



Mayor celebrates Duq student excellence

ELIYAHU GASSON
opinions editor

Friday evening's Spirit of Diversity Celebration, hosted by The Center for Excellence in Diversity and Student Inclusion at Duquesne, has welcomed many keynote speakers who discuss multicultural issues. This year's speaker was Ed Gainey, the first Black mayor of Pittsburgh.

"I'm honored to be here," Gainey said to *The Duke*. "When any major university asks you to speak about diversity and inclusion and what it means, I think it's a great opportunity to uplift all people."

The event served as a time for the center to recognize select students for their leadership and academic excellence with the Spirit of Diversity Award and the Dr. Ron L. Swain Award for Social Justice.

"I think it's great," Gainey said. "All great revolutions started with the youth. So I think that the more you have the youth out there doing [the work], the better the world will be."

Quincy Stevenson, the executive director for diversity and student inclusion at Duquesne, was running the event. According to Stevenson, Gainey was asked to come because he represented the style of leadership The Center for Excellence in Diversity and Student Inclusion wanted to foster.

"Ed Gainey ... is a visionary leader and a dedicated public servant known for his commitment to improving the region and the people he serves," Stevenson said. "Gainey's leadership style is characterized by empathy, collaboration and a deep understanding of the challenges faced by Pittsburgh's diverse population."

Following an hour-long reception in the Fiddes Shepperson Suite featuring two open bars and hors d'oeuvres, the ballroom opened up for the main event.

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THE DUQUESNE DUKE

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President Biden visits Pittsburgh for campaign



SPENCER THOMAS | SPORTS EDITOR

President Joe Biden stopped just down the road from Duquesne at the United Steel Workers Headquarters on Wednesday afternoon for a speech that ranged from steel imports, Nippon's purchase of U.S. Steel and his 2024 opponent Donald Trump's day in court.

MEGAN TROTTER
news editor

As part of his three-day campaign across Pennsylvania, President Joe Biden made his way to the United Steel Workers Headquarters — half a mile from Duquesne's campus — on Wednesday and promised to protect the U.S. steel industry from unfair practices.

"My administration will also take a real hard look at Chinese government industrial practices when it comes to global shipbuilding, which is critical to our economy," Biden said. "Right now my U.S. trade representative is investigating trade practices by the Chinese government regarding steel and aluminum."

Biden kicked off his travel plans the previous day with a visit to his hometown in Scranton, and he continues the campaign to Philadelphia on Thursday.

Prior to his speech, International President of the United Steelworkers David McCall, Allegheny County Executive Sara Innamorato and Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey spoke.

McCall recounted the previous positive relationship between Biden and U.S. Steel.

"Our union has a long friendship with President Biden that began decades ago," McCall said. "Over the years we've been proud to work with him, as together we fight to advance our union's core values. Steel workers aren't shy about sharing our opinions."

Biden's remarks began around 2:30 p.m. on the fourth floor of the building. Standing behind him were 19 U.S. Steel workers, wearing USW t-shirts and holding signs.

In 2023 Biden joined the United Auto Workers' strike and became the first president to walk a picket line.

The three-day campaign centered around Biden's reputation as the "most pro-labor president of all time," as referred to by Gainey.

Last month, U.S. Steel stockholders voted to approve a merger with the large Japanese company Nippon Steel. U.S. Steel CEO and president David B. Burritt called it "a clear endorsement," according to *CBS News*.

However, Biden wants to keep steel domestic.

"U.S. Steel has been an iconic American company for more than a century. And it should remain totally American," Biden said Wednesday.

Biden spoke about his recent investment in clean manufacturing — worth \$1.5 billion and spanning across six steel projects.

Bernie Hall, the District 10 director of U.S. Steelworkers, said they were excited when Biden's administration reached out to use the United Steel Workers Headquarters as the location of his Pittsburgh campaign.

"[The] president wanted to show his support," Hall said to *The Duke*.

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POLICE BRIEFS

Tuesday, April 2-

Duquesne student's vehicle was damaged when another unknown vehicle hit it while parked in Locust Garage.

Thursday, April 4-

Someone failed to stop at stop sign between Locust Garage and the School of Music. A state citation will be mailed to them.

Friday, April 5-

Two construction workers who were working at the new dorm construction site on Forbes were involved in an altercation. One male was punched in the face by the other after an argument. One male was cited for disorderly conduct and criminal mischief. The victim had his glasses broken.

Tuesday, April 9-

A victim's vehicle was struck by another and the actor failed to leave a notice.

Thursday, April 11-

There was damage to an unattended vehicle parked in Locust Garage.

Monday, April 15-

An unknown person tagged the Bluff Street pedestrian bridge with graffiti.

EMAIL TIPS

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 Emma Polen at polene@duq.edu

Writers & Photographers needed for the Duke

Contact our editor-in-chief polene@duq.edu

Come Visit Us
College Hall 113



EMMA POLEN
editor-in-chief

April 23 Primary Election - Guiding preparation for PA voters

The Pennsylvania primaries will take place on April 23, and while there may not be too many options on voters' ballots this year, last minute decisions could make a big impact on policy following the general election in November. *The Duke* has broken down what some of these decisions look like, and what this means specifically for Pennsylvanians.

Why vote in the primary?

Pennsylvania is a closed primary state, which means registered Republicans can only vote on Republican nominees and registered Democrats will vote on Democratic nominees. Either way, the state and local government have some important seats up in November, even if there's not too many options on your ballot this April 23 during the primaries.

The winners of the primary will have a chance at seats that will define policy on abortion, education funding, fracking, legalization of recreational weed and voting rights, according to Pittsburgh City Paper's Colin Williams.

How can I vote?

Pavoterservices.pa.gov has a great "Find Your Polling Place" page. Input

your address for details on your specific polling place. Remember, you must vote in-person ONLY at your designated polling place. All other voters, including students who cannot make it home to vote, must have applied for a mail-in ballot by April 16. These ballots must be RECEIVED on or before Election Day. Ballots post-marked before Election Day but not received until after will be thrown out.

Polls will be open for in-person voting from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. For mail-in ballots, be sure to add a handwritten date on the outside of the envelope. Without the stamp of timeliness, even if they are received in time, a ballot will be considered invalid and not be counted. In addition, an absentee or mail-in ballot that is not enclosed in the secrecy envelope will be disqualified.

Who can I vote for in April?

The U.S. Senate race is not looking for new candidates on this year's primary ballot: Incumbent U.S. Sen. Bob Casey Jr. (D) and Dave McCormick (R) are both running unopposed for Pa.'s one open U.S. Senate seat.

Attorney General, the state's chief law enforcement official, is a position currently held by prosecutor Michelle Henry (D), who will not be running for reelection this year. In her stead, five Democratic and two Republican nominees are up on the ballot in Pennsylvania. More information

on all the candidates running can be found in "City Paper's Pittsburgh Election Guide" series.

Republican Tim DeFoor currently holds the state's position of Auditor General. The Democrats have two candidates running to take his place as the reviewer of state spending, state Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta, D-Philadelphia and Lehigh County Controller Mark Pinsley. Kenyatta is the first LGBTQ+ person of color to be elected to the Pennsylvania General Assembly, according to *City Paper*, and he specifically pledges to rebuild the Bureau of School Audits to demand accountability from schools in Pennsylvania. Pinsley's demands for education address outdated equipment at public schools. He has also advocated to hold fossil fuel companies accountable for pollution.

A similar race is happening for State Treasurer. Republican Stacy Garrity currently holds the position, and both democrats Ryan Bizzarro (Erie County) and Erin McClelland (Allegheny County) are vying for a spot on the November ballot. Bizzarro is in support of retaining the Commonwealth's 529 tax-free college savings along with low-interest loans and care for individuals in need. McClelland also looks to protect local interests, and she advocates for tariffs in order to protect state dollars from being spent abroad in nations like China.

In the Pennsylvania 12th District, incumbent U.S. Rep. Summer Lee, D-Swissvale, is up against Bhavini Patel for the democratic seat in Congress. Lee has branded herself as the anti-fracking representative. Patel backs similar solutions to President Joe Biden concerning the environment and the conflict in Gaza. She has openly criticized Lee for a lack of active support for Israel and Pittsburgh's Jewish community.

Where can I find my**practice ballot?**

Voters in Allegheny County can view their practice ballot prior to heading to the polls through the official Allegheny County site. You will need to know your specific municipality, ward and district, all of which can be searched on their interactive "Allegheny County Voting District Boundaries" map. Similar maps and practice ballots are available for voters in Pennsylvania by searching Google for "PA practice ballot" along with the name of their county.

Vote411 also lists out candidates who will be on your ballot through their "Personalized Ballot" page. This site also provides more details on what each race means and the candidates who are running so that you can feel confident you are making educated decisions at the polls.

What does the presidential race look like?

No surprises here. Biden and Republican Donald Trump will face off again for the presidency. In the Pennsylvania primary, there will be no rivals to either candidate on the ballot, aside from the write-in option. In other states, an "uncommitted" option offers voters a chance to clearly show their non commitment for the incumbent leadership or for their likely rival on the other side of the aisle. In this year's primary, states' Democrats have voted "uncommitted" to show their disapproval for Biden's choices in the Israel-Gaza conflict.

