

DAILY COLLEGIAN

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25 YEARS

Photo courtesy of Mark Selders
Design by Ben McClary

Bryce Jordan Center celebrates 25 year anniversary amid pandemic

By Ava Leone
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Nestled between the central Pennsylvania mountains in Happy Valley is an over 15,000-seat venue hours away from a major metropolitan city. The building hosts top-notch sporting events and concerts with big names like Bruce Springsteen, Jay Z, the Jonas Brothers and more.

The Bryce Jordan Center has been hosting crowds of screaming fans for 25 years as of Jan. 6.

“It’s more the feeling that you would get — I would get — during each event. There’s so much electricity inside the building,” Kate Bean, the BJC’s director of marketing and public relations said. “Unlike [a] fan, I have a unique perspective where I get to be backstage and see a lot of the things that go into putting that electricity into the building. And it’s contagious — you just want more.”

Bean said the BJC was planning to celebrate its 25th anniversary with a full week of live concerts and events every single day, but the third-largest building in Pennsylvania decided to extend its celebration from Jan. 6 — the actual anniversary — throughout the year with the hope it can host

everyone together in 2021.

With the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, the facility had to change its plans — which it made over two years in advance, Bean said.

Phil Stout, the BJC’s assistant general manager expects that once the pandemic ends, artists will be clamoring to perform at the facility and enchant audiences once again, bringing a huge amount of traffic to the State College area.

Bean also said she is constantly working with agents and clients so the BJC can move forward immediately whenever it can host live performances again.

“Everyone’s fingers [are] crossed — my toes as well — that before 2021 is over, we have a return to live events,” Bean said. “And by that point, we’ll be able to celebrate in person with what I am sure will be multiple sold-out shows and screaming fans. That return to normalcy will make the celebration that much sweeter.”

Throughout the past 25 years, the BJC has hosted several memorable events. Almost no one would know better than Al Karosas, the general manager of the BJC, who has been working at the facility since before it was

built. When Karosas started, the venue was still only a giant hole in the ground with huge steel beams sticking up toward the sky.

Karosas started as a marketing assistant at the BJC after he graduated from Penn State in May 1995 with a degree in exercise and sports medicine.

Excited to combine his love of sports with his passion for music, Karosas eventually worked his way up to the general manager position five years ago — his dream job.

One of Karosas’ favorite BJC memories is Operation Salute, a 2006 event that honored soldiers coming home from Iraq. The celebration became the largest mobilization of the Pennsylvania National Guard in its history, according to Karosas.

For the event, the BJC secured The Beach Boys and “Sesame Street Live” for performances, invited several local hot dog vendors to peddle their wares, and partnered with Tastykake to provide food for members of the Pennsylvania National Guard and their families, according to Karosas.

Karosas said he still keeps in contact with the men and women of the Pennsylvania National Guard from the event.

He said he also cherishes helping Penn State students host THON every year.

“Seeing what Penn State students do collectively for the good is just amazing,” Karosas said. “Whether it’s helping them bring

in some of the bigger talent they have or just working with the executive team as they plan out the year, it’s definitely a highlight for me.”

Stout also reflected on some of the live music concerts held at the BJC, especially the ones he said most affected him.

He witnessed Paul McCartney playing hit after hit on the mainstage, Jay-Z rehearsing “Empire State of Mind” for 40 minutes straight until he perfected his delivery, and the Grateful Dead reunion hosted for President Obama’s first election.

Even in a huge arena, the energy from the fans creates such intimate moments between performers and audience members that acts like Bruce Springsteen leave the stage and tell their entourage, “This is one of the top five shows I’ve ever played,” according to Karosas.

The BJC’s spell kept Stout in State College for much longer than he expected, but working with A-list shows and sporting events in his backyard was a gift he could not pass up.

“I thought I’d be able to work, get some experience, and move on,” Stout said. “But as a Penn State grad interning here and working here part-time, you fall in love — obviously with the university — and next thing you know, you’re starting a family, buying the house and you’re ingrained in the community.”

See BJC, Page 2.

From concerts to coronavirus vaccines

By Paul Sabini
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The Bryce Jordan Center at Penn State is once again a hub of activity.

