



## Men's hoops uses solid defense to beat UCI, 66-62

SPENCER THOMAS  
sports editor

Duquesne used stout defense and a 12-0 first-half run to beat UC Irvine, 66-62 on Wednesday night. The win moves Duquesne to 5-2 on the season.

The Anteaters entered Wednesday's clash with a 6-1 record and a win over nationally ranked USC, and are consensus favorites in the Big West Conference. They are one of many mid-major juggernauts Duquesne has set up on their non-conference schedule, and the victory provides Duquesne with a Quad 3 win they missed out on in their 70-67 loss to the now 7-0 Princeton Tigers.

"Them days in the summer just paid off," said David Dixon. "This win proved to us that everything is falling into place."

The game started nauseatingly slow, and neither team scored until over four minutes into the game. The teams combined for five turnovers, several airballs and a missed dunk in that span.

Irvine opened with a run that extended to a 27-16 lead with 8 minutes left in the first half, but a 12-0 run gave 28-27 lead, their first of the game. The Anteaters' ensuing bucket marked the last time Duquesne trailed all night.

The comeback was sparked by a vicious putback dunk by Dixon, who also finished with five blocks.

"I eat, sleep and dream blocking shots and dunking on people," Dixon said. "I'm going to sleep really good tonight."

"I thought he dominated the game at the defensive end," said Head Coach Keith Dambrot. "He's just scratching the surface though."

Offensively, Duquesne's guards were noticeably more athletic than their California counterparts, which allowed players like Dae Dae Grant and Kareem Rozier to filter possessions through the paint easier than they could against other opponents.

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# THE DUQUESNE DUKE

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## Secret agent provides new information about JFK assassination 60 years later



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Secret Service agent Paul Landis signed copies of his book at the symposium where he provided new information about JFK's assassination 60 years later.

ZACH PETROFF &  
NAOMI GIRON

opinions editor & staff writer

Paul Landis's voice began to shake when he started talking about what happened in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

By the time he finished telling his story to a rapt audience in the Union Ballroom, it was clear the 88-year-old former Secret Service agent assigned to First Lady Jackie Kennedy was holding back tears.

"I see the grief and sadness there all the time," Landis said. "It has gone through my mind and thinking about the family and the kids. What's going to happen to them? It's hard for me to really go back and share my feelings."

After 60 years of silence on the subject and never being questioned by the Warren Commission, Landis's recounting of the event at last week's anniversary event challenged the official narrative of the John F. Kennedy assassination.

Landis was in the vehicle behind Kennedy's limo during the Dallas Parade and saw the shots that killed President Kennedy and wounded the governor of Texas, John Connally.

"I saw that third shot hit the president in the head," Landis said. "His head exploded, a mist of blood flowed into the air. I ducked to avoid getting splattered. I was that close."

Landis was one of several key speakers featured at the 22nd Annual Forensic Science and Law's speaker series "JFK Assassination at 60" symposium. The three-day, hybrid academic conference, which started on the evening of Nov. 15, examined the forensic and cultural impact of the Kennedy assassination.

The symposium opened Wednesday evening with a reception and opening remarks from the Keynote Speaker, Barbara Perry, Professor in Presidential Studies at the University of Virginia's Miller Center.

On Thursday the symposium was dedicated to the criminalistics, forensic science and medicine involved in the historic event. Friday, the symposium explored the history, politics and the impact of the assassination.

With the aid of experts in the field of physics, forensics, law and journalism, this year's symposium made the case for "Why the Kennedy assassination still matters?"

Audience members consisted of students like Max Gleason and Joe

Randolph who both attend University of Notre Dame. Gleason and Randolph said they both have learned about the assassination in class, but the event provided them with a bigger picture.

"I actually focused on the different scientific and forensic aspects for my research for the class," Randolph said. "It's just really cool that I'm seeing a lot of people that I actually quoted. It's kind of crazy."

Author of "Last Second in Dallas" Josiah Thompson shared his research on the case that Kennedy sustained two bullet wounds to the head, greatly increasing the chances of their being a second shooter.

"It's the only scenario that meets the constraints of medical ballistics acoustics," Thompson said. "I think, over time, this thesis will be accepted by almost everybody working on the assassination."

In addition to Landis' first-person retelling of the events that occurred in 1963 he also participated in a round table discussion hosted by Duquesne University President Ken Gormley.

"Paul Landis was not only a witness to the assassination, but he also revealed explosive new details about key evidence in his book," Gormley said. "He states that he

found this intact bullet in the limousine where Mrs. Kennedy had been sitting after the shooting and placed it on President Kennedy's stretcher inside the hospital."

Gormley and Landis first met in 2016, when former director of the Secret Service and Duquesne alumni, Lewis Merletti, suggested to Landis to meet with Gormley to discuss if he should publish his story.

"This is the exact same story that [Landis] recounted to me seven years ago," Gormley said. "I found [Landis] to be sincere and credible."

Friday, Jefferson Morley, an investigative journalist who has spent over three decades analyzing the circumstances around the assassination, spoke about the CIA's involvement.

Morley said he does not believe the "official" story of the JFK murder and set out to find out what really happened that day in Dallas.