In states like Pennsylvania where write-in is the only alternative to Biden, *NPR* reported that organizers of 30 pro-Palestinian and progressive groups are hoping for 40,000 write-in votes in excess of the average number cast (since Pennsylvania Democrats have a number of write-ins every year). In Allegheny County, *NPR* said, 6,253 Democratic write-in ballots were counted in the 2020 primary alone.



EMMA POLEN | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Remember to vote on April 23 and receive your "I Voted" sticker.

Mayor Ed Gainey celebrates Duquesne student leadership in ballroom

from MAYOR — page 1

The doors to the ballroom opened at 6 p.m. Well-dressed attendees took their places at their assigned tables.

"I am excited about tonight," Stevenson said in his opening remarks. "I am excited because we get to acknowledge our students and we get to acknowledge servant leadership on our campus."

Following Stevensons' opening remarks and a prayer from Spiritan Campus Minister Gio Cuchapin, attendees were welcomed, one table at a time, to get food from the buffet.

Ron Swain is the namesake of the Ron L. Swain Award for Social Justice. He graduated from Duquesne in 1970 with a Bachelor's in history and is the chaplain and director of Spiritual Life at Southwestern University. He addressed the audience prior to the recipients of his award being announced.

"The university has come a long way," Swain said. "We've

come a long way as a society, but we still have much more work to do, and I'm just so honored to be a part of this program to encourage young leaders to continue the work that has been begun."

Quincey Stevenson, announced the winners of the Spirit of Diversity award, which included Lindsey Harris, Samiya Henry, Chispa Kayonga, Anna Nguyen, Elisha Shoeneck and Marie Sullivan.

Winners of the Ron L. Swain Award for Social Justice included Jakobie Green and Lei'asha Battle.

Green, a junior finance major at Duquesne, said his win was a welcome surprise.

"It was not expected whatsoever, but I was very happy to know that I won an award," Green said.

Green is the executive vice president of Duquesne's Black Student Union. He also serves as the president of the Collegiate 100 at Duquesne, a national campus based student organization.

"In order for us to be vital role models for our communities, we

have to be present within our communities, and that's what we do," Green said.

"What we're celebrating tonight, quite frankly, are our students that promote equality and

inclusion on campus and strive for academic excellence and do everything that they can to assist us with promoting a sense of inclusion for all students on campus," said Stevenson.



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Ed Gainey and Quincey Stevenson met about half an hour before the event started. The two then posed for a photo during the reception.

Housing is a human right: Pittsburgh residents continue to hurt for housing

NAOMI GIRSON & MICHAEL O'GRADY
staff writers

20,000 Pittsburghers were shorted out of housing this year due to a lack of affordable options.

On Saturday, more than 150 frustrated city residents congregated in the Frick Fine Arts auditorium for Pittsburgh People's Assembly for Fair and Equitable Housing multi-tiered event in honor of Fair Housing Month.

The main issues discussed were about the lack of affordable housing in Pittsburgh. The number of individuals incapable of purchasing housing has been higher than 20,000 in past years, but people have moved out and displaced, even dying from lack of affordable and livable housing.



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR
Randall Taylor was kicked out of his home and has felt the effects ever since.

Besides the opening and closing preliminary sessions, there were a total of eight breakout rooms, divided into a morning and afternoon session covering economic struggles, redlining, restrictive covenants, cultural barriers and racism.

Breakout rooms were led by educated guest speakers informing the audience about what to do in the case of greedy landlords, immoral house flipping and inflated pricing on student housing.

Despite the topic variety it was clear each group echoed the same sentiment – affordable housing is disappearing in Pittsburgh.

Pittsburgh has shifted from a city of homeowners to renters, Carl Redwood Jr., a Pitts-

burgh activist advocating for the Rental Nation Project, said during the opening session, due to the rising disparity between housing prices and pay.

Attendees were educated about Pittsburgh's long history of inequality in the real estate market.

"The [United States'] racist housing policy was built on two pillars, redlining and restrictive covenants. These mainly applied to homeownership but impacted rental patterns as well. In short, the basic U.S. housing policy during the 1900s was homeownership for white families, and rent for blacks," Redwood said.

While times have changed, the general problem remains the same.

"Human rights don't trickle down, they rise," was the slogan of the day.

Before the day even started, James Drurey, a biological sciences major at the University of Pittsburgh, attended Saturday as a way to further his understanding of his human rights class. Drurey's human rights professor had been using the "Human rights don't trickle down" quote in the classroom.

"He always tries to link it [the lessons] to human rights," Drurey said. "They don't work simply from a top-down approach."

Opening speaker and Pitt research affiliate, Randall Taylor, was angry about the lack of action regarding fair housing.

"I'm angry that I have to fight about something as basic as housing, and particularly I'm angry that we have the solutions here, and we have the money here," Taylor said. "It's time for us to end this foolishness about displacement eviction and begin to house our people, the government [needs to] begin to house our people."

Many groups in attendance represented minorities in Pittsburgh, including nonprofit Casa San Jose, a resource center for the Latinx population.

"We have leaders that are much more progressive than they've ever been in the past, but that doesn't mean they get a pass," said Casa San Jose staff member Monica Ruiz.

This particular sentiment was especially impactful and received cheers throughout the auditorium. The crowd agreed that changing politics helps little when handed an eviction notice with nowhere else to go.

However, it was also emphasized that no solutions would have a perfect outcome.



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

John Butler is a graduate student at University of Pittsburgh. He sees the challenges of students finding housing and attended the event to express his concern.

Sally Stadelman, manager at nonprofit Pittsburgh Land Bank, highlighted the importance of making sacrifices to have the best of both worlds.

"Everybody wants to live on an urban farm, but two blocks away from a cute business district with the best public transportation you've ever seen," Stadelman said.

As a dedicated worker to her cause, she is trying to make a change with housing in Pittsburgh, buying homes, rehabilitating them, and selling them to nonprofit organizations like City of Bridges who sell them to tenants for a more reasonable price, despite her employment's lack of ability to guarantee her 2025 salary. Currently, Stadelman is working without a promise of pay next year.

In another session during the Fair and Equitable Housing event, John Butler and Samey Jay, two Pittsburgh college alumni, discussed student housing.

In this session, students were asked to share stories about their housing experiences. Jay said that she has moved 17 times in 14 years. To her, it is so important that students know that they have the power and can make a change. Butler felt the same.

"A little love goes a long way," Butler said. "Each of us is human and each of us face the same struggles."

One of the largest issues students pointed out was feeling like a temporary commodity that landlords can take away at any moment.

The advice was simple: get to know your neighbors, learn the signs of exploitation and see if you are falling into the trap.

While it's important to know what to do next, it's imperative to have people standing with you. Working in a group can offer more power as opposed to fighting individually.

Meeting and calling council members is both possible and plausible. In fact, Councilwoman Deb Gross attended the event and outlined problems and solutions to social housing that she and other local leaders have the ability to solve.

With all of the presented goals, the most important takeaway was that none of these problems are solvable alone. The point of the day was to learn how to make an impact: to start signing petitions, start calling council members and start enacting change.

Rachel Shepherd, executive director of Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations, the main co-sponsor of the event, motivated the crowd.

"We're here to get you all moving to move ourselves forward, and to approach this not just on a policy level, not just on the government level, but on the ground," she said.

President Biden talks keeping steel domestic in Pittsburgh

from BIDEN — page 1

Point Park student Isabella Drischler said her reason for protesting was because of the Israel and Palestine conflict.

Because of the campaign's close proximity to her campus, she took the opportunity to voice her concerns.

"As a Jewish individual, I think genocide is wrong," she said.

Despite protester unrest outside the building, Biden did not mention anything regarding the conflict.

Instead Biden said he wants to put a stop to imported material by tripling tariffs on Chinese steel.

Backed by U.S. Steelworkers, Biden criticized former President Donald Trump for wanting across-the-board tariffs on all imports from other countries. Biden said it would hurt American consumerism.

"The bottom line is I want fair competi-

tion with China, not conflict," Biden said.

Innamorato said Allegheny County needs allies like Biden.

"We are going to build up the middle class now and into the future. A top priority for Allegheny County is to expand access to good paying jobs and growing industries," she said.

Biden also took some time to crack a joke about his opponent in the 2024 general elections.

"My predecessor ... is busy right now," Biden said with a chuckle. While Biden was on the campaign trail, Trump spent his Wednesday in criminal court regarding a "hush-money trial."

Trump is being charged with 34 counts of falsifying business records in the first degree. Under New York law, a person is guilty when their "records are falsified with the intent to commit or conceal another crime," according to CNBC.



KELSEY DUFFY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Protesters making their voices heard outside.



SPENCER THOMAS | SPORTS EDITOR
Biden greeting campaign attendees.

Walking on to the NCAA Tournament

SPENCER THOMAS
sports editor

Duquesne basketball guard Jimmy Clark III remembers the first time he saw Jake DiMichele play. It was the first practice of the season, and Clark noticed that one of the freshman walk-ons wasn't a typical benchwarmer. He was unafraid to take chances, and every time he put up a shot with his unique shooting motion, the ball went in.

