapin said. "I get to share with them the hotspots for gathering."

Whether it was going to a rodeo, belting out tunes from Journey at karaoke or enjoying Boba tea in Chinatown, the students were able to celebrate their hard work by letting loose and hitting the town.

During one evening the students were able to attend the famous Houston Rodeo, which

included a concert performance by Lauren Daigle.

"It was a great excuse to bust out my cowboy boots and hat," said Grant Leemhuis, a senior business student.

Aside from the entertaining portions, the Houston mission trip also gave students a spring break with a sense of purpose.

"Having the opportunity to meet people, work in their communities and see the impact of our service in real time has been

more fulfilling than I ever would have expected," Leemhuis said. "The joy I get from helping others is more to me than anything I can think of."

Some of the mission's highlights came from simple moments—like speaking with fellow college students in the area, or being accompanied by a local dog on a morning run. The crew was able to formulate timeless memories while creating a bond with one another.

"People didn't really bring their laptops or schoolwork, and we didn't have cell service on the ranch we stayed at," Schoeneck said. "It truly felt like a relaxing, fun and carefree spring break."

The Spiritan Campus Ministry mission trips are open to all students regardless of religious affiliations. Students that are interested in the next trip, planned for the fall, can follow the Spiritan Campus Ministry at @scmdqu on Instagram.



COURTESY OF GIOVAN CUCHAPIN

Alex Hajkowski, Dan Timoney and Tony Carbino helped with the Houston parish grocery drive-through during their spring break volunteer work.



COURTESY OF GIOVAN CUCHAPIN

Mission volunteers had the opportunity to explore the rodeo scene in Houston during their spring break mission.



# WLAX falls at home to Central Michigan

**MATTHEW THEODROS**  
staff writer

The Duquesne women's lacrosse team lost its second-consecutive game, falling to Central Michigan 19-8 at Rooney Field on Tuesday afternoon.

The Chippewas came out of the gates with energy, making plays on the offensive and defensive end. Goalie Alexa Martel had two of her career-high 18 saves in the first minute of the game. Kendall Hoyt scored the game's first two goals in just 2:06, giving Central Michigan an early cushion.

The Chippewas carried a 5-2 lead into the second quarter, with four of the five scores coming from Kendall and her twin sister, Kelly. Martel launched a hail-mary

Kendall finished with three goals on the same, while Kelly scored a game-best seven times.

After Delaney Rodriguez-Shaw scored her second of a team-best four goals to bring the Dukes' deficit to one at 5-4, a 4-0 run from Central Michigan gave them a comfortable advantage.

Rodriguez-Shaw scored once more before half to make it 9-5, but an 8-1 run from the Chippewas that lasted from the start of the third quarter until the 10:50 mark of the fourth quarter helped that lead grow into double digits at 17-6.

The two squads would exchange blows twice down the stretch, with Central Michigan never letting the lead slip back into single digits.

For the Chippewas, it was their first

the season.

Duquesne Head Coach Corinne Desrosiers attributed the loss to many things, but most specifically was the lack of continuity and how her team handled it.

"Today was the first day we rolled out the new defense, and we only had three hours of practicing," Desrosiers said. "If you saw the sidelines, we don't have numbers. We were down seven to begin the year and we have lost three to major injuries. We didn't have the depth to match up (with them)."

She added that her team "decided to take [Tuesday's loss] on the chin and run a new zone" to make up for it.

"Nineteen (goals) is too much, but it was a very easy mistake we could fix," Desrosiers said. "So we're going to look to fix them (during) the next few days of practice."

A similar sentiment was present around the team: bounce back, learn from the loss and improve for the next game, especially on the offensive end.

"Their goalie did a great job today against our shooting, so I think [Wednesday] and outside of practice, we all need to get together and start ripping shots," Rodriguez-Shaw said. "We don't have a lefty goalie, so we aren't used to a lefty goalie, but I think we need to face all challenges with ease."

Desrosiers also gave credit to defender Miranda Held for her on-field tenacity.

"She grinded, she was all over the field, she jammed hands and didn't foul once," Desrosiers said. "She looked really, really good, and we are super proud of her."

As for the defensive struggles, Duquesne goalie Mady Piersielak spoke on the adjustments needed to bounce back moving forward.

"Starting the new zone this week, we need to watch film and see how we got beat," Piersielak said. "Working on it re-

ally hard in practice, and just keeping a positive mindset leading into the conference (season)."

The Dukes will begin the Atlantic 10 Conference portion of their schedule on Saturday afternoon, when they take on Davidson in a road contest.

The Wildcats have won four of their last five meetings with Duquesne, including a 10-7 victory over the Dukes in the first round of last season's conference tournament.



DYLAN FISTER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Duquesne's Delaney Rodriguez-Shaw jostles with Central Michigan's Jozy Allen in Tuesday's game.

pass to Kelly, who found the back of the net with just seven seconds to go in the opening quarter.

win since defeating California in the season opener on Feb. 12. For the Dukes, it was the fifth loss in six games to kick off



DYLAN FISTER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Duquesne teammates celebrate after scoring a goal during Tuesday afternoon's 19-8 loss to Central Michigan at Rooney Field.

# It's the most wonderful time of the year

**LUKE HENNE**  
editor-in-chief

I'm a traditionalist, plain and simple. I crave logic, order and structure. Change isn't a friend of mine. I love repetition, knowing when certain dates and events will roll around.

The month of March, because of the tradition it's created in my family, has become my favorite month of the year.

At 10 years old, back in March 2011, my dad took my brother, Brendan, and myself to Cleveland to watch college basketball games in the NCAA Tournament. I'd been to all of two basketball games in my life to that point, and I didn't know much about the sport at all.

Nonetheless, a tradition was born.

Every year since then, with the exception of 2020, we've attended NCAA Tournament games in a handful of cities across the country.

I'm now double the age I was when this tradition began, yet I still find myself buying the same collectibles every single year come tournament time: a t-shirt with the

logos of all 68 participating teams on it, a souvenir soda and a commemorative tournament program.

March Madness has become a national phenomenon, with individuals all over the nation filling out brackets and watching the best college basketball teams in the country pull off Cinderella runs or compete for a national championship.