"This is our story, but this is a story that is unfinished and we are handing it off to the next generation," Morley said during his opening remarks. "I really see my job is helping young people understand this story that happened long ago."

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# 2 Duquesne symposium hosts JFK assassination conversation

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Morley's presentation included his investigation into the CIA's involvement in the events surrounding the assassination while also questioning the validity of both President Johnson's investigation and the Warren Commission.

According to Morley, four of the seven officials involved claimed the Warren Commission investigations have inaccuracies.

The first official to go on record, CIA officer Jane Roman, spoke with Morley 31 years after the assassination. Her retelling of events, according to Morley, included the CIA's involvement and understanding of Oswald's activities leading up to Kennedy's murder.

There were documents in circulation with Oswald's name and Roman's signature on them, Morley said "Roman herself admitted to signing off on information about the future accused assassin (Oswald)," said Morley. "[She] admitted that the information was false."

Greg Adams and Dave Lentz who originally met at a JFK assassination conference in Dallas have been actively involved in the research and investigation into JFK's assassination.


The self-titled "conspiracy theorists" attend JFK conferences as not just a hobby but as a way to shake off the stigma around conspiracy theorists.

Lentz said he believes it's important for civilians to look into the circumstances surrounding Kennedy's death.

"There are thousands of people at our level, still interested in this it shows that the truth does matter," Lentz said. "We don't like to be lied to about major events. We're capable of handling the truth, we're mature enough."

Even 60 years later the death of the president continues to leave behind unanswered questions.

"It remains one of the greatest mysteries in American History," Gormley said. "All of these years later, it's astounding that it remains unresolved."



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# Men's hoops moves to 5-2 with win over Anteaters

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This may have enabled another atypical trend for the Dukes; their scoring distribution. Points were shared throughout the lineup, rather than their normal cluster at the guard position. Nearly 29 minutes passed before Andrei Savrasov became the first Duke to cross the 10-point threshold, a milestone that's normally achieved in the first half. Dixon was the next to

do so, in spite of some misses from up close early on.

"It takes a load off of the two main scorers, knowing that everybody can do something," Dixon said. "We're all really good basketball players, and when the opportunity is given to us, we are taking full advantage of it."

However, Irvine was able to climb back to within 3 in the final minute of the game. They had the ball with a chance to tie, but Clark

got his hands on the ball, first forcing a jump ball, then tipping a pass to Grant, who hit a pair of free throws. Dixon added two of his own to conclude the scoring and put the game on ice.

The freedom to play so aggressively was because Duquesne remedied their biggest failure in last week's loss at Nebraska by limiting their fouls. Rozier, Dixon and Clark all picked up at least four fouls against the Cornhuskers, with the latter pair committing a terminal fifth. On Wednesday, nobody committed more than two.

"A point of emphasis was our discipline. Not taking 10% gambles, not reaching in," Dambrot said. "Not playing so hard that we play like idiots."

Finally, Duquesne posted its best night of the season from beyond the arc. They shot 9-of-18, led by Savrasov's trio of 3s. The remarkable night from their big men had helped open things up outside for guards to move the ball around. Defensively, they anchored a performance that held the Anteaters to a season low in points.

Dambrot saw the night as one step on the way to developing a well-rounded offense that blends

post, paint and guard play.

"We haven't played inside at all," Dambrot said. "We don't have to live and die with it but we have to develop it. You have to get paint touches in some way."

Savrasov saw it as a breakout game for himself, after a rough patch of performances to start the season thanked his coaches for sticking by him.

"Their trust helped me a lot. And hopefully-not hopefully-I know because of the work I put in every day, this game will help me down the stretch to start getting back in my groove and start being the player I know that I can be," Savrasov said. "I know that I'm at my best but I feel like it was a good sign."

The performance rewards Dambrot's decision to keep Savrasov in the starting lineup, despite how frequently he gets overshadowed by performances from bench players.

"Clearly, Fousseyni [Drame] has played better than Andrei to this point," Dambrot said. "And clearly Dixon has played better than Chabi, but [we're] going to need everybody."

The Dukes will get another week-long break before they travel south to face Marshall on Wednesday, Dec. 6.



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR  
Forward David Dixon celebrates the Dukes' 66-62 win over the Anteaters.

# Speaker fled Ethiopia over human rights

ELIYAHU GASSON  
staff writer

Semahagn Abebe fled Ethiopia to Germany in 2005 to avoid government political violence stemming from his teachings at Ethiopian Civil Service University.

On Tuesday, Abebe spoke at Duquesne about his war-torn homeland as part of a Human Rights class project.

"In June, 2005, many people were killed. Over 30,000 people were in prison," Abebe said. "I was hiding for weeks because they were arresting any person who they thought was supporting the opposition groups."

Clifford Bob, the professor of Human Rights, said the class chose what scholar they wanted to visit, and they were in charge of planning, promoting and communicating with community outreach organizations. Students were also tasked with participating in advocacy about human rights conditions in Abebe's home country.

"From early in the semester, students work with the New York-based Scholars at Risk network, which the university is a part of, to identify at-risk scholars from other countries who would be a good fit for the course," Bob said.