Clark said he looked around and asked who this kid was. He was shocked to find out that the true freshman holding his own with fifth-year seniors was a walk-on.

"I'm like, y'all better watch out, he's going to play this year," Clark said. "I was saying that jokingly, but I was kind of serious."

Even in that moment, neither Clark nor anyone else in the program imagined that DiMichele wouldn't just play but start and star for the most successful Duquesne basketball team in 50 years.

The fact that DiMichele was even on the court without a scholarship was his best-case scenario. Even after he won four state championships and averaged nearly 32 points per game in his senior year of high school, DiMichele spent a year at prep school in Washington, Pa. Still, he never got a scholarship offer from a Division-I program. DiMichele had resigned himself to playing Division-II ball at IUPUI on a full scholarship, even going so far as having a conversation with his parents to announce he was ready to commit.

The next day, Duquesne came calling. The walk-on opportunity from then-Duquesne Head Coach Keith Dambrot opened the door for DiMichele to stay in Pittsburgh, and he didn't think twice.

"This is where I want to be," DiMichele said to his parents. "Let's do anything we can to make it happen."

When somebody says an athlete 'bet on himself', that is usually a meaningless trope. In DiMichele's case, it was very literal. He chose to pay full tuition just to have a shot at suiting up in red and blue. He said that he carried that determination with him into those first open gyms of the summer where he shocked his teammates.

"I think that's when they realized that I could play," he said. "I know for myself that I've had confidence since I was a young kid."

Dambrot said that once DiMichele hit the court, he overrode everyone's initial assessment of him.

"Well, first off, he's a quiet guy," Dambrot said. "When you're unassuming like him, and you go out there and compete every minute, guys respect you. You have to earn your respect in this business."

As the season drew nearer, there were rumblings that one of the walk-ons was angling for some playing time. DiMichele said that Dambrot came to him with the news that he'd be a part of the rotation.

"This is your time," DiMichele said to himself, "You've just got to make the most of it and have fun out there."

He saw five minutes of action in the

season opener, where he missed the only shot he took, and didn't record a single significant stat until the fourth game of the season. His playing time didn't reach double digits until January.

"I try to use a lot of things like a chip on my shoulder to instill competitiveness. I knew I'm coming in as a walk on, that just put an even bigger chip on my shoulder."



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

In a two-month span, Jake DiMichele went from an unknown walk-on to starting games in the NCAA Tournament. He did so as the first Pittsburgh native to star for Duquesne in a decade.

Nobody really thought that I deserved a full scholarship anywhere," he said. "Even if people consider me a walk-on or whatever, I know I could play at this level."

Part of the low expectations laid on DiMichele come from his appearance. He stands 6-foot 4-inches but is wiry and has a scraggly beard that makes him look like a spitting image of the rapper Jack Harlow.

"Obviously, I lack some things athleti-



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Senior Jimmy Clark III (left) said that DiMichele (right) is unlike any walk-on he'd seen.

cally. I'm not the most athletic guy. I'm not the most coordinated guy, whatever it may be," DiMichele said. "The way I look and stuff, people see me in the street and they're not gonna think 'this guy's a basketball player.'"

Once the conference season started, however, DiMichele showed the rest of the world what his teammates saw last sum-

mate Andy Barba.

It even exceeded his coaching staff's expectations.

"It just tells you how inexact this science is," Dambrot said. "We saw him play and we thought he was pretty good, but we probably didn't think he'd play this soon."

He put up a career-high 15 versus Fordham in late January, then matched it less than two weeks later versus Davidson.

His performances are never flashy or jaw-dropping. They're the accumulation of hard-nosed plays that fit in perfectly to Dambrot's style of 'mud-wrestling' basketball. It got him a black eye and puffy lip at the end of the regular season that Dambrot was keen to show off.

"It's just being like a junkyard dog," DiMichele said. "Pitbulls you know, winning games like fights almost."

DiMichele developed these traits growing up as one of the youngest boys in a competitive family. They'd go toe to toe in the backyard, where he usually ended up on his back. Nobody ever let him win.

That grew DiMichele into a player that walks around with a quiet but vigorous desire to prove himself.

"Competition is my favorite part of the game, going mano a mano against somebody else to see who is better. There's nothing like that," he said.

By the end of the season, DiMichele was a full-time starter for the Dukes. It was a significant accomplishment, not just for himself, but for the local community. A native of McKees Rocks, DiMichele is the first Pittsburgh native to see such a role at Duquesne since Micah Mason, nearly 10 years ago. It's just another layer to this story meant for Hollywood.

He became a fan favorite of Yinzers who saw one of their own represent the city in front of them.

"Being able to see my family at every game and stuff and seeing how much joy and pride I've brought to the people closest to me, it means the world to me," he said. "I hope that I can continue to keep going and keep making them prouder with every moment."

Duquesne's Cinderella run in March added another layer to the DiMichele legend, and it's one that he doesn't take lightly.

"Being a Western Pennsylvania guy, it means a lot to me," he said. "I know going forward, even when I'm older, I'll still get recognized for that accomplishment and helping bring Duquesne back to the tournament."

DiMichele will surely receive a full scholarship in the coming months, a long-awaited reward at the end of his years-long journey.

"You have to work hard at it," DiMichele said. "Being competitive, being tough, working hard. It can take you places in life, for sure."

"It's a good success story," Dambrot said. "It just goes to show you that it's the best players play, regardless of what their name is, what their status is, where they're from."

"He's earned every minute he's got."

Oakland A's dying a miserable death

MICHAEL O'GRADY
staff writer

The date is Oct. 2, 2019.

For the second straight season, the Oakland Athletics are in the American League Wild Card Game and unlike the previous year, they are hosting it. In the six seasons since Oakland had hosted a postseason game, it has become clear that the crumbling Oakland Coliseum needs to be replaced, and soon. The stadium, home to both the Athletics and NFL's Raiders, is widely considered to be the worst and most outdated in both sports. The Athletics have been trying to build a new ballpark in the area for nearly twenty years, and the Raiders are set to move to Las Vegas. Despite the A's usually fielding a good team, fan attendance has suffered, and entire sections are normally closed off.

However, on this night, the A's faithful pack the same crumbling Coliseum. A wild-card record 54,005 people fill the seats to see their stars such as Marcus Semien, Matt Chapman and Matt Olson. They're there to see a team that has punched above their payroll year after year both in the standings and in player development. A team that, since moving to Oakland in 1968, has won four World Series championships, six AL pennants and 16 AL West titles. There was even a book and a subsequent movie, "Moneyball," about this team winning against all odds.

The A's lost that game, but it was a reminder that Oakland's fanbase hadn't gone anywhere. Amid uncertainty regarding the future of their team, they showed out and made it clear Oakland was where the Athletics belonged, and as long as the front office

tried, then they would, too.

Fast-forward to the opening week of this season. After a second-consecutive 100-loss season, and every recognizable player on the team sold off, the A's drew 3,837 fans at the Coliseum for their second game of the season. That's barely larger than crowds drawn to Cooper Fieldhouse here at Duquesne.

Athletics owner John Fisher has made it clear over the past few seasons his intention is to relocate the team to Las Vegas, at a hypothetical ballpark that is not guaranteed to be built. In the meantime, he's made the bold move of intentionally alienating the Oakland fanbase. The team is now downright terrible, and Oakland signage and merchandise has been removed from the stadium. This is not normal procedure for a relocation of a sports team. It's an unnecessary temper tantrum. It's gotten so bad that the A's have shut off replies on their social media accounts due to all the backlash Fisher has received.

None of this had to happen. The city of Oakland was willing to work with the A's to secure a new ballpark site, but Fisher saw the success of his former neighbor Raiders and saw an opportunity to win big in Las Vegas. To cut all ties to Oakland, he rejected an extension on the Coliseum lease and the Athletics are now getting evicted after this season. Just days after Opening Day, the A's announced they'd temporarily move to a minor league stadium in Sacramento for at least three seasons.

The fact that Major League Baseball and commissioner Rob Manfred are letting Fisher get away with this is disgraceful and unprofessional.

Although the Athletics have released renderings and have land picked out in Las Ve-

gas, nothing has been finalized. To let an owner go scorched-earth on his city and fanbase and play major league ball in a Triple-A park, casts a shadow on MLB as a whole. That's not to mention Las Vegas and their mayor Carolyn Goodman don't even want the A's.

Goodman said on a podcast in February that she thinks the A's should try staying in Oakland.

Sports have become fixtures in communities, especially in Oakland where the A's have played since 1968. Fisher should learn that tickets aren't sports fans, people are, and people in Oakland would be happy to give him the money he wants if he built a new stadium there.

The situation out there draws parallels to another cheap owner ignoring his team's fans for a buck. Bob Nutting has spent years making the Pirates into a farm team for big-market cities around the league. Even he has all recognized how to get fans in the ballpark despite being uninterested in winning.

Poor ownership in baseball is more common than any other sport. The lack of a salary cap is killing the sport. Not because it allows big money teams to spend big, but because it justifies small-market owners burrowing their franchise in the bottom of the standings. Fans have an undying passion for the sport that will keep them paying money to the teams they love, even when it isn't reciprocated.