For me, the tournament means a little something different.

When that calendar flips from February to March, there's a tingle in my spine.

I start playing the NCAA March Madness theme song on loop on my phone. I go outside, where the temperature is rising and the sun is shining more often, to shoot hoops in my driveway. I get to look forward to March Madness, which is suddenly just around the corner.

Sports are, at the end of the day, sports. But they have the power to unite. To bond. To create lifelong memories.

The NCAA Tournament has done just that for my family. It's created a memory and a tradition that my dad started with my brother and I, and that I hope to be

able to pass down to my children.

It also means even more when the teams you care about are in contention.

Pitt, my childhood team, is all but guaranteed to be back in the tournament for the first time since 2016 — I was a freshman in high school at that time.

After many tumultuous seasons, the Panthers are on the doorstep of heading back to a tournament that they became a regular at the start of the century.

In fact, in 2011, we were so convinced that we'd get to see Pitt play in Cleveland (they ended up in Washington).

Some people might just see it as a calendar month where I know memories are about to be made.

With Selection Sunday coming in just a handful of days, I'm going to sit back and soak it all in. I'll be in Columbus, Ohio, for the tournament's opening weekend just a few days after that.

It's an annual occurrence that began as a dad figuring out a way to bond with his two sons. In the 11 years since, it's become a tradition that I don't take for granted.

As CBS Sports college basketball insid-

er Jon Rothstein frequently says, "This. Is. March."



COURTESY OF LUKE HENNE | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

My brother, Brendan (left), and I pose for a picture at the 2016 NCAA Tournament. In the picture, we're wearing shirts from the 2015 tournament.



# MBB loses to La Salle, out of A-10 tourney

LUKE HENNE  
editor-in-chief

After a 27-point loss at Fordham on Saturday, the Duquesne men's basketball team returned to New York, needing to win four games in five days to capture the Atlantic 10 Conference's automatic-qualifying bid to the NCAA Tournament.

Despite holding a 33-27 lead at halftime, the No. 6-seed Dukes were outscored 54-37 by No. 11-seed La Salle in the second half of Wednesday's 81-70 loss in the tournament's second round.

"I felt like we had them on the ropes," said Duquesne Head Coach Keith Dambrot. "We started the second half slowly, but then we got up 8 (44-36 with 15:26 left), and we didn't really guard during that stretch ... And then we quit guarding completely. We had a hard time defensively. They did a great job of isolating us."

"It looked like we kind of died on the vine, physically and mentally, and they exploited us. And from that point on, we didn't really guard them the whole second half. We defended well in the first half, but not very well in the second half."

Duquesne's Jimmy Clark III led all game scorers with 27 points, while Khalil Brantley and Jhamir Brickus combined to score 45 of the Explorers' 81 points.

Dae Dae Grant, who recorded 13 points for the Dukes in the loss, said that "lack of rhythm and feel" contributed to the team's offensive struggles in the second half.

Clark added that the team wasn't "getting into the flow of [their] offense."

Following a 91-74 road win in Philadelphia against La Salle just two weeks ago, the Dukes have now lost three of the last four games by an average margin of 14 points. Their hopes of returning to the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 1977 have also been effectively eliminated, as the A-10 is widely projected to be a one-bid league.

Grant said that, this time

they have a pretty good team," Grant said. "They have some good guards, so give props to them. But we just have to be better overall, on our side and on our end."

After Saturday's loss to Fordham, which bumped Duquesne from earning the No. 4 seed and a double-bye in the tournament, Dambrot was asked if the emotions from that difficult defeat carried over into tonight's performance.

"It's a long year ... We caught

team from a 6-24 showing in 2021-22 to a 20-12 record this season.

"The hard part, for me, is those guys have given us everything we wanted all year long," Dambrot said. "And so I feel bad for them because they just didn't get what they deserved, really. Now we didn't play very well, so I guess we deserved what we got tonight, but overall, they had a really good season and deserved a little bit better."

While those like Clark and Grant have eligibility remaining and can return to the team next season, impact players like Austin Rotroff, Joe Reece and Tevin Brewer all might've played their final game in a Duquesne uniform (if no postseason invitation comes and/or is accepted).

"If I needed to have another son, I'd take Rotroff in a minute," Dambrot said. "He's an unbelievable human being. Great guy, cares about other people, cares about winning. It's been an unbelievable pleasure to coach him. Through good, bad and ugly, he hung in there with us."

"Tevin Brewer, we got to know him in a short time period, Reece. They've all been great. We've had good comradery, good leadership. They've been fun to be around."

The Dukes have a record that could put them in position to earn an invitation to the National Invitation Tournament (NIT) or the College Basketball Invitational (CBI), but that's out of their control.

Duquesne last played in the NIT in 2008-09, while its last trip to the CBI came in 2015-16.



BRENTARO YAMANE | LAYOUT/MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Dae Dae Grant — pictured here in a Dec. 11 game against New Mexico State — scored 13 points in Duquesne's 81-70 loss against La Salle on Wednesday.

around, the Explorers had "a lot more energy." After defeating No. 14-seed Rhode Island in Tuesday's opening-round contest, as well as Duquesne on Wednesday, La Salle now sits three victories away from its first trip to the NCAA Tournament since 2013.

"They were well-coached, and

[La Salle] on a night where they played pretty good, and we didn't shoot the ball particularly well," Dambrot said. "And then we had to chase the game."

Dambrot said that he feels bad for players like Clark and Grant, each of whom transferred into the program and helped improve the

## WBB defeated in A10 tourney

Behind a late 3-pointer from Mia Lakstigala, No. 7-seeded George Washington bested No. 10-seeded Duquesne 71-68 in the second round of the Atlantic 10 Conference women's basketball tournament last Thursday.

After defeating No. 15-seeded Loyola of Chicago a day earlier, the Dukes appeared to be out of it, trailing 58-49 entering into the final quarter.

Duquesne rallied to take the lead, holding a 68-66 edge with 2:52 left after a pair of successful free throws from Megan McConnell.

However, the Colonials held the Dukes scoreless the rest of the way. Nya Lok would even the score at 68 with a layup with 56 seconds remaining.