Abebe was born in Ethiopia and lived there until 2005, when he was forced to flee the country after the general election.

According to Abebe, these elections were the most competitive in the history of Ethiopia.

"There was more political space for opposition groups," Abebe said. "I was involved with the opposition because some of the leaders of the opposition groups where my friends and I had been advising them."

Abebe said that the opposition groups were optimistic, believing that they had an opportunity to enact political change. How-

ever, said Abebe, the election was rigged, and the ruling party, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front, had claimed victory before all the votes were counted.

He was ultimately driven out of Ethiopia due to the potential of political violence against him.

Abebe reached out to a professor from Germany who had been his teacher while he was working on his master's degree in Addis Ababa. Abebe's professor recognized his situation and aided him in finding scholarships so that he could move to Germany and continue his studies. Abebe said he made it out of Ethiopia and spent five years in Germany working on his Ph.D.

He came across the Scholars at Risk organization, which works to connect scholars at risk of violence and persecution in their home countries with temporary academic positions at foreign colleges and universities.

Bob said that Abebe was chosen to speak partly because he is a member of Scholars At Risk.

Emily Harling, a student in Bob's class in human rights, said that those wanting to help scholars in similar situations to Abebe can do more.

"Our class learned how to write advocacy letters to our local representatives or others we felt were in a position to help such as non-governmental organizations," Harling said. "The main goal of our letters was to raise awareness and promote accountability. Given the corruption within the Ethiopian government and the lack of free media, a lot of abuses are not talked about or accurately reported."

Prior to fleeing Ethiopia, Abebe earned an undergraduate degree at Addis Ababa University, studied law for five years and became a public prosecutor.

"I like the job because it really gives me a sense of purpose – I could really help people who



AVA RIEGER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Clifford Bob introduced Semahagn Abebe on Tuesday for his speech about fleeing Ethiopia because of human rights issues.

have been affected by crimes," Abebe said.

Abebe said that the first few years he was working in the justice system, the government would not interfere with the courts. However, the government soon began to slowly politicize the justice system. The number of cases involving trumped-up charges against human rights activists and corruption among officials increased and Abebe felt he could no longer work as a prosecutor.

He then switched careers and began teaching at Ethiopian Civil Service University, which was established to increase the capacity of Ethiopia's public sector. However, the university mainly educated individuals already working within the government.

"Even the president of the college was a central committee member of the ruling party," Abebe said. "That's where the problem started, because I was openly speaking about human

rights violations."

As a professor at the Ethiopian Civil Service University, Abebe would often share his previous court experiences in which he had to prosecute people who claimed they were coerced into false confessions with torture. Because of these lectures, his students who were linked to the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front reported him, leading to a reprimand from the president of the university.

"That's very difficult because when you are teaching human rights or conversational law or criminal law, it is very difficult for a professor to not really address normalization," Abebe said.

Saffrin Schaeffer, a member of the events planning group, said the event took lots of coordination with her classmates and Duquesne staff.

"It is one thing to discuss these abuses in an academic setting, but to hear a firsthand account truly changes your perspective," Schaeffer said.



# Penguins slide past NEC Champions Duquesne

**MATTHEW THEODROS**  
staff writer

Duquesne had its season come to an end in a 40-7 loss at Youngstown State on Saturday in the first round of the FCS playoffs.

The week prior, the Dukes earned their place in the postseason, by defeating Merrimack 26-14 in a de-facto Northeast Conference championship game. The win gave the Dukes their second outright NEC title and first playoff bid since 2018. The next day, they gathered in Cooper Fieldhouse for a Selection Sunday watch party, where they learned they wouldn't have to travel far for the playoffs.

With the loss Duquesne falls to 1-3 all-time in FCS playoff games. They finished the year 7-5, but dominated conference opposition for a 6-1 league record.

Duquesne struggled to gain any movement on the offensive end. All-conference freshman running back Edward Robinson broke loose for a 24-yard touchdown with a minute remaining in the first quarter. The offense was limited to this lone score for the entire contest.

Youngstown State hit on all cylin-

ders, dominating in all facets. The Penguins scored with ease, and out gained Duquesne, 532-148. A goal-line stand in the first half helped Duquesne preserve a 10-7 deficit, but they remained unable to keep pace with the Youngstown State offense.

Penguins quarterback Mitch Davidson passed for 316 yards and two touchdowns, while receiver Bryce Oliver had a career day, catching nine passes for 181 yards and a score.

Duquesne quarterback Darius Perantes was held to just three completions for 33 yards, by far his season low in both categories. Backup Matt Robinson entered the game and completed six for 41 yards. The Dukes were not able to string consecutive plays on drives, with many ending as three-and-outs. A measly 1-of-11 performance on third downs contributed to the lack of offensive gain. The lack of consistency on the offensive end threw the team out of rhythm as guys were not able to convert on typical plays.

"When we weren't moving the football and getting the first downs, we weren't able to get into our normal rotation and getting some guys some quality carries or

catches out of the backfield," said Head Coach Jerry Schmitt.

The Penguins advance to the second round to play Villanova on Dec. 2.

Despite Duquesne's playoff run coming to an end, it was a big moment for the program and school. The team improved leaps and bounds from last season, improving on their 4-7 record.