But instead of hosting basketball games or THON, the BJC began serving as a major coronavirus vaccination location for the State College community Monday, March 15.

Centre Volunteers in Medicine set up a base in the BJC that currently provides Pfizer injections to Pennsylvanians who are eligible under Gov. Tom Wolf’s vaccine rollout plan.

Under current Pennsylvania vaccination guidelines, health care personnel, persons 65 or older, long-term care facilities and persons aged 16 or older with preexisting conditions are a part of phase 1A of the vaccine rollout.

However, according to Monica Wright, director of development for Centre Volunteers in Medicine,

the vaccine location will be able to expand to more groups if everyone eligible is scheduled to receive the first dose by Mar. 31.

Wright said CVIM is the first local dose provider to the general public, and after initially setting up a base in nearby Mount Nittany High School, moved to the BJC upon approval from Penn State officials.

The BJC presents a “logistically ideal location,” according to Wright. It’s important for the scheduling system to be streamlined, so access to the website and appointments are accessible to anyone looking to be vaccinated, Wright said.

When scheduling an appointment for a vaccination through CVIM, a person just has to schedule a date and time that works for them for the day of the first and second dosage.

Individuals who are placed on CVIM’s waiting list will be contacted either



Ernesto Estremera Jr./For the Collegian

Dr. Mark Stephens prepares a dose of the coronavirus vaccine on Monday, March 15 at the Bryce Jordan Center.

by email or phone call and will be scheduled for the vaccine based on the date they signed up, according to Wright. This way the potential scheduling errors are removed, leading to a “clean and clear system,” Wright said.

Local residents who were vaccinated at the BJC said the CVIM

system works well.

Meg Haniver of Lemont said there was an ease to setting up an appointment.

“All I did was click a few buttons, and I had two appointments set up [for] three weeks apart,” Haniver said.

According to Wright, CVIM administered over 1,100 vaccine doses in the

first two days at the BJC, with “everything working exactly the way it was designed.”

Currently, CVIM is staffed daily with anywhere from 30-50 volunteers — each of whom are either physicians, registered nurses or pharmacists, and all are certified to administer the vaccine, according to Wright.

“Each week we expect to receive one tray of the Pfizer vaccine, which is around 1,100 doses,” Wright said.

For a company that receives little outside funding and is supported by the work of volunteers, Wright said CVIM has been able to operate at an “astounding” pace.

The nonprofit will continue to operate in the State College area until further notice and appointments for vaccines can be made here.

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Seniors react to in-person graduation

By Olivia Estright
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The day is nearly here for Penn State's class of 2021 graduates to receive their diplomas — and many expressed excitement for the chance to celebrate in person.

Penn State announced Wednesday its plans to host a series of in-person commencement ceremonies in Beaver Stadium the weekend of May 7-9.

Each senior will only receive two tickets for guests to encourage social distancing.

Student D.J. Krausz said when he and his roommate first read the email from President Eric Barron, they were both “pretty excited.”

“It's going to be interesting,” Krausz (senior-psychology) said. “I'd imagine it'll all look a little weird.”

Although seniors are only given two tickets, Krausz said they shouldn't take the opportunity to have guests for granted.

“I'm glad that my parents are going to be able to be there, so I'll be able to experience that with them,” Krausz said. “I'm glad that others will be able to share the experience with their parents or loved ones, too.”

However, some students weren't satisfied with Penn State's decision. After receiving the news, Aneesa Karimushan

said she was “super upset” to see the university's plans for commencement.

“I actually cried,” Karimushan (senior-communication sciences and disorders) said. “I wanted to have an in-person graduation, but this is just not really how I wanted to have it.”

Karimushan said she has been “dreaming of having that same experience [her] own” after attending her brother's Penn State graduation a few years ago.

“Seeing that we could only have two people go and that they weren't even going to announce our names was kind of just a slap in the face after all we've been through,” Karimushan said.

According to the announcement, students must remain seated during the commencement to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus and names of graduating seniors will not be called.

Students are allowed to sit in pods with their two guests, according to Barron's email. Karimushan said that aspect is “understandable,” and she knows the university still has to obey coronavirus protocols.