Baseball would be just fine without the owners, but it's the fans who breathe life into the teams they love. Maybe the power should be in their hands instead. Someone needs to step in and take the wheel away from Fisher, because baseball — and Oakland — will suffer if they don't.



SPENCER THOMAS | SPORTS EDITOR

Duquesne lax survives Explorers' comeback

The Duquesne Lacrosse Team used four goals from Corinne Webb to stave off a late rally by La Salle on Friday, winning 12-11. Duquesne controlled the ballgame early on, outshooting the Explorers 17-3 in the first quarter, and carried a 7-3 lead into the half. The Explorers fought back, however, scoring six of the game's final seven goals to climb within one at the 58-second mark. It was Rachel O'Toole's save in the final minute that kept Duquesne in front for a narrow win.

Déjà Ew: Pens miss playoffs again

The Pittsburgh Penguins lost to the New York Islanders on Wednesday night, but it didn't matter. They were eliminated from playoff contention on Tuesday under cruel and twisted circumstances.

Three other teams, the Philadelphia Flyers, Washington Capitals and Detroit Red Wings entered that night bidding for a single wild card spot. Pittsburgh needed Detroit to lose, and Philly to beat the Caps. However, the Flyers needed to win in regulation to stay alive, so with three minutes left and their game tied at one, Philly pulled their goaltender, and gave up an empty-net goal to lose by one.

The sick irony of it? They didn't need to do that. Moments earlier, Detroit had scored with 3.3 seconds left in their game to eliminate the Flyers. Had that news made it to the Philadelphia bench in time, they would have kept their goalie in the game and had a chance to win. Detroit's miracle goal helped them to a win as well, which also ensured the Penguins had nothing to play for on Wednesday night.

Instead, it will be another long off-season in Pittsburgh, as Sidney Crosby's biological clock keeps ticking.

NBA playoff series to watch

MATTHEW THEODROS
staff writer

The 2023-24 NBA regular season is in the books. Playoff basketball is upon us and the wide-open tournament begins on Saturday. While the first round of the playoffs is normally just a formality, this year features tight matchups that will play out over the coming weeks.

No team in the association is under pressure to make a deeper postseason run than the Boston Celtics. Entering the playoffs with the league-best record at 64-18, the city of Boston is expecting banner number 18 in June. The superstar duo of Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown have all the tools necessary to get over the hump and win their first title.

The acquisitions of Jrue Holiday and Kristaps Porzingis were seamless and opened the court for their stars to get easier shots. While questions from previous seasons regarding their execution in the grinded-out playoff environment are still in the air, the overwhelming talent on this team makes them favorites to win it all.

The New York Knicks enter the playoffs as the two-seed despite an immense amount of injuries including season-ending surgery to Julius Randle. The rise of Jalen Brunson to superstardom has turned this franchise into a legitimate competitor. Their opponents, the Philadelphia 76ers, are the biggest X-factor

out of any remaining teams. Before his meniscus injury in January, Joel Embiid was on pace for his second consecutive MVP award. His absence proved detrimental for standing purposes but allowed growth for Tyrese Maxey to develop into an All-Star. It is an enormous ask, but if Embiid can stay healthy during this run, Philly can make noise in a questionable Eastern Conference. The three-six matchup between the Milwaukee Bucks and Indiana Pacers holds a lot of stakes, especially for the higher seed. The Bucks have had a disastrous season considering their early expectations. The underwhelming performance of Damian Lillard, the firing of Head Coach Adrian Griffin and the hiring of Doc Rivers have resulted in a measly 19-20 record to end the year. To cap it off, the Bucks are expected to miss Giannis Antetokounmpo to begin this series which could not have come at a worse time.

The most balanced series in the entire first round is between the fourth-seeded Cleveland Cavaliers and the fifth-seeded Orlando Magic. Both squads finished the year with top-10 defensive ratings, however both finished in the bottom-10 in offensive ratings, so expect a gritty, physical style all series.

The household names in this series are lacking, but what it provides is a first look at many of the young-promising stars of the league. In just his second year, All-Star Paolo Banchero has propelled a youthful team to the playoffs, dramatically exceeding expectations.

The Cavaliers' Donovan Mitchell/Darius Garland experiment has provided back-to-back years of hosting a playoff series, however, it feels like the tandem has reached its ceiling. The twin-towers duo of Evan Mobley and Jarrett Allen's defensive efforts are greatly appreciated, however stagnancy on offense makes the pair exposable in a seven-game series.

This year's Western Conference has a pedigree of winning that the NBA has not seen in years. 11 teams finished with a winning record and the top three seeds all won at least 55 games.

The Oklahoma City Thunder enter the playoffs as the one seed, and are the youngest team to do so in NBA history. Shai Gilgeous-Alexander's ascension to a top-three MVP candidate has reinforced that this young core's success is no fluke.

A first-round rematch of last year's Western Conference Finals awaits as the Denver Nuggets take on the Los Angeles Lakers. The defending champions have won seven straight against the Lakers, including that 4-0 sweep last postseason. The two-time MVP and finals MVP Nikola Jokic and the rest of the team are comfortable and have the pieces to neutralize LeBron James and Anthony Davis. Los Angeles lacks depth and the firepower in the starting group to keep up with Denver's experienced core.

The first batch of series begin on Saturday afternoon, when the Cavs host the Magic on ESPN.

Carnegie Museum of Art reimagines plastic

HANNAH PETERS
staff writer

As Earth Day draws near, we're called to reflect on the place we call home and how to protect it. Carnegie Museum of Art's exhibit, "Everlasting Plastics" is using environment-forward art to do just that.

On display from March 9 to July 21, "Everlasting Plastics" features the work of five artists, architects and designers – Xavi L. Aguirre, Simon Anton, Ang Li, Norman Teague and Lauren Yeager – who focus on both the metaphorical and material relationship that society has with plasticity.

"I wanted people to think about how plastic is a global commodity. It works in the same way that a lot of materials have worked throughout history – people in power control the way the material flows over the Earth and how people move through space," artist, designer and educator Simon Anton told *The Duke*.

Originally commissioned for the 18th Venice Biennale of Architecture in 2023, the exhibit is a reaction to society's extreme use of plastic and man-made environmental disasters, such as the 2023 East Palestine train derailment.

To tie the conversation back to Pittsburgh, the museum curated the exhibit with the Steel City's strong history in petrochemical manufacturing. It emphasizes criticism of the Shell cracker plant in Beaver county and fracklands of Marcellus Shale.

The exhibit "highlights our unseen dependency; demonstrates how

plasticity has created expectations for the behaviors of other materials; and points to plastic's unknown, long-term and indelible impact on our futures," according to the exhibition's website.

While staying true to its message, the exhibit acknowledges the material as a potential agent of change and strays from "making a value judgment about plastic."

Employing a more nuanced approach, the curators hoped to shift away from the overused rhetoric that the problem will be solved if we just reduce, reuse and recycle.

Anton said that integrating these perspectives for his featured collection, "This Will Kill _____ That," called upon harmonizing opposing methods of expression.

"It was a challenge for me to aesthetically make something that can be appealing and more enticing in some ways, but can also be kind of repelling or even repugnant in a way," Anton said.

By using small pieces of plastic from toy factories in his hometown of Detroit, Anton chose to coat politically relevant pieces of steel with the waste material using a unique grafting technique that he developed in graduate school.

The transformed pieces include a barricade, window covering and turret clock now covered in brightly colored toy remnants. Anton said his inspiration came from exploring architectural ornamentation and the different typologies surrounding them.

"Through these forms, I found



HANNAH PETERS | STAFF WRITER

Norman Teague's "Re+Prise" utilized "cultural memory," according to the exhibit website, by drawing inspiration from basket weaving techniques in his reuse of plastic materials.

different ways to bring the conversation of plastics into these historical conversations to make pieces that combine different materials, worldviews and different times of history to make these larger, stranger, more complicated narratives about plastic, power and architecture," he said.

In this way, Anton sought to explore symbolism and storytelling through architecture, his work offering various interpretations.

"There wasn't any direct one-liner message that I wanted people to take away, but more so to give an impression that makes people want to dig deeper," Anton said. "Each of these different designs tell a story about our world of plastic pollution."

To museum visitor Kimberly Lawless, the story told by "Everlasting Plastics" was a personal one. A social work professor from Bethany College, Lawless shared how her community was recently devastated by floods, resulting in long strips of plastic sheeting to infiltrate a local creek and cover surrounding trees.

"I see my community literally being covered in plastic waste and I am horrified ... so when I see this art, I carry with me a constant awareness of plastics and how plastics are damaging to the environment," Lawless said.

She said other pieces, like Yea-

ger's sculptures, use plastic coolers, crates, chairs, buckets and even basketballs, reminded her of the things she saw littering the streets after the flood. Despite being prompted to recall her community's destruction, Lawless shared that she was captivated by the artists' ability to address our complex reliance on petroleum-based materials in a creative way.

"I'm fascinated by how artists take this toxic material and do something with it that's functional, useful, and beautiful," Lawless said. "That's what artists do – they take things that are often toxic and turn them into art."