The sentiment amongst the team and Head Coach Jerry Schmitt following the loss was that this team can build on their newly acquired success after a taxing year.

"This team learned how to overcome adversity," Schmitt said. "From playing seven games on the road and playing the teams we played, the FBS teams, they learned how to overcome adversity. We will use that to continue on."

Duquesne's last appearance in the FCS playoffs was in 2018 when they beat Towson in the first round, before falling to national powerhouse South Dakota State

in the round of 16.

Schmitt finishes his 19th season coaching at Duquesne with intentions to build off their strengths and establish a winning culture where making the postseason is common.

"There's lots of great people in this program," said offensive lineman Michael Dorundo. "I'm really happy with how this season went. Obviously, it's not the outcome you want, but when you make the playoffs there's going to be [23] teams that don't win that championship."

Winning the NEC championship meant a lot to the entire roster of guys who were yet to win a ring with the program.

"Being in the city of Pittsburgh, coming straight from[home] 30 minutes away, it's really cool to put it on for a city with lots of expectations," Dorundo said. "It feels good to really finally live up to those expectations and win our NEC championship."



COURTESY OF DUQUESNE ATHLETICS

Duquesne finished the season with a conference title, but were 1-4 outside of NEC play.

## Other football news

Robert Morris University announced on Tuesday that it would be rejoining the Northeast Conference for football starting in the 2024 season. The move puts the Colonials in the same league as Duquesne for the first time since 2019, reigniting the "Cross-Tahn Rivalry," which will be played annually starting next year. Duquesne is 13-8 all-time against RMU on the gridiron.

Duquesne's 1st team all-conference defensive back Ayden Garnes announced Wednesday that he has entered the transfer portal with two years of eligibility remaining. Garnes was a 2023 team captain, and was fifth on the team with 51 total tackles. He was second in interceptions, and led the team with 11 pass break-ups. He registered a season-high seven tackles against Youngstown State on Saturday.

# WBB beaten by last second shot at BGSU

**MICHAEL O'GRADY**  
staff writer

It was surely a long ride back from Bowling Green for Duquesne women's basketball on Monday night. The Dukes surrendered a game-winning buzzer beater to lose a game they led by as many as 7.

Granted, that was Duquesne's largest lead of the game, but it seemed at that point they'd turned the game around. After trailing for most of the first half, the Dukes overtook Bowling Green with a 25-9 third quarter, led by Amaya Hamilton with 15 points. Hamilton finished with 28 points, a career high for the fifth-year senior. She also added nine rebounds, a block and a steal.

Ultimately, the scoring dried up for the Dukes in the fourth, and despite a game-tying layup by Hamilton with nine seconds left, Bowling Green guard Amy Velasco sank a jumper from the paint as time expired.

The game didn't seem to be destined for that thrilling finish. The Falcons were the better team in the first half. While both teams were slow to get going from tip-off, Duquesne's only real momentum in the first quarter was a 7-0 run that made

the game 7-4. Neither team shot well and turned over the ball multiple times, but by quarter's end it was Bowling Green leading 17-14 thanks to their marginally better three-point shooting.

Bowling Green would lead by as many as 6 early in the second quarter before Duquesne went on another 7-0 run. One particularly impressive Duke possession was at this time, when Hamilton and Megan McConnell each had an offensive rebound on two straight missed threes, and Hamilton was able to put hers in for 2 points. On the next play, Precious Johnson made a steal and Nae Bernard made a three to put the Dukes ahead by one. Bowling Green responded with a three of their own, and from there was a rare burst of scoring.

The 90-second run of a combined 14 points culminated in Bowling Green going on a 10-2 run to end the first half, again off the strength of their three-point shooting which was 4-of-5 in the second quarter. Duquesne just wasn't able to keep up behind the arc, shooting 1-of-6 in the second another troubling issue was their lack of bench scoring. Johnson hit a jumper in the first quarter, and that was the only two points their bench had all game. Hamilton, Bernard and McCon-

nell scored all but 11 of the Dukes' total points. If they got cold, there weren't others to rely on.

That became irrelevant in the third quarter, as coming back from the half, Hamilton went off for 15 points with 10 added between McConnell and Ayanna Townsend. Bowling Green's strong shooting to close out the first half fell off a cliff. The Falcons shot 3-of-18 total and missed all eight of their tries for 3. Duquesne rode the momentum swing to the end of the quarter, leading by their game-high 7 points.

But the wave wouldn't last. Bowling Green held the Dukes to just 1 point in nearly four minutes to begin the fourth, and they eked back into the game on free throws. The Falcons' Lexi Fleming hit a 3 seconds later to break their streak of nine straight missed 3-pointers. With the monkey off their back, Bowling Green made a stop and scored again. As time dwindled, the lead changed three times in one minute. With 1:28 remaining, it was 64-63 Duquesne following a Hamilton jumper.

A critical stop was wasted when Hamilton missed with 47 seconds remaining, and Fleming struck again with another three to put the Falcons up two. Hamilton redeemed herself by tying it with nine seconds on the

clock, and Fleming turned it over with three to go. The Dukes turned it over themselves after a timeout, enabling Velasco's dagger.