Then, after a missed jumper from Duquesne's Ayanna Townsend, Lakstigala hit her game-winning shot with just four seconds left in the game.

Lakstigala (24 points) and Lok (20 points) were the game's two leading scorers, while McConnell paced the Dukes with 14 points.

With a record of 19-12, Duquesne improved by eight wins from the 2021-22 season.

## Pitt looks to punch NCAA ticket

It wasn't a pretty end to the regular season, but the Pitt men's basketball team is still in solid position to earn its first trip to the NCAA Tournament since 2015-16.

After claimining the No. 25 spot in last week's AP Top 25 poll (first time being ranked since January 2016), the Panthers dropped two road contests to unranked Notre Dame and No. 16 Miami.

As of Wednesday, CBS Sports' Jerry Palm projected the Panthers to be a No. 9 seed in the NCAA Tournament. ESPN's Joe Lunardi sees them as a No. 10 seed.

The Panthers, who earned the No. 5 seed in this week's Atlantic Coast Conference tournament, defeated No. 12-seed Georgia Tech 89-81 in Wednesday's second-round contest.

A loss likely would've done significant damage, but the win all but solidifies Pitt's first trip to the tournament in seven years.

Pitt will face No. 4-seed Duke in Thursday's quarterfinals.

-Luke Henne, Editor-in-Chief

## Atlantic 10 Conference MBB Tournament Bracket



BRENTARO YAMANE | LAYOUT/MULTIMEDIA EDITOR



(Right): Both Austin Rotroff (above) and Tevin Brewer (below) have been key contributors on a Duquesne men's basketball team that improved by 14 wins from 2021-22 to 2022-23. Both players are set to graduate.



# Front-runner for this year's Academy Awards

ANDY KAMIS  
staff writer

The movie full of googly eyes, hotdog fingers and zany costumes is up for eleven Oscar nominations at the Academy Awards this Sunday.

Since its release nearly a year ago, "Everything Everywhere All At Once" has become a global phenomenon, grossing over \$107 million dollars worldwide and far surpassing its budget of only \$25 million dollars.

The box office hit has also become the highest grossing film for the independent American entertainment company, A24, passing their 2018 box office record for 'Hereditary' by over \$24 million dollars.

"Everything Everywhere All At Once," directed by Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert, has raked in dozens of awards already, including two Golden Globes and the Critics' Choice Movie Award for Best Picture.

The film just recently took home four major wins at the Screen Actors Guild Awards (SAG) ceremony on February 26, breaking the SAG Awards record for most wins for a single film. The movie has received countless other awards and nominations from other festivals and ceremonies as well since its release. It has become clear that Kwan and Scheinert's feature film is a serious force to be reckoned with, and it's going to be a serious candidate at this year's Academy Awards.

If you have not seen the movie that's been turning heads, you might not know what all the buzz is about. Not only does the film consist of a great screenplay, visual effects and an insane multidimensional wardrobe, but it also goes beyond its theatrical elements to display great representation for the Asian community.

"Everything Everywhere All At Once" stars Michelle Yeoh, who depicts a Chinese immigrant named Evelyn living in America. Evelyn contemplates her choice to move to America and start a family throughout the course of the movie. She longs to be recognized by the world for her



The Academy Awards are approaching a century of history, glamour and stardom as they prepare to air the 95th awards show on Sunday.

talents and hopes to escape the repetitiveness of her life that has left her feeling insignificant in society.

I personally saw Evelyn's longing for recognition as a message about the misrepresentation of the Asian community, especially when it comes to the entertainment industry.

In her acceptance speech for Best Actress at this year's SAG Awards, Yeoh said that "This is not just for me, this is for every girl who looks like me...Thank you for giving me a seat at the table because so many of us need this. We want to be seen. We want to be heard. And tonight, you have shown us that it is possible."

Supporting actors, Ke Huy Quan and James Hong, also spoke about representation for the Asian community when accepting awards for the film.

In an interview with Nerdist entertainment company, Quan said, "Not only just Asians, but all groups of people need to, and should be, represented in the en-

tertainment [industry]. Because until you see it, you're not going to believe that it can also be you up there on the screen."

Both Yeoh and Quan gave stellar performances, with their emotional response and talent quite literally traveling across the many universes depicted in the film.

Yeoh will likely win the Oscar for 'Best Actress in a Leading Role,' and Quan will join her as the 'Best Actor in a Supporting Role.' It will be disappointing if both Yeoh and Quan are unable to receive the recognition that they deserve at this year's Academy Awards ceremony.

Additionally, Stephanie Hsu gives a remarkable portrayal of Evelyn's daughter and the picture's primary villain, Jobu Tupaki, showcasing an astonishing amount of range in her acting abilities. Expect her to walk the Academy Award stage as the 'Best Supporting Actress.'

Lastly, Shirley Kurata will likely receive the Oscar for 'Best Costume Design,' as the movie

showcases a myriad of intricate clothing designs. The amount of wardrobe changes throughout the film is extraordinary with most of these changes happening all within a few frames of the movie as Evelyn cycles through dozens of sophisticated costumes while she travels across realities.

I believe that "Everything Everywhere All At Once" has a great chance of winning in all of the categories that it has been nominated in, including 'Best Director,' 'Best Original Score' and 'Best Film Editing.' Although, I will be left completely speechless if it does not win 'Best Original Screenplay' and 'Best Picture' overall.

"Everything Everywhere All At Once" is one of the better movies I've ever seen. I would be very happy to see this film get the acknowledgement it deserves this Sunday.

The 95th Academy Awards Show will air on ABC at 8 p.m. on Sunday. Tune in to see if my predictions are right.

## CAMPUS EVENTS

Food Truck Fridays  
March 10 from  
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Explore some local cuisine on A-Walk! Cash or card payments are accepted. FLEX and meal swipes are not honored.

15th Annual Films on Human Rights: Belonging  
March 14 @ 7 p.m.

Head to the Towers MPR to watch "Planetary." Drinks and snacks will be served, followed by a speaker and a Q & A session.

Clay Craft Night  
March 15 @ 4:30 p.m.

The Center for African Studies & Honors College are co-hosting a cultural night! Food will be provided by Shadobeni.