From colorful plastic coil sculptures to crown moulding made from styrofoam, "Everlasting Plastics" cultivates a more expansive way to think about the materiality of plastic and its evolution on our planet.

"The stuff that's being used to create plastics are devastating our oceans, our Earth and are now in our bodies. It's just distressing to me," Lawless said. "I'm happy to see that they are bringing a show like this to the museum. Hopefully it will build some public awareness."

General admission at the Carnegie Museum of art starts at \$25 per adult, but students with a valid ID can purchase tickets in person or online at www.carnegieart.org for \$15.



HANNAH PETERS | STAFF WRITER

Simon Anton's work, "This Will Kill _____ That," coated public steelworks with brightly colored waste materials from Detroit toy factories.

CAMPUS
EVENTS

Cowboy Carter Rodeo
April 18 @ 9 p.m.

Join Lambda for free food, hat decorating and Beyoncé music in the NiteSpot.

Pharmacarnival
April 19 @ 12 p.m.

Head to Mellon Lawn for Kappa Psi's carnival-themed pharmacy celebration.

Nature Walk
April 20 @ 12 p.m.

Girl Gains, Ecology Club and oSTEM are teaming up for a walk around Schenley Park. Meet outside the Union.

Paper Making
April 22 @ 3 p.m.

oSTEM is hosting a recycled paper workshop in Towers MPR. Snacks will be provided.

Pancakes with the President
April 23 @ 8:30 a.m.

President Gormley will be on A-Walk for giveaways, a photo booth, prizes and, of course, pancakes!

EMILY'S
EPIPHANIES

We're Almost There

"You wish and you dream with all your little heart. But you remember, Tiana, that old star can only take you part of the way. You got to help it with some hard work of your own."

~Disney's *The Princess & the Frog*

Hard work is an obvious ingredient in the recipe for college success, but being in the right mindset can do wonders for our productivity and our confidence.

While it's tempting to give into the early sunshine, we have to stay focused on what is yet to come.

The work we've put in so far — the assignments, the papers, the exams, the attendance points, the projects and presentations — are all pieces of the larger puzzle that is impossible to complete if we 'check out' early.

We have almost reached the finish line and it would be shame to trip at the end of the race. Stay focused on the bigger picture.

— Emily Fritz

Aquarius ♒

If I got whacked with a really big ear I think it would hurt.

Pisces ♓

Gumbo, gumbo, in the pot. We need a princess, whatcha got?

Aries ♈

Mom, God is speaking to me on the back staircase.

Taurus ♉

Feed me but do not perceive me.

Gemini ♊

Cheetahs never prosper.

Cancer ♋

What's a Bogey Lowenstein?

Leo ♌

Kumquats.

Virgo ♍

One must imagine Sisyphus knee deep in a passenger seat.

Libra ♎

Who you calling 'upid-stay??

Scorpio ♏

Chai?
Short for Tchaikovsky, idiot.

Sagittarius ♐

Mmm, armpit milk.

Capricorn ♑

It's Golgi apparatus up in here.

Good 'Company': An inside look at Broadway in Pgh.

EMMA POLEN
editor-in-chief

"Company" is back in the 'Burgh for Marianne Elliott's gender-bent rendition of Stephen Sondheim and George Furth's classical musical.

The national Broadway touring production at the Benedum Center is presented by the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust as part of the 2023-2024 PNC Broadway in Pittsburgh series.

Bobbie (Britney Coleman) is celebrating her 35th birthday with all her friends, but she's the only one that's still single. Through all the moments Bobbie spends in the company of her friends, they pressure her to find "the one," while also proving to the young woman why marriage is not always the right option for everyone.

Bobbie's dilemma, balancing loneliness and freedom of bachelorette life while in the company of her friends in relationships, presents itself physically through the show's set design.

Tony Award winner Bunny Christie, "Company" set and costume designer, calls herself first and foremost a visual storyteller. The Scottsman explained how the show's "hallucinatory" Alice in Wonderland set portrayed a fun,

playful and surprising world.

Through a series of boxes Bobbie could step through and enter into the settings of her friends, she traveled from living room to living room, brunch to the bedroom, getting a peek inside the looking glass at her friends' lives (and occasionally her own).



PHOTO BY MATTHEW MURPHY | COURTESY OF MURPHY MADE

Britney Coleman (center), accompanied by the cast of 'Company' (left, right), presented a gender-bent production during its national tour.

"Every time she went into it, there was a different setup for a different house or a different environment," Christie said.

Even with their differences, each place that Bobbie entered had constant thematic elements. Christie said this included thread-

ing a lot of 35s throughout the show. In the opening scene, with Bobbie at her own kitchen table, a pair of silver 35 birthday balloons loom over her shoulder. In the second box where Bobbie travels to Harry (James Earl Jones II) and Sarah's (Kathryn Allison, played by understudy CJ Greer on

"relevant."

The gender-bent "Company" revival brought changes beyond the now-female lead, including Bobbie's three boyfriends, a gay couple and a role reversal for one of the show's couples, Jenny and David.

Bobbie speaks a lot about marriage with her guy friends, which was an interesting choice as a woman living alone.

"One is lonely but two is boring," Bobbie sings in "Side by Side," one of the final songs of Act II. Even alone, Bobbie finds herself plagued by the voices of her friends, even in the most private moments of her life.

The surprising humor of Sondheim's "Company" was revealed through character mannerisms and comedic timing.

There was often a rhythm behind the jokes – in a three-person conversation, there was a clear call-and-response that ended in a punchline that the audience could easily recognize as the end of the joke.

Used quite a few times during the show, a well-placed "anyways" followed an awkward silence where all the characters stood frozen in apprehension.

The characters did well portraying the comedy in their own ways.

One of Bobbie's gender-swapped boyfriends, Andy, was played by

Jacob Dickey, who said he had a lot of fun channeling "a dumb blonde, but on a male figure."

Andy's defining moment in the show is what Dickey calls his "butterfly monologue," and what makes this story about a caterpillar turning into a butterfly, despite complications with his cat, is that "he [Andy] truly believes it."

"It is truly laugh-out-loud comedy," Dickey said.

Dickey looks forward to being back in Pittsburgh, after a short two-week run performing in a CLO production last August.

"Honestly, I love performing at the Benedum so much," Dickey said. "It's such a beautiful theater, and Pittsburgh was such a cool town."

During his stay, Dickey plans to visit the Andy Warhol museum and head back to Lawrenceville, some of which he was able to visit last time he was in town.

Patrons can head to the Benedum Center through Sunday, April 21, to see the comedy "Company" which will be showing at the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts through Sunday. Student tickets can be purchased at the university student tickets page of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust website (www.TrustArts.com), or by using the promotional code 2324DUQ at checkout.

Red Masquers end season with campus debut of 'Ruthless!'

NAOMI GIRSON
staff writer

None of us are immune to the desire for success and for some, the competitive spirit that propels us toward our goals can become overwhelming and, at times, *ruthless*.

For third grader Tina Denmark, a young girl who dreams of being on Broadway, her craving for the lead role of Pippi Longstocking in her school's production of "Pippi in Tahiti" leads her to abandon her bubbly facade in lieu of show business and murder.

The Red Masquers showcase Tina's story in the last show of the

2023-2024 season at Genesis Theater with their production of "Ruthless!," a musical, originally written by Joel Paley. Running from April 18 to 28, the theater troupe is running six showings between Thursday and Sunday the next two weeks.

In preparation for the show's campus debut, the Red Masquers invited *The Duke* to preview rehearsals earlier last week.

Encouraged by her mother, Judy (Julia Kadar), and her agent, Sylvia, Tina believed she was destined for stardom, "but, things take a turn for the worse. Tina's 'talent' might not be able to save her in the end," according to the Red Masquers Cam-

pusLink.

After Tina's behavior is discovered, she is later sent away to Daisy Clover School for Psychopathic Ingenues. Meanwhile, her mother Judy uncovered her own aptitude for the melodramatic.

Freshman Red Masquer Ashley Caldwell, who portrays the role of Tina, said she took inspiration from past child stars when bringing the character to life on stage.

"I really thought of Shirley Temple, and I don't really know what the vengeful part came from," Caldwell said. "I wanted it to seem like [Tina] was a little kid but that there's always a demon side."

Because "Ruthless!" presents a show within a show, the audience is privy to Tina's psychopathic nature. Using her talents to put her in center stage at every opportunity, Tina is quick to claim the spotlight. But offstage, her intentions of insatiable vengeance become disturbingly clear.

"You can tell when she's [Tina] acting," Caldwell said.

The cast is small, with three leads and four supporting actresses. Every character in "Ruthless!" is a woman, but Tina's agent, Sylvia St. Croix (Matt Dudley), is intentionally cast in drag.

Though the cast is full of dramatic characters, Sylvia St. Croix takes the cake for the biggest diva from her

first entrance at the beginning of the show to all of her striking moments in the spotlight.

Though the material may seem daunting to those who are unfamiliar with the show, "Ruthless!" also presented refreshing and unexpected humor to balance out its dark elements. Dudley's dramatic ad libs garnered him the most laughter.

"[The cast will] tell jokes and I'll still laugh at them. I've seen them 20 times and I'll still laugh," said stage manager Iya Yancura.