The bitter ending dropped Duquesne to 3-2. They'll start a four-game homestand on Sunday against Delaware before they begin Atlantic-10 Conference play with a game versus Fordham on Tuesday.



COURTESY OF DUQUESNE ATHLETICS

Amaya Hamilton takes the ball up the court during the best game of her five-year career.





## THE DUKESNE DUKE

113 College Hall  
600 Forbes Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15282

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### administrative staff

adviser Paula Reed Ward

email us: theduquduke@gmail.com

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email: theduquduke@gmail.com

## The holidays are a great time to show our loved ones we care

I close my eyes, and I can see it clear as day. It's Thanksgiving from years ago. The family is gathered all around. The only cares we seem to have are whether or not we are going to eat by six or whether the rest of the family can hold their patience for a few more minutes to enjoy the food as a family.

As we are now in full swing of the holiday season, it is important to cherish the moments we share with our loved ones. One of the most beautiful and painful things about life is that it is finite. Tomorrow is never promised, and the holidays are a perfect time to show our love and appreciation to those important in our lives.

It's hard to watch someone you love die. My 91-year-old grandmother, who is so full of life, is struggling. There are times now I just watch her sleep and reminisce on the ways things used to be. It is hard to fathom that even though she is right in front of me, I feel her slipping away.

Having all four of my grandparents alive is the best gift I could ever receive. They were there on my first birthday, they taught me to swim, and most importantly they helped shape me into the person I am today.

I will forever be grateful for the things they taught me and the

about things that did not matter. I spent so much time worrying about the future, when I should have been enjoying the moment.

I wish I would've taken each day, eventful or not, and soak up every little bit.

Acceptance is hard. I have tried countless times to slow down time, I have never been successful. The truth is, time cannot be stopped or slowed, so it is important to make every moment count. Yet, I remember, it was my grandmother who always reminded me to live



JULIA HALVAS  
staff writer

in the moment.

My days with my grandmother now consist of tucking her in and forcing her to eat breakfast. To be honest, even though it hurts to watch her age, I am grateful.

Even though this person in my life is not yet gone, anticipating the inevitable is part of the grief, too. Anticipatory grieving, according to the University of Rochester Medical Center, is a common grieving process that occurs before the death of someone. It is usually the result of a terminal diagnosis.

And while common, it can be difficult to navigate.

But one thing I've found that helps is verbalizing what I'm feeling. And, as it turns out, this is scientifically proven to help people deal with grief.

Allison Werner-Lin, Ph.D., a licensed clinical social worker and associate professor at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice in Philadelphia, suggests that if one is having a hard time with the grieving process, talk it out.

"Grief is a universal human experience," said Dr. Werner-Lin "And discussing it with others is how you begin to work

through it."

According to Dr. Werner-Lin, some common counseling interventions include narrative therapy, which can help the grieving person reframe loss as well as active listening which allows the grieving person the time and space to talk out their feelings,

"This type of out-loud musing can help a person process their grief," Werner said

I have found comfort in spending as much time with Grandmother as possible. Even though she may not be able to do the things we used to do together, like play board games or share popcorn together while we fall asleep watching television, it is still nice to just be around her.

For the woman who always found time for me, who made me a priority in her life, I feel both honored and lucky to have the opportunity to return the favor of love.

As her granddaughter, I want her to be able to enjoy her days, no matter what they consist of. I want to embody all the life lessons she taught me.

This is not a tale of caution, but a reminder to all those that have aging loved ones in their life that there is no time like the present. We can get so caught up with the everyday actions of life that we forget what matters most to us. The holidays are a wonderful opportunity to show our appreciation for those that mean so much to us.

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## STAFF EDITORIAL

## What Christmas lights can do for local economy

Pittsburgh's holiday attractions fill up the city's skies as well as local business owners' pockets as they receive a present of their own – increased sales.

Driven by the holiday spirit, people gather to shop for gifts, especially with the promise of an attraction or two to add to their visit.

Local businesses can benefit from the implicit generosity that comes with the holiday season for shoppers.

Limited-time holiday displays like Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens' Holiday Magic! Winter Flower Show and Light Garden, Kennywood's Holiday Festival with holiday-themed food and drinks and North Park's Laser Show create additional ticket sales on top of the standard business hour prices. These events can cost anywhere from around \$20 to \$40 for a standard adult ticket, which is a hike in price from regular or other special events admission.

Areas like Market Square feature 150,000 LED lights and a 35-foot tall illuminated Sphere Tree. Right next door is another even taller tree at the ice rink. "The 65-foot-tall PPG Place Christmas Tree, located in the center of the ice rink, is a sensational site to see," the Welcome Pittsburgh Information Center said.

Every year, visitors to the city can be sure they'll have trouble parking Downtown during Steelers games and during Light Up Night because of its popularity as a staple attraction to the Burgh.

And for this, local business owners can benefit—and that's when shoppers can step in to support their communities.

If you're already going to PPG's Annual Gingerbread Display and Competition of over 300 entries, visit the People's Gas Holiday Market pop-up featuring 39 vendors throughout the Christmas season. Your business supports the local makers in the holiday booths, as well as the surrounding Market Square stops with the increased traffic the holiday village brings.