Lip Sync Battle  
March 15 @ 9 p.m.

Join Alpha Omicron Pi in the Union Ballroom to raise money for the Pittsburgh Variety Foundation! Admission is \$2, team registration is \$80.

## EMILY'S EPIPHANIES

Post-Break Piecemeal

We're back on campus and we've hit the ground running as we start to approach finals, graduation and summer vacation.

If Spring Break wasn't restful enough for you, or you find yourself struggling to finish strong, try setting your day in three's.

Set three goals for yourself, three assignments that you'd like to get done, and three chores that are on your "to-do" list.

None of these tasks should be overwhelming or life-altering, but they should serve as a starting point to help you be productive and get through the next eight weeks.

Very rarely do I accomplish all nine of my combined goals, assignments or chores in a day, but even getting one task completed from each category, or one of the nine tasks done at all, is better than nothing.

Finish strong, piece by piece.

— Emily Fritz

### Aquarius ♒

we're crying together,  
it's called group therapy

### Pisces ♓

I have a hot date with some ramen  
noodles and a good movie

### Aries ♈

we're on a rock flying through  
space, nothing matters

### Taurus ♉

what an exciting little goose chase  
we just had

### Gemini ♊

You're the most James P. Sullivan  
person I know

### Cancer ♋

the only thing holding that thing  
together is washi tape

### Leo ♌

Love. Peace. Taco grease.

### Virgo ♍

the key to work-life balance?  
Idk probably a cartwheel

### Libra ♎

The Princess and the Pauper  
goes hard

### Scorpio ♏

I can't stop, there's a platypus  
controlling me

### Sagittarius ♐

We love a man that knows how to  
Jurassic Park

### Capricorn ♑

I'm on crutches, I can't run away



# The Anatomy of Love with Kali Uchis' new album

**BUNNY SCHAAF**  
staff writer

Kali Uchis' latest release, "Red Moon In Venus," is an album saturated in honey-sweet and groovy ballads about love, lust and romance.

"The whole project is about love," Uchis said in an interview with Vogue.

A departure from her 2020 album, "Sin Miedo," her ethereal sound remains, but the lyrics have become lush and the beats softer.

Originally, Uchis made her entrance to the music industry via mix tape, "Drunken Babbles," in 2012, but later gained enough traction for her EP album in 2015.

The dreaminess she has offered since her debut continues to an elevated degree in 2023.

The first and most-popular song on the album is "I Wish You Roses." It sets the stage and tone for the album, with Uchis' confident delivery as she reflects on a relationship she lost but doesn't grieve.

The bitterness of her hurt and heartache is delivered by stable, delicate vocals. Uchis oozes confidence in herself and her love in this song, as well as throughout the rest of the album.

"I was a rose in the garden of weeds," she draws out. "My petals are soft and silk as my sheets, so do not be afraid to get pricked

by the thorn."

Some of the most standout tracks are "All Mine," "Moral Conscience," "Blue" and one of three features on the record, "Fantasy," featuring Don Toliver.

"All Mine" is a doting, romantic piece that asserts Uchis' love through her adoration. A world where nothing but her and her muse exist.

It's a song about commitment and romantic ownership, delivered with a mystical R&B backing track.

"Fantasy," features hip-hop influenced Toliver, known best for his 2020 debut album, "Heaven Or Hell."

This song focuses on the lust of love, with Uchis wanting to be worshiped by her partner. Toliver's hip hop, R&B feature compliments Uchis, without distracting from her unique and sultry vocals.

In the final parts of the album, the tracks become more somber while still maintaining the hyper-feminine fantasy that Uchis has constructed with the album.

"Moral Conscience" is the vindictive sister to "I Wish you Roses," wishing karmic justice in return for the hurt she experienced from a lost love and a broken heart.

This song definitely leans more towards R&B musically, demonstrating her fringe style.

"Blue" is audibly colder than

the rest of the record, which is full of warm tones and more traditional love song sentiments.

"Blue" incorporates the sad side of love, where "Moral Conscience" focuses on anger.

"What's the point of all the pretty things in the world if I don't have you?" Uchis asks, her delivery almost desperate.

"Red Moon In Venus" is a successful thesis on love, tackling sensuality, loss and being in love with relatable maturity and refinement.

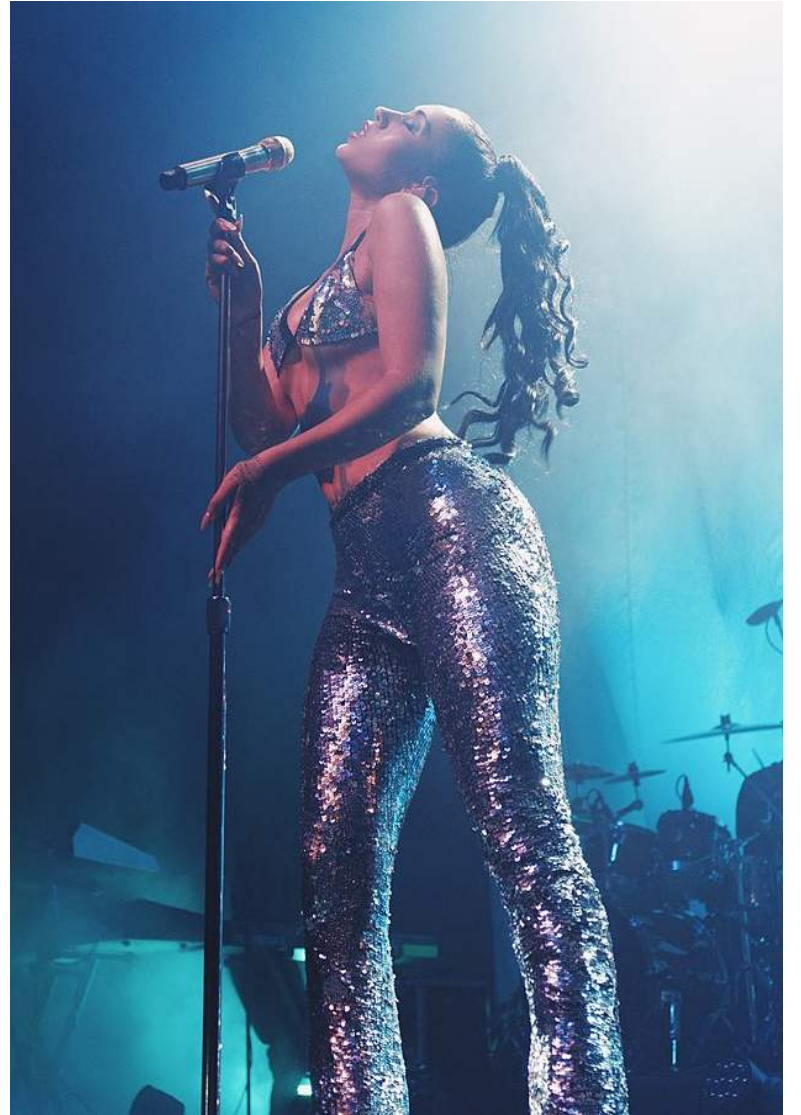
Uchis' growth since her debut in 2015 is incredibly obvious here: the entire album presents her in the spotlight while still maintaining a groovy, easy-listening sound.