Comparable to the humor of a Mel Brooks' production – albeit less raunchy – the musical numbers also lend to the balance between unhinged determination and the satire of child stardom.

"The show is not what it seems at all. It's very comedic in ways that you wouldn't really expect," said Red Masquers vice president Ellie Troiani.

In addition to their comedic delivery, the cast was very talented in their vocal ability. The set list ranged from dramatic solos and ballads, to quippy upbeat songs about mundanity and its Broadway counterpart.

Kadar was the first voice heard in the show, cheerfully going back and forth across her living room to answer the phone like a proper 1950s housewife.

Although Judy learned of her musical abilities during the 105-minute

show, Kadar's voice was powerful and well-tuned from the start. Mirroring her confidence, the character showcased more solo pieces during the second act, but perhaps most notable was the vocal blending between Kadar and Dudley before the intermission.

Meanwhile, the props in the show were fairly minimal – if you don't count tap shoes – but each prop had its own comedic flair and satirical nature.

Many of the auxiliary pieces doubled as 'Pippi in Tahiti' rehearsal props, like the jump rope that Tina used to unleash her vengeance.

Cast members wielded their props in interactive ways as well, using a small water gun to immerse the audience in their antics (and their ammo).

During rehearsals, some of the props malfunctioned, and other prop work was not yet well-practiced, but the mistaken behaviors only added to the fun for the cast, crew and audience alike.

"I just want [the audience] to have a good time and come out with a 'WTF' moment," Troiani said.

Tickets for the show start at \$20 for general admission and \$15 for seniors and general students, but Duquesne affiliated students, faculty and staff can purchase tickets for \$10 by visiting <https://vbotickets.com/event/ruthless/121248>.



AVA RIEGER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Ashley Caldwell (left) and Julia Kadar (center) took on two of the three lead roles, Tina and Judy Denmark, respectively, as freshman while Matt Dudley (right) practiced drag for the first time in his role of Sylvia St. Croix.

THE DUQUESNE DUKE

113 College Hall
600 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15282

editorial staff

editor-in-chief	Emma Polen
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multimedia editor	Brentaro Yamane
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administrative staff

adviser Paula Reed Ward

email us: theduqduke@gmail.com

“Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places, that history informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature.”

David Hume

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

@TheDuquesneDuke

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Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

The puzzle piece has been criticized by autism advocates for its negative connotations, implying that autism is a problem that needs to be solved.

The problem with Autism Speaks

REBECCA JOZWIAK

staff writer

April is known for a handful of celebrations including April Fools Day and Earth Day. One celebration, though, lasts the entirety of April: Autism Awareness Month.

Autism Awareness Month aims to educate the general public on autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and individuals who are affected by autism. The campaign also highlights how individuals who are on the spectrum can navigate their life like people who are neurotypical.

Even with a month dedicated to autism awareness, the general public still lacks a proper understanding of what the disorder is.

Created in 2005 as a non profit organization, Autism Speaks is dedicated to helping individuals navigate autism through advocacy, events and research. The foundation was built on the idea that a cure for autism needed to be found, and had the word ‘cure’ in their mission statement up until 2016, according to *The Huffington Post*.

The National Institute of Mental Health defines ASD as a “neurological and developmental disorder that affects how people interact with others, communicate, learn and behave.” It’s often described as a “developmental” disorder, as autistic traits usually appear in the first two years of life. Autism is a lifelong disorder that can not be cured – but can be treated.

On the About page of Autism Speaks’ website, the organization boasts statistics of how they’ve contributed to autism: \$4.6 billion dollars have been used for authorized federal research funding, while \$218 million was invested in scientific grants and projects. Over 27 million people have received “free autism information and resources.”

However, Autism Speaks does not specify the kind of information and resources that are given out to the general public, but is able to go into detailed infor-

mation about how large money investments have gone to grants and research into autism. Why has this money not gone to working with the autism community and how to teach them about their diagnosis and how to cope with it?

In the group’s 2018 990 Non-Profit Tax Exemption form, it stated that 1% of their finances were spent on family services, while 20% was spent on fund raising. In 2022, less than 1% of fund raised money went to family services, and spent 50 times as much on fund raising with 50% of their 2022 funds going to it.

19 out of the 28 members currently on the Autism Speaks board represent major corporations, such as Goldman Sachs, Mastercard and Johnson & Johnson. In addition to this, representatives from these companies are either a former or current CEO or senior executives. Only two out of 28 people on the board – which is 0.07% – have diagnosed autism.

Why should people support an organization that lacks visibility on their board, and who lack easily accessible information regarding autism on their website?

Why should we be okay with major companies associating with the organization when less than 1% of funds go towards therapies and awareness groups to support friends and family members who are on the spectrum?

Autism Speaks has also been a magnet for controversy in the media. In 2009, the organization published a video entitled “I Am Autism,” depicting the disorder as an invisible illness that ultimately ruins the quality of life for individuals with ASD and family members or friends who are affected by someone with autism.

“I work faster than pediatric aids, cancer and diabetes combined, and if you’re happily married, I will make sure your marriage fails. Your money will fall into my hands, and I will bank-

rupt you for my own-self gain ... I will make it virtually impossible for your family to attend a temple, birthday party or public park without a struggle, without embarrassment, without pain. You have no cure for me,” the narrator said in the video.

There’s a lot wrong with this excerpt from the organization’s video. It essentially advertises autism as a death sentence for peers and family members who are affected by the disorder, creating little to no hope for individuals with autism to live their life without devastating social, financial, and health consequences.

Although it is not a physical disease, symptoms of autism include constantly repeating words or phrases, trouble with social cues, poor communication skills and delayed movement skills, according to the CDC.

There is no evidence that autism can ‘work faster’ than debilitating diseases such as pediatric AIDS or cancer. Along with this, each instance of autism looks drastically different for each individual with the disorder, which is why the concept of a spectrum is utilized when speaking about the disorder.

Autism deserves more than one month for awareness. Autism also deserves a proper explanation, supported by ways to understand individuals with ASD. Those on the spectrum do not bite, and have the same capabilities that we do – they want to be our friends, and we should never forget that.

Autism Speaks is not your friend. They are an operative company that benefits from donations from those who are not completely aware of autism and how their money is being used.

Instead of donating to a website that claims to have your best interests at heart, say hello to someone on the spectrum. Be kind, and try to get to know them. The best form of awareness starts face to face – and when you understand more you may end up with a new friend.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Recognizing women in tech

When you think of the current major driving forces of the tech industry, names like Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg come to mind.

However, this wasn’t always the case and with only 26% of the tech workforce consisting of women, according to advocacy group WomeninTech, it is important to remind people of the women behind major waves in technological advancement.

Even with Women’s History Month having come to a close, technology has a rich history of brilliant women, and we should be talking about it.

Ada Lovelace, a British mathematician in the 1800s, is considered the world’s first computer programmer. Her article, “Sketch of the Analytical Engine, with Notes from the Translator,” led to the first modern computer in the 1940s by Alan Turing, according to the software company Sumo Logic’s website.

Lovelace’s contributions brought Zuckerberg the programming needed to run the computer that launched Facebook in his college dorm room in 2004.

American actress and inventor Hedy Lamarr paved the way for crucial modern technologies.

The self-taught inventor was indispensable in the creation of the Secret Communication System, a frequency hopping device used to set radio-guided torpedoes off course during the war, according to Sumo Logic.

The technology derived from her work is featured in the many functions that set Musk’s Tesla prices so high – WiFi, GPS and Bluetooth.

Radia Perlman or the “Mother of the Internet” invented the algorithm in Spanning Tree Protocol in 1984, which makes today’s internet possible and consequently the convenience of Bezos’ Amazon items ordered online.

Mary Wilkes is known as the first home computer user. She attended MIT and was assigned to work on designing the system software and interactive operating system, according to Sumo Logic.

Wilkes’ programming became the building blocks to Gates’ success with Microsoft’s Windows operating system.

Their contribution, while often lost in the male-dominated field, solidifies every little girl’s mantra – girls rock!

The tech world will continue to benefit from women in technology; their talents will be going away anytime soon.

Deloitte AI Institute, an AI consulting firm, conducted a survey that demonstrated that having more women working in AI can only benefit the industry, saying 71% of companies that promote diverse groups within their organization do well by adding unique perspectives.

Technologically we’ve come a long way, but let’s not diminish or forget the women that helped get us here.

Generative AI cannot write by itself

EMMA POLEN
editor-in-chief

Last week, *The Duke's* Eliyahu Gasson argued that AI had no place in the world of artistic expression. This week, I'd like to dive deeper into this discussion and offer a different stance: Generative AI is a useful tool for creators, and the technology has no ability on its own to infringe on copyright. It is ultimately the user's responsibility to manage gen AI in an ethical way.

Gen AI cannot create anything using only itself. It is a proven fact that AI can have no personal experience of its own. Unless AI could open up the dirty window and feel the rain on its skin, it will never be able to portray its experiences through artistic expression.

Jason Allen's AI-generated "Théâtre D'opéra Spatial" image which took first place at the Colorado State Fair still consisted of an original idea he delivered through a prompt to AI technology. Yes, he may not have spent the same devoted hours perfecting brush strokes like the other painters who also submitted art, but it was a different form of media production.