According to Statista, Christmas holiday retail sales in the United States saw an increase of 3% this year compared to sales during the rest of 2023.

Some retailers, Forbes Magazine said, can even expect for Christmas time sales to account for one quarter of their annual profits.

In all, it's important to support local business ALL year round, but it's especially pertinent during the November-December shopping season.





Market Square aglow with holiday cheer

KAITLYN HUGHES  
staff writer

Previously dubbed the #1 Holiday Market in 2020 by USA Today, The People’s Gas Holiday Market has been bringing Christmas joy to Downtown’s Market Square for 12 years.

From Nov. 17 to Dec. 21 numerous businesses stationed in alpine-style wooden chalet stands line the marketplace, pulling inspiration from the Christmas Markets of Germany, Poland and Eastern Europe.

Attendees enjoy live music, various foods and beverages and hand-made items such as ornaments and jewelry. There is also a holiday kids play area where children can create Christmas themed crafts.

Vendors both local and visiting attend the event yearly. The market consists solely of small businesses with hand-made products. Popular vendors include 837 North, Bali Made, Helmut’s Strudel and Pittsburgh Irish Festival Celtic Gift Shoppe.

This week’s visiting vendor, MP Pinecone Designs, was manned by founder and owner Michael Pappa who started the pine cone wreath business in 2009.

Beginning with pine cone wreaths and garlands, Pappa’s brand has branched out to producing beard oil, soaps and candles as well.

Everything is all-natural with nature-related names to go with the forestry theme.

“I make everything myself 100%,” Pappa said. “Nothing is bought and sold, it is all hand-made from scratch.”

As an art major, crafting his products comes naturally to Pappa.

Every pine cone he uses is organic and collected locally and nationally from various places around the country.

“It is something that I can get from nature and make it into something even more beautiful,” Pappa said.

Another vendor, Elizabeth Griffin of Copper Coast Confections, shared how she and her husband enjoy the diverse groups of people that they get to interact with.

“[My husband] loves sweets,” said Griffin. “[And] he loves the business aspect of things, so I think running a small business is what he wanted to do.”

Started in 2016 by Griffin’s husband, Copper Coast Confections’ fudge, turtles and truffles were not the only booth that had sweet treats to share.

“[Helmut’s Strudel has] pretzels and different strudels,” said market staff member Caroline Colantonio. “They’re so good... I had the apple [strudel], and it was amazing.”



KAITLYN HUGHES | STAFF WRITER  
Despite their temporary role in the market, MP Pinecone Designs decked their booth with holiday cheer to showcase their products.



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR  
Damiano V was among many local artists who have made the entertainment schedule at the holiday market. Performances run throughout the week.

Having worked for Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP) for about a year, Colantonio shared the vision for the market space.

“The whole point of PDP is trying to make Downtown a better place,” said Colantonio. “It’s a good environment because all we want to do is make everyone enjoy Downtown.”

Aside from providing a comforting environment to attendees and vendors, the PDP also ensures all its staff members feel appreciated in their work environment. Managers make sure all staff members have the training and resources they need to succeed, and oftentimes they will purchase coffee for their staff.

After leaving her job at the Starbucks in Market Square, market staff member Kelli Prizner has found that helping with the market was a more enjoyable form of income.

“I couldn’t work there anymore, it got too hard. I like this a lot because I like being Downtown. This is nice because it is a very casual way to make money,” Prizner said.

“I don’t want to say it’s easy because it’s not, but it’s not retail.”

But that doesn’t stop attendee Roddy Wis from making his annual trip to the market with his wife.

“We come every year to support local artisans and help support the local economy,” Wis said.

This year Wis’s wife purchased glass earrings, and last year she took home a handmade pot holder.

In addition to shopping, the Wises also enjoy the holiday scenery of Santa Claus, Christmas trees and ice skaters.

The nostalgia brings them back to their favorite winter memories.

“We would drive down to Oglebay and look at the lights,” Wis said. As they age, the couple stays local for their holiday fix.

The People’s Gas Holiday Market excels at its mission to curate a unique holiday environment for all its members.

It was market staff member Alan Vasilisin’s first year working the event, and he could not have been more pleased to be part of it.

“You cannot say there is a bad booth here,” said Vasilisin. “Every booth here is great.”

CAMPUS  
EVENTS

- PFC Winter Paint and Sip  
Nov. 30 @ 9 p.m.
- Head to the NiteSpot for a hot chocolate bar and bring an item of your choosing to paint. Paint and brushes provided.
- Lambda Holiday Movie Night  
Dec. 1 @ 8:30 p.m.
- Watch a holiday movie in the Towers MPR. Free food included!
- 2nd Grade Classroom Christmas Party  
Dec. 2 @ 7 p.m.
- Join Res Life in the Towers MPR for a nostalgic 2nd grade classroom themed Christmas party with crafts and snacks!
- PPG Ice Skating Party  
Dec. 3 @ 10 p.m.
- Join DU Cares for a 2 hour private Duquesne Student Skate at PPG Skating Rink. Tickets are \$10, purchase in ORL. Skate rental and hot chocolate included.