"It's more based around love, all the different signs and elements of love. Self-love, lost love, trying to call love into your life," Uchis told Vogue.

"The other songs on the album are mostly very soft and very down tempo and back to my roots, the type of music when I did my first project."

Uchis plans to release a wholly Spanish album at the end of the year, which will be a departure from the emotional side of the Colombian-American artist displayed in this spring release.

The second installment of the dual-album project has yet to be titled and has not been given a formal release date.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Kali Uchis rose to fame in 2015 with her debut album, "Por Vida." Since then, she's released "Isolation" in 2018, "Sin Miedo" in 2020 and "Red Moon in Venus" in 2023.

# Chris Rock combines comedy, culture and division

**AARON DUKE**  
staff writer

On March 4, Chris Rock created a full-circle moment for both the streaming community and stand-up comedy, as he became the first to deliver a comedy set live on Netflix.

His live stand-up act was available exclusively for subscribers before finding its permanent home in the Netflix library for fans who wished to revisit his set.

Since then, the special has been deemed the no. 1 TV show on Netflix for the week of March 5.

The comedy show took place in Baltimore, as Rock spoke about the division in America, the spoiling of kids and one of the biggest talked-about moments in recent pop culture: the slap he received during the 94th Academy Awards last year.

Throughout the set, Rock laced his crude and irreverent comedy with traces of life lessons and more somber pieces of culture.

Rock talked about how there are serious problems in America,

from the polarization of political parties to the younger generations' constant yearning for attention, focusing largely on social media usage. He explained how so many people will do anything to get validation.

A lot of people, according to Rock, have what he calls "selective outrage."

Rock defined this selective outrage as conveniently choosing when to take a stand against a certain issue and the act of "canceling" someone, which can depend on who the person is and their popularity.

He went on to say that this can cause a problem with people who find themselves the victim of someone who likes to victimize themselves.

Not only does he believe that this can cause people to suffer, but he also believes that this selective outrage is one of the causes of the division seen in America.

Rock also talked about his personal experiences in parenting. Rock told a story about his



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Chris Rock was a celebrity of the 1990's, but returned to the spotlight after last year's Academy Awards.

daughter Lola who was caught for underage drinking in her school, despite giving his children the best opportunity that

he could by sending them to the best schools and providing whatever they needed to do extracurricular activities.

He told viewers how he would do anything for his children. But when he noticed his daughter being snobby and showing a lack of remorse for what she had done, Rock said he ended up getting his own daughter kicked out of high school.

Although he had spent more money on a lawyer to try to prevent his daughter from getting kicked out of the school, Rock explained how he wanted to teach his daughter a lesson. What resulted from this action was a lesson learned according to Rock: His daughter never got into serious trouble again.

Lola had to explain her actions to every college she applied to and explain her mistake. In the end, she was able to go to Paris for culinary school.

In another segment of his routine, Rock talked about racial discrimination with a story about how his mother, who wasn't al-

lowed to see a white dentist.

Instead, she had to face the embarrassment of going to a vet office for dental procedures. Now, though, she is now able to fly to Paris to see her grandchild. Again, Rock showed his capability for providing important lessons to his stories and jokes.

The last subject that Rock discussed was "The Slap" that occurred at last year's Academy Awards. He talked about how he adored Will Smith and all that he had accomplished, until the actor assaulted him on stage. Rock says that Smith is one of the leading examples of selective outrage today.

Rock continued to make hits toward Smith and his relationship to Jada Pinkett Smith, and how he himself was raised better than to retaliate against the actions toward him.

This comedy special summed up a lot of current social issues seen in America today while also adding Rock's own satirical twist, which entertained those from a more mature audience.



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needs citizens  
who love it  
enough to re-  
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CORNEL WEST

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EDITORIAL  
POLICY

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COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Last May U.S. Sen. John Fetterman, D-Pa., checked himself into a mental health clinic following a stroke. This has drawn sharp criticism from predominant conservative figures, including Donald Trump Jr.

## Red, green and blue — mental health on the minds of politicians

Like many other touchy subjects, depression has become a politically charged debate.

Last May, U.S. Sen. John Fetterman, D-PA, checked himself into a mental health clinic following a stroke. Politicians on social media have been sending him various levels of well-wishes, but a division between blue and red responses to his hospitalization has clearly appeared.

In the conversation democrats are advocating for mental health beyond Fetterman's specific, personal case.

“Millions of people struggle with depression every day, often in private. Getting the care you need is brave and important. We're grateful to you for leading by example,” President Joe Biden said in a tweet following Fetterman's hospitalization.

Depression is not an uncommon mental illness. A study from Columbia University and City University of New York found that in 2020, depression was “prevalent” in nearly 1 in 10 Americans. A politician coming forward to share their struggle with mental health might seem ludicrous to some, but relatable for at least that 10% of their constituents.

In fact, a public figure being vocal about their struggles with mental health might just be what some individuals needed to speak up about their own mental health.

On the other political side of the discussion conservatives tend to look for a concrete problem to fix. Their reaction to the senator's hospitalization seems to overwhelmingly be to find someone to blame.