Back in the early 1900s when photography began taking off, landscape painters were concerned for their jobs. They argued that photos could not compare to their unique renderings.

However, as we know today, painters still exist. Some scholars even argue that the advent of photography opened artists up to be able to express the world around them differently, leading to movements like

impressionism and post-modernism which were based more on the personal, emotional interpretation of a specific moment, rather than representing a scene realistically.



Courtesy of Gencraft AI
Gencraft AI's interpretation of Duquesne University's campus.

Even photographs can be argued as personal interpretations of the world. Photographs are two-dimensional captures of the three-dimensional world. Stephen Shore, an American photographer, argues that a camera is "a tool to create what they [the artist] want, which is not the same as the world."

The photographer gets credit for their captures of the world, a decision made official with a ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court. Maybe monkeys can't claim their own copyright, but the same is true with AI. The work generated from a creative tool, like a photo camera or

generative AI, is assisting the actual human creator. It is this human's job, then, to consider the impact of their creations using gen AI.

Matthew Sag, professor of Law in Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Data Science at Emory University Law School, argues that it is ultimately the AI user's decision to run through copyrighted works. AI cannot come up with original ideas, instead relying on the prompt of the user to produce media.



Courtesy of Ava Capagna
A real photo of Duquesne's campus overlooking Rooney Field and Academic Walk.

One of my most recent creative storytelling projects was writing a "Cunk on Earth" parody, where a friend walked around campus telling the camera about Pittsburgh in the humorous style of English actress Diane Morgan's character, Philomena Cunk.

It was my decision to write a parody using someone else's copyrighted work.

I used AI to provide me with ideas for video segments. Here was my prompt to ChatGPT: "Write me three short segments in the style of Philomena Cunk from Cunk on Earth about the city of Pittsburgh." I then used the output as inspiration when writing my final script.

AI is only as creative as the prompter. ChatGPT would have never had segment ideas for me in the style of Philomena Cunk had I not deliberately asked the technology to produce it. Ultimately, it was my decision to prompt AI to parody a copyrighted work.

With my "Cunk on Earth" script, I obviously claim that this is not my original work; this was inspired by a previous show starring British "investigative reporter" Philomena Cunk.

If I had called the sketch something completely different and attempted to claim I made the documentary idea up all on my own, that would have been immoral. It would not be AI's fault that the production I prompted would be taking from copyrighted work – it would be my own fault. I literally asked ChatGPT to take inspiration from "Cunk on Earth."

Claiming the work as your own would be a conscious misuse of AI technology to assist your own creation. However, asking AI to generate an original idea using your own personal intellectual property allows for something new – a piece that not only represents your own artistic capabilities but opens the doors for further creativity.

The youth deserve better history education

MAX MARCELLO
staff writer

At the turn of the twenty-first century, a silent overhaul in America's education system began, championed by both major political parties. President George W. Bush signed the "No Child Left Behind Act" in 2002, a watershed piece of legislation that would directly impact not only my life but my fellow Gen Z-ers.

In addition to ushering in standardized tests in elementary schools (which have their own controversies), this law signaled a shift in American teaching, as these reforms brought about a period of STEM focus. STEM, a popular catch-all acronym for science, technology, engineering and mathematics, expanded in classrooms all across America.

Funded by both private and public initiatives, STEM won the battle for America's education before the War in Iraq was declared. But like all battles, there are innocent and unplanned casualties, with the greatest one of all being the future of the United States of America.

Pushing children toward STEM invariably means that other subjects, such as history, are overshadowed. How historical education is pursued is often a contentious issue, largely because of the significant influence it has on shaping young minds. The way we introduce children and young adults to the past leaves a lasting impact on their perspectives as they mature.

Historical study is not just about

memorizing dates and events. It demands a fundamental level of thinking. Students of history must recognize patterns, analyze trends and contextualize events within broader social, economic and political frameworks. While it may lack the immediate visual impact of a math formula written on a chalkboard, the intellectual rigor of historical analysis is equally as valuable.

I am not suggesting that STEM education is unimportant; rather, I am advocating for a balanced approach that does not sideline history. It is imperative that our education system does not neglect this fundamental discipline, as a comprehensive understanding of history is essential for the development of well-rounded, critically thinking adults. In neglecting history, we risk depriving students of the ability to fully understand their own society and the world at large.

Yet, under our current system, history is often underfunded and at times taught from a virulent, political angle, leaving generations to be undereducated at best and deliberately miseducated at worst. This places the nation in a very precarious position as more people are being shortchanged with their historical education, which can have a tangible impact on society. Deficiencies in historical education can have profound real-world consequences, influencing how individuals understand and engage with contemporary issues.

It is my contention that many of the

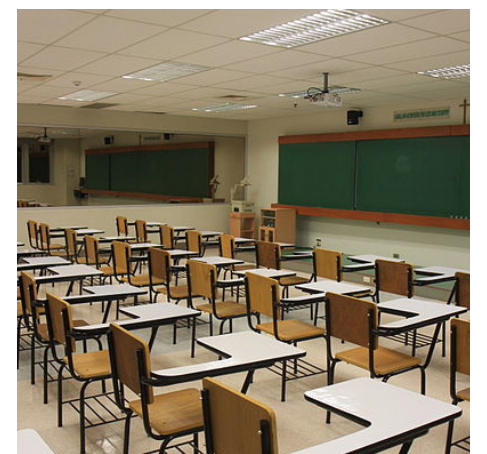
challenges facing our nation today can be traced back to this neglect and distortion of historical education, with the evidence being unignorable. From the widespread acceptance of pseudo-historical narratives about the American Civil War, to genuine belief in the overly simplistic and Disney-fied retelling of the United States: our country seemingly cannot grapple with its past. We create these lies and distort our children's perspectives because our nation believes in comfort over truth. By failing to provide a robust and unbiased historical perspective, we deprive future generations of the tools they need to critically assess and effectively address the complexities of modern society.

Remediating the long-standing deficiencies in America's historical education is a substantial task that will not produce immediate results. Implementing reforms to enhance historical understanding across educational systems will take time – possibly several years – before we see significant changes, but these changes are still necessary.

Several challenges to such reform will need to be addressed, most importantly the undue influence politics has on historical education. Criticisms and anger at our nation's past are bound to be met with accusations of "hating America" or being "unpatriotic." But I would argue that those who possess a burning drive to make this nation better for the children who come after

are the most patriotic among us. I will never cower or apologize for expressing my sincere shame in my country's past, nor will I conceal my enthusiasm in forcing the United States to live up to its potential.

Such a nation can only begin to take shape once the people understand the consequences of actions taken many years before their lifetimes began. It is for that reason we owe it to ourselves and younger generations to equip them with the education and true historical perspectives they deserve so they can make informed observations and decisions. In our age of limitless information, ignorance is a choice, and we as a collective must make that option unacceptable.



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
28% of Americans believe the Civil War was primarily about states' rights according to the *Pew Research Center*.

Exploring the role of music in the autism community

HANNAH PETERS

staff writer

Music is many things, but one of its most principal qualities is its power to be universal. Full Spectrum, a free musical event series aimed at exploring the role of music in the autism community, testifies to this truth.

Hosted by the City Music Center of Duquesne University, Full Spectrum's mission is "to connect families and individuals in the autism community to one another through a common love and enjoyment of music," according to Duquesne's website.

Located in the Mary Pappert School of Music, the program series is held every Saturday on an open door basis from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. throughout the month of April. During this time, guests have the opportunity to engage with sound and melody through several music-making activities.

This includes a drum circle, musical games and an 'instrument petting zoo' that allows visitors the chance to try an array of instruments alongside several music student volunteers. Additionally, they offer an open recording studio session with a live rock band and audio engineer.

Each week also features a rotation of presentations from experts in autism spectrum disorder (ASD) as well as performances from guest musicians, some of which are led by artists who are on the spectrum themselves.

The expert voice at this past session was Duquesne's own chair of psychology, Dr. Elizabeth Fein, author of "Living on the Spectrum:

Autism and Youth in Community."

As for the musical performances held on the PNC Musical Hall stage, these are made possible by Full Spectrum's partner, Band Together Pittsburgh, an organization that works to create opportunities in music for people with ASD.

One of these Band Together Pittsburgh performers from this past Saturday was Logan Smith, who sang 'Giants in the Sky' from 'Into the Woods.' Mother to Logan, Andrea Smith, says the highlight from the event was watching Logan learn a chord on the guitar for the first time.

"The music therapy here is awesome. He hasn't really played instruments before because it's one of those things where it's just hard to be involved in," said Smith.

Smith explains that many social activities, like team sports, are not often welcoming to children with autism. Events like these are important to her family for the community it builds and the opportunities it offers.

"Kids with autism don't get to showcase their talent often because of behavioral issues or things that people just don't know how to handle," said Smith. "So it's nice to have a place where they can perform in a loving environment where nobody's judging. Everyone here has been so kind and welcoming."

Thomas Carsecka, the director of music admissions and community programs at Duquesne, is also a parent of a child on the spectrum and is responsible for the Full Spectrum event.