“I know they put a lot of hard work into planning it, and I know that it's better than what the class of 2020 got,” Karimushan said. “I still think there was more they could've done. They just didn't have our best interests in mind,



Lily LaRegina/Collegian

Seniors had mixed opinions about Penn State's decision to hold an in-person graduation.

and we should've had a little more input in the decision.”

Osamu Onizuka said he's grateful to have some sort of in-person ceremony for his graduation.

“I was happy in a way — last year's seniors didn't even get [an in-person commencement option], but with the health crisis and constant delays, we were at risk of not even having a senior year,” Onizuka (senior-biochemistry and molecular biology) said. “We have had a partial senior year, so now at least we can end on a good note.”

Onizuka said he wasn't disappointed with the amount of tickets students were given because his family is not very large. He said this isn't the end of his Penn State experience, either.

“Just keep in mind that we can still come back and visit,” Onizuka said. “For now, though, we've got to do what we've got to do.”

After initially meeting her close group of friends one year ago, Erin Woods said she was “really excited at first” when she received Barron's email.

“We've all taken this journey together, and now we can finish it,” Woods (senior-genetics and developmental biology) said.

Woods said her initial reaction faded slightly after continuing to read the email.

“The email said more details to come,” Woods said, “but it

seemed to be insinuating that you'd be sitting down, watching your name flash on the screen instead of walking.”

Although Woods said she appreciated the university's strategy, she also questioned what the point of it was.

“It just didn't make any sense because why would we go if it would be the same thing as if we were just watching it at home?” Woods said.

Woods said she hopes that in the future when “some sort of normalcy returns,” the university will be able to “reevaluate its approach” to events like commencement.

“I'm not sure if there is a right answer for what they're doing, but that's how I interpreted it,” Woods said. “I was just a little disappointed.”

However, Emma Holderman said she was still “really excited” to hear about the commencement plan.

“After the horrific year we had, I was expecting to have virtual graduation. [My friends and I] have even discussed it before,”

Holderman (senior-theatre) said. “My automatic assumption for graduation was that it would be virtual.”

Holderman said she was looking forward to watching her name “pop up on the screen” accompanied with a small celebration.

“I had been telling myself, ‘It is what it is, just accept it,’” Holderman said. “Everyone else is probably in the same boat as me.”

For any student who doesn't feel comfortable with an in-person event and wishes to attend virtually, the university plans to hold the ceremony on May 9 at 6 p.m.

“I think it's great that they are offering the option to do virtual graduation, especially for those who are immunocompromised or have underlying health problems,” Holderman said.

“It's just exciting to see that the world is slowly but surely getting better.”

Aneesa Karimushan
Senior-Communication sciences and disorders



Lindsey Toomer/Collegian

Graduating seniors will be able to bring two guests into Beaver Stadium for an in-person commencement the weekend of May 7-9.

BJC

FROM Page 1.

Karosas and Stout both enjoy sharing the BJC with student interns interested in getting a foot in the live events industry.

Past interns like Rachel Inglesino used their experience at the BJC to jumpstart their careers. Inglesino graduated in 2019 with a degree in recreation, park and tourism management.

While working as a marketing specialist at the BJC, Inglesino received the opportunity to connect with the Jonas Brothers when the band visited Penn State for its notorious performance at Champs Downtown bar in April 2019. She helped pitch the idea — alongside Bean, her supervisor — for the band to come back and perform at the BJC.

Flash forward to September 2019, the Jonas Brothers not only performed at the BJC, they came with Inglesino as a part of their entourage working as Joe Jonas' personal assistant.

Inglesino now works directly under Kevin Jonas Sr. as an artist manager for developing talent with Jonas Group Entertainment, which she attributes to her position at the BJC when she was a student.

“The whole reason why I decided to take on this career path is because I know how much going to live concerts and events affected my life,” Inglesino said. “I wanted to reciprocate that feeling and give people memories lasting a lifetime — so to be able to get my start so early in life, to be a small part of big moments was and always will be a treasure that I'm very grateful for. [It] kind of paved the way for me moving forward.”

The BJC has served as a launchpad for several careers over the years. Emily Grabowski started as a sales and

marketing intern at the BJC in 2014 and stayed on with the staff as a marketing assistant until she graduated with a degree in public relations in 2016. Since her supervisors allowed her to be hands-on with the artists and the tours that came through the BJC, she made many connections within the live events industry.