If you've ever found yourself talking about suicide, the phrase “It's no one's fault” has probably come up. There really is no simple approach to solving what some are calling the “mental health pandemic,” including Chris Michaels, CEO of Pennsylvania's chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

But, I admit, it is so easy to find a scapegoat in these tough situations.

Right now, Fetterman's opponents seem to be taking the easy

approach—to finding something or someone to blame.

Republicans came after Pennsylvania voters.

“I pray for his full and speedy recovery,” he said. “I can't quite explain the voters of Pennsylvania,” said Republican U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson in a video interview with Newsmax.

Fetterman's health may have impacted voters' decisions, but



EMMA POLEN

news editor

as a Pennsylvania voter, I know that this was not the main issue on my docket, nor did it have the biggest effect on most voters' opinions.

Ben Shapiro, on a talk show with another conservative radio host, Megyn Kelly, blamed Fetterman's wife and those in the senator's life in general for the crisis.

“The question is who lied to whom, who is still lying, and is this person capable of holding out the office, and if not, why aren't you just replacing him with another democrat?” Shapiro said.

It is so frustrating to be on the other side of an individual's mental health crisis, knowing something is wrong but not knowing how to help without the individual communicating their needs.

If Fetterman's peers are anything like the friends I have encountered, they want what is best for their friend first, before worrying about his career. Even if any of them had known about Fetterman's struggles with mental health pre-election, they would be more concerned with his personal health than with alerting the media to his crisis.

Other republicans have outright blamed the senator for his own lack of recognition to get help sooner, perhaps before he was sworn into office.

Donald Trump Jr., in a speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference recently, basically called Fetterman unfit for office.

“Is it unreasonable for me to expect, as a citizen of the United States of America, to have a United States senator have basic cognitive function,” he said.

Once again, it's upsetting to see a conservative leader looking for a blanket solution that does not address the actual issue. Fetterman's leadership does not rest on his ability to be “cured” of depression, but on his ability to seek help when it is needed and carry on as a leader. For that 10% of America with depression, resuming his duties soon will surely inspire hope and possibly de-stigmatize the need to ask for help.

There is no “truth” that conservative radio hosts seem to be searching for mental health is never a black-and-white issue. The senator's lack of communication regarding his wellbeing is not a “lie” to the people. It's more likely that the severity of his mental health problems were unknown to the people closest to him, possibly even himself.

Fetterman is in treatment, for an undetermined amount of time, and in the meantime, we should all take a moment to reflect on our own mental wellbeing. Don't always look for an all-encompassing solution, but be mindful, be aware and check up on those friends who might not always be vocal about the help they need.

STAFF  
EDITORIAL

## Young women are being poisoned in Iran

As more and more school-girls fall victim to chain poisoning attacks in Iran, protests and statements flood national news stations.

What started on November 30 with an attack in the religious city of Qom has risen to more than 50 schools falling victim to the poisonings. Some victims have suffered respiratory problems, nausea, fatigue and dizziness.

These attacks have been carried out by hardline religious groups who are opposed to girls' education and were made to try and shut those schools down for good.

They have come after months-long protests led by Iranian women and girls after the death of Mahsa Amini, who was killed over improper hijab.

The poisonings have girls worried about even simply attending school.

Why are we living in a world where students are afraid to go to school?

A school is a place for education. It is where we send out children to learn and feel safe, not a place to be subjected to violence, guns and poisoning.

According to PBS News Hour, at least 400 school-children have fallen ill to the poisonings since the first November attack. Although no fatalities have been reported so far, many have complained about pain in the legs and abdomen online.

What kind of world are we living in if children can't even be occupied at school?

Instead, these children are fleeing, leaving sick and even worst-case scenario, dead.

Why are these stories not being reported on enough, either?

According to PBS News Hour, President Ebrahim Raisi only announced an investigation into the attacks after the poisonings received international media attention. This was months after the first incident.

According to CBS News, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei recently spoke publicly about the incidents saying the perpetrators should receive the death penalty.

The number of schools affected has risen to over 60, nothing seems to be changing, and no perpetrators are locked up or dead.

Why are we waiting to address issues that should be at the forefront of our minds?

How many more schools and girls have to be attacked before we come to a solution and find perpetrators?

Maybe we'll find out, maybe we won't.



## How were the Murdaughs overlooked for so long?

**SARAH STAGER**  
staff writer

The Alex Murdaugh trial, which has taken the streaming services by storm, is one of the most prolific examples of the wealthy elite overstepping the bounds of legal proceedings and law enforcement.

For years, the Murdaugh family has been suspected of covering up illegal activity their family members may have been involved in. For instance, the tragic boating accident caused by the youngest son Paul Murdaugh's intoxicated negligence in 2019 was handled so callously by the family, it's alarming.

According to CBS, Murdaugh family members were even allowed to enter the site of the boat crash, which became a crime scene due to the search for missing Mallory Beach, while her parents were not.

It was evident from their actions that they could care less about the accident their son caused that led to the loss of young Beach's life.

The family was so desperate to cover their own tracks that they were even willing to frame one of their son's own friends for the crash.

Almost any individual who was involved in such a terrible event would put finding Beach and ensuring that all of the young teens received imme-

diately medical attention. Instead the Murdaughs appeared to be trying to evade legal prosecution of their son.

It was not just Beach's life that has been lost due to her connection to the Murdaugh family; there are other victims that are linked to the Murdaughs.

According to *Newsweek*, Stephen Smith and Gloria Satterfield are both two individuals that police have received tips about possible Murdaugh involvement in their deaths. Is it a mere coincidence that the investigations into these victims have been halted almost immediately after ties to the Murdaugh family have been made public? It appears unlikely.

There are so many unanswered questions due to these cases going cold so quickly. This is not only unfair to the victims and their families, but also a deliberate and calculated evasion of justice and the law by the Murdaughs to save their own skins.

It is so ironic that this family of prominent lawyers, individuals who should be protecting and upholding the law, have been caught bending it to fit their own selfish and illegal actions for decades.