EMILY'S  
EPIPHANIES

Little Gifts of Giving

Winter holidays are often marked by high spending, elaborate gifts and an obsession with finding the perfect way to express our love and thanks for others.

Although these practices are wonderful and usually bring a lot of joy, sometimes the smaller details and deeds of the season can prove just as meaningful.

Make time for the friend you haven’t seen all semester.

Call a family member that wants to hear your voice and be a part of your world.

Let that professor know that something they said inspired you.

These little things are often what matter the most when we reflect on our day.

Amidst the hardships of finals, the stress of holiday preparations and the bleakness of the cold, give someone a reason to smile. Give someone a reason to hope. Fill someone’s bucket.

— Emily Fritz

<p><b>Aquarius</b> ♒</p> <p>Oh you know, same soup, just reheated.</p>	<p><b>Pisces</b> ♓</p> <p>Faux nap behavior at its best.</p>	<p><b>Aries</b> ♈</p> <p>She measures butter with her heart, not with her allergies.</p>	<p><b>Taurus</b> ♉</p> <p>I got a chill in my butt pimple.</p>
<p><b>Gemini</b> ♊</p> <p>I’m leaving this country. Goodbye.</p>	<p><b>Cancer</b> ♋</p> <p>RIP Eleanor Rosalyn Carter &lt;/3</p>	<p><b>Leo</b> ♌</p> <p>I do not think, therefore I do not am.</p>	<p><b>Virgo</b> ♍</p> <p>Sometimes love is a chicken cutlet.</p>
<p><b>Libra</b> ♎</p> <p>I don’t know what it’s like in the fridge.</p>	<p><b>Scorpio</b> ♏</p> <p>Catch a bubble, Uncle Jim.</p>	<p><b>Sagittarius</b> ♐</p> <p>Great British Break-Off? You mean Brexit??</p>	<p><b>Capricorn</b> ♑</p> <p>I am the bagel top thief.</p>



# Veteran completing education

ISABELLA ABBOTT  
features editor

Not many students graduate from college with great-grandchildren, years of service in the military, and a wife of 27 years. But 59-year-old veteran and Duquesne grad student Scean Lawhorn has all three.

Lawhorn completed his bachelor's degree in psychology at Duquesne in December of 2020 and is on his way toward a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling, something he's done his whole life.

"I figured I'd go to school for what I've already been doing, sitting down talking with people, mentoring, listening to people's issues and things like that," Lawhorn said.

His wife, Diane Lawhorn, said he has always been persistent in assisting others.

"Scean is a man who has a lot of integrity, and he's committed to helping people he cares about people, and he's always wanting to help if he can make their lives better," Diane said. "He always did counseling, helping people in our church, but now, since he's gotten his degree, he sees things from an even deeper perspective."

Before his college years, Lawhorn joined the military in 1985 at age 20 and re-enlisted, serving seven years.

During his service, Lawhorn was stationed in Fort Jackson, S.C., Fort Lee,

Va., Stuttgart, Germany, El Paso and Fort Bliss, Texas.

After his service, he worked for Port Authority of Allegheny County, now known as Pittsburgh Regional Transit, and retired in 2016 after working for 25 years.

He was planning to enjoy retirement life, sitting around and collecting his pension.

Lawhorn quickly realized he couldn't sit around and wanted to go to school after talking with friends his age in college.

"I started thinking, I gotta do something, I want to do something," Lawhorn said.

Driving down Interstate 376 while on the phone with a Veterans Affairs representative, he passed Duquesne's campus just as she was telling him to look at Duquesne for a college degree.

He thought it was amazing she had said that at the exact moment, he was looking at the university.

Lawhorn said the Office for Military and Veteran Students on campus has been a huge help for him.

Student Veteran Affairs president Kimberly Sugden said Lawhorn does an exceptional job knowing what others around him may need help with.

"At all times, Scean consistently prioritizes the needs of those around him before his own," Sugden said. "Since I've moved to Pittsburgh, he is without a doubt one of the most devoted and compassionate individuals I've come across."

Diane said she's impressed and amazed that he was able to go back to school.

"I admire that he did this after retirement, to see the work that he puts in and the persistence to continue on, I really admire it," she said. "Just to see someone go so many years without being in school and then go back to start it all over, I'm so proud of him."

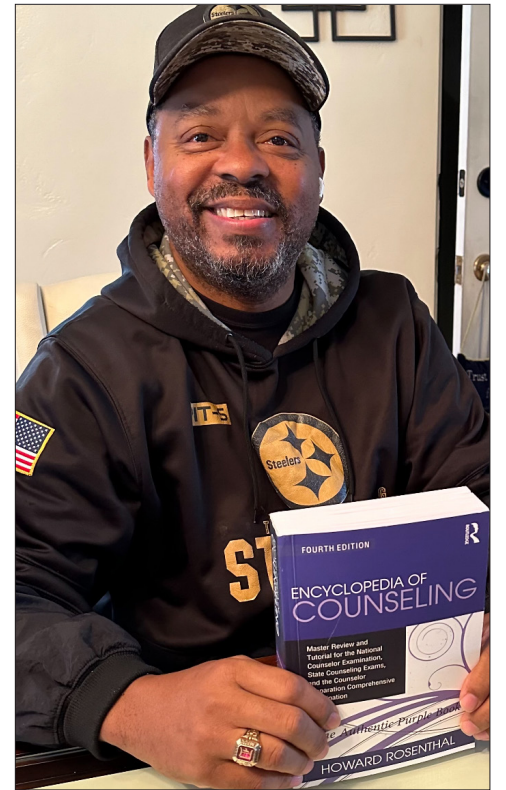
Her love and support for Scean can be seen in Diane as she proudly tells everyone she meets that her husband attends Duquesne.