"I had been thinking about what I can do in

my role at Duquesne to piece these bits together and create something that is truly inclusive that explores a lot of different avenues of music within the autism community all at once," said Carsecka. "So I came up with the full spectrum concept."

This was the first time Carsecka had organized an event for kids on the spectrum; he explained that through this event, he's found that his thinking about music as a tool for communication is changing.

"As far as the role [of music], it's an evolving role. It's one that can grow and change with our understanding of autism," said Carsecka. "We have terms and vocabulary, but then a breakthrough happens and that vocabulary is no longer relevant. But music is something that is never wrong in that moment. It transcends and it changes with us over time."

In addition to music, Carsecka spoke to another crucial element of the event, inclusivity.

"You don't have to be on the spectrum yourself or even have a kid in your family to come and learn more. The nature of true inclusivity is come one, come all," Carsecka said. "This is the focus and everybody's welcome."

Carsecka explained that building the event took a lot of collaboration, he guesses around 100 people are involved with running the event, including their other partnerships with Achieving True Self and Pittsburgh Youth Chorus.

He mentioned that students are also a major component of running the event. Students from all degree programs—music therapy, education,



HANNAH PETERS | STAFF WRITER

Ash Voight, right, is helping Logan learn how to play the guitar. Voight volunteers every weekend as the acting team lead for music therapy activities.

performance and technology—are helping run the event and leading the music-based activities.

Senior Ash Voight is one such student who volunteers every weekend as the acting team lead for music therapy activities. She says this event caters directly to what they learn here at Duquesne and that music plays an important role in building community for everyone, but especially for those with ASD.

"Music is for everyone first and foremost," said Voight. "Music is the format for community so it's a huge community builder. We're finding ways to have other autists meet other autists as well as make music together and find that solidarity with others, no matter the difference in where they are on the spectrum."

Organ artist Anna Lapwood sparkles for Pittsburgh

EMMA POLEN

editor-in-chief

United Kingdom native Anna Lapwood might be known best to her younger audiences for her organ performance clips on TikTok.

From 2024 hits to reimagined classical pieces, Lapwood reminded her audience that "good music is just good music, no matter what the genre."

On Friday, Lapwood came to Pittsburgh, shared learned wisdom from her trials as a musician and played eleven organ arrangements for about 900 Pittsburgh concert-goers at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Mt. Lebanon.

With over one million followers and world renown, Lapwood's visit to Pittsburgh was a big deal.

"Anna's concert appearance in Pittsburgh was a huge feat for the Organ Artist Series of Pittsburgh, as well as for Music at St. Michael the Archangel," said Chaz Bowers, Director of Music at the parish. "We were one of only six stops on Anna's tour and many of the other venues were large concert halls across the country. People came to Pittsburgh for this concert from Wisconsin, North Carolina, Kentucky and Canada, as well from the tri-state area."

Larger crowds have assembled in the church for 4 p.m. Christmas Eve, but, out of hundreds of organ recitals and concerts hosted by the parish over the years, "We have never seen an audience this large for a concert," he said.

"You're never going to see another organ concert with 900 people, at least in Pittsburgh," said Duquesne musical liturgy director Nathan Bellas after the show.

For Lapwood, every organ is different. She called St. Michael's organ, built by Casavant Frères in 1961, "the most remarkable music storyteller" out of all the organs she had visited on her U.S. tour so far.

The organist shared before how emotional a musical performance should be and how focusing on storytelling releases some of the nerves of the live performance. She said on social media that for artists, "If you make your priority ... to communicate emotions and have kind of an emotional experience with the audience, then it becomes something very different, and I find it



Organist Anna Lapwood performed at St. Michael the Archangel Church on Friday. The Director of Music at the parish, Chaz Bowers, said they have never seen an audience this large for a concert. becomes much more enjoyable."

Lapwood's homebase is the organ inside Royal Albert Hall in London, arguably THE performing hall of England's capital city. Since the venue is so popular among visiting shows, Lapwood often practices at odd hours. In one of her TikToks, Lapwood comments that, at 3:20 a.m., it is the appreciation of a night janitor (heard applauding the end of her piece in the background) and her sparkly jacket that help her stay awake.

With Lapwood's natural energy at the organ, though, it was difficult to imagine she ever tires around the instrument. After each piece at Friday's concert, Lapwood leapt from the bench, hopped up and down enthusiastically, bowed, then jumped back onto her seat, eager to return to playing.

"You can tell she's enjoying it," said audience member Aidan Bartholomew, a freshman Duquesne music education major who was invited to the performance through his organ teacher at the school of music. "She got up after every song and danced."

Lapwood's movement was accented with a dazzling suit jacket that resembled a starry night. The sparkly jacket is a staple piece of Lapwood's wardrobe, along with a pair of golden organ shoes.

"Their [musicians'] performance is a form of personal expression which extends to the clothes

too," said Lapwood on social media. In fact, Lapwood encourages her audience to dress in sparkling attire as well, so that they can sparkle back.

And the audience got the memo. Tom Parkes and his fiancée Laura West both sported glitter. Parkes wore a silver bowtie along with a patterned purple dress shirt. West had on boots, leggings and a dress that all met the sparkling dress code. In fact, the bold footwear caught the attention of Lapwood herself, who motioned her enthusiasm for West's boots more than once while facing the audience to bow.

"You will delight my ears, I will attempt to delight your eyes," West said.

Parkes was the first in the couple to be introduced to Lapwood's arrangements, seeing her covers on YouTube. He was booking tickets for her Cardiff show, much closer than Pittsburgh to his hometown in Wales, but when he found there was a show in Pittsburgh and the couple would be in the area anyway, he knew he had to come.

West is originally from Youngstown, and since the two met online on Reddit and spent most of their initial relationship over long distance video calls, Lapwood's videos and music made it into their time together.

West compared Lapwood's sparkly jacket to the total eclipse the couple viewed earlier that week in Ohio. The total eclipse meant more than a chance to see the stars during the day, though,

West and Parkes proposed to each other, and got engaged, during the totality of the eclipse.

"She looks like the night sky," West said.

Lapwood's sparkling jacket came off for the second half of her performance. The eleven pieces printed on the program ended up differing from what Lapwood played, and she explained why.

Originally, Lapwood had intended to play "Naiades" by Louis Vierne. However, once the church was packed with people, the organ music became "a very different piece" from rehearsal, she said, losing its intended acoustic sound.

"I had kittens about it," said Lapwood while rehearsing "Naiades." The expression is the English version of "I'm getting butterflies."

Still, Lapwood finished her concert with an encore performance of "Test Flight" from the animated movie "How to Train Your Dragon," rounding out her performance at the eleven songs promised.

Her program included two original arrangements of Hans Zimmer's "Cornfield Chase" and "No Time for Caution" from "Interstellar."

Lapwood also performed her arrangement of Alan Menken's "The Bells of Notre Dame" from "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." Before she began playing, the church bells went off. The time was 8:37, leaving audience members to assume the bells feature was intended.

Lapwood remained animated while talking about the Hunchback tune, hopping up and down while explaining the church bells and her use of the organ in the solo arrangement.

"Sorry, I'm like a child in a toy shop sometimes with the organ," she said.


Bartholomew, a student of the Pittsburgh Organ Academy through Duquesne, said the concert inspired him to become more invested in organ music outside of traditional hymns.

It was not just music that he could hear with his ears – he could also feel it under his feet.

"You can physically feel the music, each note, each stop," he said.

While online followers will miss that live feeling of low note vibrations under their feet, fans can at least, for now, follow Lapwood's journey on social media.

"Whoever you are, you are welcome," Lapwood said.




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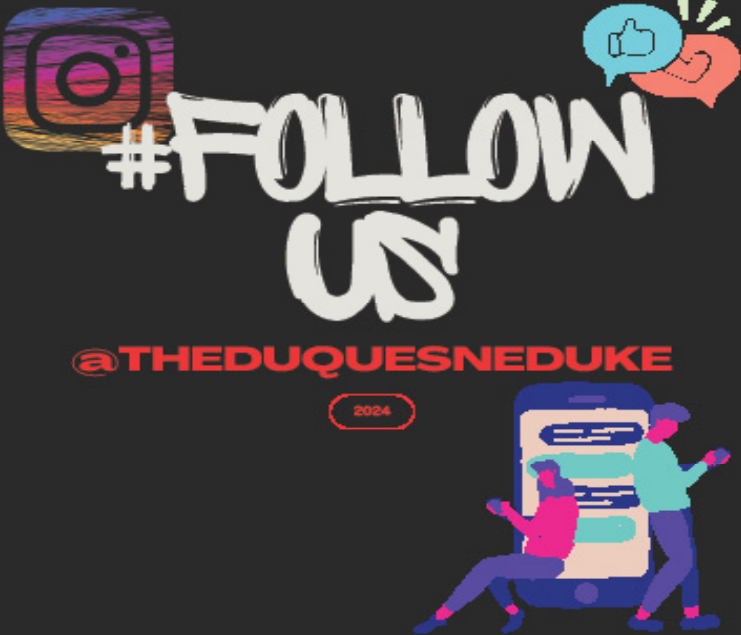
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