Despite being close to the family as their house sitter and babysitter for several years, Satterfield, who was injured and ultimately died on the Murdaugh property, was given surprisingly cold treatment by Alex

Murdaugh despite working for the family for so long. Murdaugh claimed that Satterfield's death was an accident, yet can anyone explain how convenient it was that Satterfield's accident came soon after she discovered Murdaugh's drug stash, forcing Murdaugh to come clean about his addiction to his family?

And how quickly he was caught within several lies about the details of the accident? And that he claimed that to make amends with the family he would provide Satterfield's children with financial compensation since they were left without a mother, but the children allege that they never saw a single cent of the money? Where did the money go? Not many can say.

Smith, yet another victim tied to the Murdaugh family, is an example of a quick cover-up. His alleged close relationship with eldest son, Buster Murdaugh, was mentioned numerous times through police tips, despite the family vehemently denying any and all possible involvement in his mysterious death.

Yet, if they truly were not involved, then why was the investigation into Smith's case shushed so quickly after the Murdaugh family name was tied to him? Since there have been so many people connected to the Murdaugh family that have wound up either harmed or dead, it truly would not be surprising if they did

have some involvement.

The family's influence has extended far beyond just trying to protect Paul from harsh judgment for his mistakes.

Alex Murdaugh, the patriarch of the family that has just recently been sentenced to life without parole for the murders of his wife son has evaded prosecution for various crimes for years.

According to CNN, he has been accused of stealing millions of dollars of funds from his law corporation and using them to supply his drug addiction. However, not much is known about the whereabouts of the rest of the money, and several suspicious checks of large sums of money have been collected that were written by Alex Murdaugh before and after several troubling events involving the his family.

Murdaugh has also shown considerable cruelty since he has been accused of murdering his own wife and child. Whether or not he actually committed the crime, since he himself maintained his innocence in court, could be debated. What cannot be debated is that Murdaugh lied about not being on the property when the murders took place, and that the blood present on his person point to him being involved in the murders.

There are many secrets coming to light about this Southern fam-

ily, and one can only hope that all of the corruption, deception, and questions that have been hidden by the Murdaughs for years are finally accounted for, investigated, and answered.

I recommend that if you'd like more information about the Murdaugh trial and all of the subsequent details I have discussed, you can watch the new documentaries about the Murdaugh family that just came out on Netflix called, "Murdaugh Murders: A Southern Scandal" or "Low Country: The Murdaugh Dynasty" on HBO Max.



COURTESY OF FOTOLIA

On Friday, Alex Murdaugh was found guilty of murdering his wife and son.

## Lessons I learned from my little sisters

**ZACH PETROFF**  
opinions editor

Being the eldest of six, with four younger sisters, is not for the faint of heart. It was not until I turned 18 and moved out that I was finally able to experience a clean bathroom floor.

Even as someone who wrestled, had two combat deployments and even cage fought, some of my greatest (and bloodiest) battles have come at the hands of my sister, Amanda, as we fought over the family computer.

I often describe my childhood as strange because that is the closest adjective that can describe how our household operates without having to go into detail.

My mother, while greatly flawed, had to support her six children by any means that she could. This often left the kids to fend themselves, creating a rank-structure that required the older sibling to look after the younger sibling.

The backward lifestyle we experienced created a level of resentment toward my childhood. However, like everything in life, time heals all wounds.

It's only with the benefit of hindsight that I am able to truly

appreciate the lessons I learned from my younger sisters.

Amanda, the aforementioned grappler, was the closest to my age and was my best friend while being my greatest foe.

Her passion is often described as brazen by men who are intimidated by her unwillingness to compromise her ethics. She is intelligent and has become a prominent advocate for women's rights.

Amanda taught me to stand up for what I believe in, no matter the repercussions. The irony that my little sister taught her Marine older brother about what bravery really entails, is not lost on me.

Emmaline, the fourth born child, is bound for success. She is beautiful and unforgiving, and truly sees the world as it is. She recently moved to Detroit to pursue her dream of becoming a model.

She taught me how important it is to take that jump to follow your dream. She also taught me how to take attractive selfies for Instagram, a talent that is lost on me.

Victoria, the fifth born child, is kind and open to the world. She is also selfless. In a family full of children, she was on the receiving end of middle-child

syndrome. Attention was often diverted to the other siblings, as Victoria often played second-fiddle to the constant crises that we created. It is a rare occasion that she says anything ill about someone else.

Victoria taught me about giving people, even if they don't deserve it, the benefit of the doubt. She taught me to see the best in everyone.

Rylynn, the baby of the family, was born after I moved out. She is currently in high school and very well may be the most intelligent member of the family. She wants to be a writer, which is driven by her natural curiosity.

Rylynn taught me about hope. It has become easy to be cynical, to just throw in the towel on today's world. We forget that this world is not really made for us, but for the future generations.

Wednesday was International Women's Day, a day designed to celebrate the social, cultural and political achievements of women. My life would be vastly different if I didn't have my sisters and other strong women in my life.

While history is filled with admirable women, most of us do not have to look far to find unsung heroines. My sisters are tough, smart and compassion-

ate because they had to be. They showed me how to be compassionate but were not afraid to hold who they love accountable.

There is no doubt that even today this is a man's world, whether it's limiting women's health rights to young women in Iran getting poisoned. Before we can honestly protect and stand up for the women in the

world, perhaps we can start appreciating women.

The way I choose to appreciate my sisters, especially coming from a family that tends to shy away from affection is by keeping the lessons they taught me in my heart.

And knowing that no matter how much time or space is between us, I can still embarrass them.



COURTESY OF ZACH PETROFF | OPINIONS EDITOR

Pictured above are Zach Petroff's younger sisters (from left to right) Emmaline, Amanda, Victoria and Rylynn.



# DU student grows optimism in new garden

ISABELLA ABBOTT  
features editor

Duquesne's campus is about to get a little greener, at least indoors, that is. Fifth-year biomedical engineering student Tony Carbino is nearing the end of his hydroponic garden project and hopes to have it ready in the next couple of weeks.

Hydroponics is a technique used to grow plants without soil, and with a water-based nutrient solution instead.

His goal for starting the project was not only to address food insecurity in Pittsburgh but to bring people together and form a community.