"I could just talk about it all day long. I'm riding along in my car with a Duquesne sticker, and people will say, 'Did you go to Duquesne?' or 'Did you graduate from Duquesne?' and I say, 'No, my husband did,'" Diane said.

The married couple have six children together, eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Diane said Scean going back to school encourages his children and grandchildren to pursue their further education.

Lawhorn also encourages others to go back to school, and he said that those looking to get an education after retiring should research first and know the amount of work it takes.

"We shouldn't get into the thing where we're just going to go to school to try it out," Lawhorn said. "We're further along in life for that. Have a purpose, a plan, a goal, and if you really believe that that's what you want to do, then go for it."



COURTESY OF DIANE LAWHORN

59-year-old Scean Lawhorn is pursuing a graduate degree in clinical mental health, taking courses in counseling to achieve his goal.

# Physics student in Hawaii for conference

NATALIE RODRIGUEZ  
staff writer

While it's been freezing in Pittsburgh, senior physics student Hannah Valenty has been enjoying the warm weather of Hawaii.

But she's not there for vacation Valenty is there representing Duquesne at the American Physics Society (APS) conference in Honolulu.

Hannah is one of three seniors majoring in physics at Duquesne's School of Science and Engineering. She found out about the APS opportunity through her mentor, Dr. Fatiha Benmokhtar.

Benmokhtar is a physics professor at Duquesne. In addition to her work as a professor, she works with hundreds of other scholars at a particle physics lab in Newport News, Va. Benmokhtar has been to many conferences and was able to recommend this experience to Valenty.

Valenty collaborated with other students and professors to research nuclear physics. Her work focused on protons and current and target fragmentation.

"We are studying the proton and what happens to it when you throw in a beam of electrons. A particle jet comes out, but we wanted to check where the particles actually come from," Benmokhtar said. "Some scholars believe that the electrons just scatter like a pool table, but many disagree and say there has to be something else going on."

The APS conference lasts from Nov. 27 until Dec. 2 and will consist of speakers and presenters at both the professional and undergraduate levels. Most of the week features discussions, lectures and oral and poster presentations from under-



COURTESY OF FATIHA BENMOKHTAR

Hannah Valenty traveled to Hawaii for the American Physics Society conference. She's pictured here in a particle physics lab in Newport News, Va.

graduates and professionals in the field.

APS events are held annually, but every four years the conference is held in Hawaii and hosts members from the Japanese Physics Society.

In preparation for the conference, Valenty worked for hours to gather data and finalize her findings.

"All of my research is remote, and all of it is done on the computer and it consists of analyzing huge data sets with millions and millions of lines of code," Valenty said.

Her work at Duquesne has also inspired her to consider a career in data analysis.

"I've really enjoyed the research that I've done with my mentor, and that research led me to come to understand data science," Valenty said. "In the future, I'll

either be applying for graduate school or a job in data science."

Benmokhtar described Valenty as a hardworking student who achieves exceptional grades while also balancing a myriad of other tasks.

"Hannah does one thing at a time and is very focused on her studies. She performs well and is always willing to mentor other students," Benmokhtar said.

Not only has she excelled in the classroom, but Valenty has also found ways to stay involved on campus. In addition to being captain of the rowing team, she is also involved with Duquesne's Spiritan Campus Ministry, leading weekly Bible study and rosary group.

The Duquesne women's rowing team

has already begun preparing for their winter season. The team typically practices six days a week, but even in paradise, Valenty found time to take advantage of the warm Hawaiian weather to train and condition.

Her diligence and determination do not go unnoticed.

Senior Britta Wheeler is Valenty's roommate and rowing co-captain.

"Hannah's work ethic is crazy. As her roommate, I've seen her stay up until midnight doing work. Her major is very intensive, including a lot of intense math," Wheeler said. "Then every morning, she'll get up and kill it at practice and kill it at lifts."

Wheeler also described Valenty's contribution to the team's environment.

"Everyone describes her as a light on the team," Wheeler said. "Hannah is the perfect model for novices because she never rowed in high school, started during Covid and didn't get in a boat for another 2.5 months. She also models the desire to improve and find love in a sport."

Valenty's other roommate and friend since freshman year, Sarah Ricketts, also met Valenty through rowing and admires her ability to focus on others in the moment.

"Hannah is definitely the model student athlete. She's very humble and she could have a million things going on at once, but she always takes the time to focus on rowing and asking people how they are," Ricketts said.

Valenty uses her experiences at Duquesne to give back to her community and campus life overall.

"I am proud to be a part of a D1 team, practice my faith and still have time to take a deep breath with my friends," Valenty said.



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