"The whole goal for this is growing stuff and then taking it out into the community and creating it in a way that brings people together," Carbino said. "That's my biggest vision, it's using this type of project and this type of service to gather communities."

According to The City of Pittsburgh, one in five residents is food insecure, meaning more than 60,000 residents struggle to have adequate and healthy food. Carbino's research showed that the Hill District was one of the main places of struggle with food insecurity.

Although Pittsburgh has made advances in helping with this issue, Carbino doesn't think enough is being done.

"There's plenty of initiatives out there that, historically, have thrown food on people," Carbino said. "I've seen it plenty of times where they give the folks vegetables, and they say they don't really want that because, first of all, it's not culturally desirable, and second of all, the time to cook that is way more than getting a non-perishable."

"It's how can we create a culture around food and dietary health, and how can we not only support the other initiatives in

the city like food access and food culture, because the majority of the foods that are available to people that need food are non-perishables."

Knowing that many people dislike vegetables and the time it takes to cook them properly, Carbino hopes to not only give them the fresh ingredients they need, but

is one of the reasons why he named the garden Cor Unum. This means "one heart" in Latin.

"It's one heart and one spirit because it's really important to me," Carbino said. "That's what I hope and feel like this project is. It's people gathering in one heart and one spirit to do something that's big-

bino said.

With help from friends and volunteers at project-building events, 80% of his hydroponic garden is complete. During these events, to show his gratitude, Carbino cooks for everyone in attendance.

"We've had about four events now for the planting and the building of structures, and each time, we get students and faculty from multiple different disciplines," Carbino said. "It never ceases to amaze me because it's very grassroots, and for me, the biggest thing is figuring out how I can make community in these events where we're doing work, so I've made dinner for everybody at every event that we've had."

"It's really cool because we kind of get together, we eat food that I made the hour beforehand, we listen to music and build this stuff. It's very chillaxed, it's still work and it shouldn't be stale. It should be something that's enjoyable."

Students and classmates of Carbino are proud of the work he's doing. Senior communications major Sarah Bazzel said he worked hard to get to where he is in the project today.

"I think it's amazing how much community he's brought together just to build these," Bazzel said. "He's not doing this for selfish reasons either. He's doing this to try to help the people of the Hill District, which I think is amazing."

When finished, Carbino plans to put a garden structure in Hogan Dining Hall and one by Chick-fil-A in the Union. These structures are made with PVC pipes, as well as a couple of gallons of water with nutrients.

Carbino is thrilled for the garden to finally open.

"It's really cool because, after all that work and all that thinking and all of the approval process and all the budget, it's really finally come together," Carbino said.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TONY CARBINO

Biomedical engineering student, Tony Carbino, plans to help residents in the Hill District by providing them with fresh produce. He hopes for more projects like his to make an appearance in Pittsburgh.

also to grow the ingredients they'll want to consume.

"Ultimately, my goal is to grow vegetables and fruits and to survey the community that we're going to work with first, and grow according to that," Carbino said. "I'm not going to grow tomatoes when people don't want tomatoes."

Carbino believes that he can make a difference with help from his community and his service background, which

ger than themselves."

Although he knows the garden won't solve all food insecurity issues in the area, Carbino believes it's a step in the right direction.

"Are we going to address this issue fully? No, but we're going to help address the issue, and we're going to do it in a way that engages the community of people who are minded and geared toward service and toward the community," Car-



Carbino is currently growing different herbs like cilantro, but plans to branch out to different fruits and vegetables. He uses the hydroponics technique, which is cost-friendly and efficient.



During project-building events, Carbino and his classmates planted dozens of herbs to prepare for the hydroponics project. He wants them to grow by soaking up water from the trays pictured here.

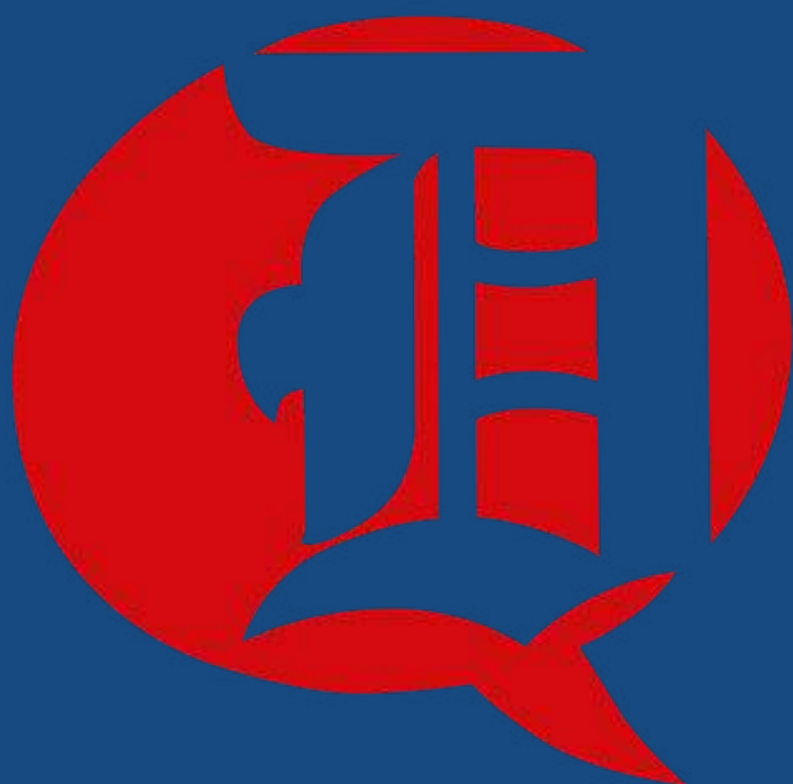


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IF INTERESTED, PLEASE SEND YOUR RESUME AND A COVER LETTER TO THE CURRENT EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, MAURA FISCHER (FISCHERM4@DUQ.EDU), AND THE FACULTY ADVISOR, DR. SARAH WRIGHT (WRIGHTS3@DUQ.EDU), BY WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15. INTERVIEWS WILL TAKE PLACE AS EARLY AS FRIDAY, MARCH 24.

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