She actually met her current employer, Vector Management — an artist management industry — backstage at a country concert in the BJC when she was still a college student.

“I think that artists genuinely love to perform there, because there's such a high energy,” Grabowski said. “It's almost like a magical kind of environment... The venue is gorgeous and I think all of the people that work at the BJC are so passionate. They do a great job with marketing their shows and making sure that it feels like home when [people] come through Happy Valley.”

Even though live events at the BJC have come to an end for the time being, Karosas said the facility still gives back to the community by transforming into a classroom for students during the week, by becoming a coronavirus testing area, and by turning into an early voting location for State College residents and a polling place for students on Election Day.

“We're finding these little ways to give back and be a resource to our community and to our university,” Karosas said. “And then, hopefully, when it's time to get back to having 12,000 people or 15,000 people screaming at a last-second three-point shot by one of our teams or screaming for an encore — we're preparing for that as well.”

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Comedy clubs foster sense of community

By Joshua Chu
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

On March 27, 2019, a conglomeration of comedy groups on campus gathered in the Flex Theater at the HUB-Robeson Center to hold a comical bonanza — Comedy Late Night, a celebration of the different comedy organizations at Penn State.

Present at Comedy Late Night were Derby: A Women’s Comedy Troupe, Full Ammo Improv, Second Floor Stand Up, Phroth and The Nittany Wits.

While the show was open to the public, the night belonged to the performers themselves, giving them a chance to celebrate comedy and make their comedian peers laugh.

Kaitlyn Gaus, a member of multiple comedy groups on campus, said comedians that night “could do just about anything.”

“Me and my friend Ayana did a bit where we were doing a live advertisement for the Catholic church, because we both grew up Catholic,” Gaus (senior-telecommunications and political science) said. “We both decided to say, ‘Let’s exploit this!’”

Little did Gaus and other participants know that 2019 would be the last year Comedy Late Night would be held in person — the coronavirus would force the next two years of the event online.

The clubs present that night are still staples of the Penn State comedy scene, and they range widely in terms of style and content.

Second Floor, for instance, is a club that focuses primarily on stand-up comedy, while Phroth is a satire publication that spoofs school newspapers such as The Daily Collegian.

But while these groups differ wildly and often collaborate with one another, many members overlap in their participation in the various groups.

Derby President Rachael Hobbs, for example, holds more responsibilities than just “president of Derby.” She’s also production manager for Phroth and vice president of Second Floor.

“We had a meeting yesterday [at Phroth] for people to volunteer [for this interview],” Hobbs (senior-psychology) said. “But no one volunteered, so I was just like, ‘I could be a mouthpiece for everything!’”

This trend of membership overlapping with different groups is not unique to Hobbs. According to Ryan Hatfield, vice president of Full Ammo, membership overlap is common.

“I don’t know anyone from Full Ammo who isn’t part of another [comedy] club,” Hatfield (graduate-creative writing) said.

While this isn’t the case for all the clubs, most members of each group maintain contact with one another.

Jimmy Lu, a member of Second Floor, said he still feels a sense of community despite only participating in one club.

“People will just be like, ‘We have this improv night happening and we’re gonna stay up til’ 1 a.m.,’” Lu (senior-telecommunications) said. “I like the sense of community there, where we just kind of do whatever anyone else



Josie Chen/Collegian file photo

Torin Cronin (junior-film) performs her set during Derby and Second Floor Stand-Up’s comedy show at the HUB-Robeson Center lawn.

says. We’re just one big family.”

All the groups congregate at the comedy house, a residence where a collection of comedians from every group live under one roof. Members from all five groups live there, including Hobbs and Hatfield.

“Actually, Ryan [Hatfield] is just upstairs,” Hobbs said. “I can hear him when he games at night and he yells at the screen. It’s very fun.”

Hobbs described the house as a “piece of Penn State comedy history” and said the existence of the house was a natural culmination of the friendships that formed between the different clubs.

“We spend so much time together, and then we become friends and roommates,” Hobbs said. “This is State College, and finding an apartment is really hard, so it just worked out that we offered people to live here. And it just became the comedy house.”

Even for people who don’t live in the house, Hatfield said gatherings — prior to the coronavirus pandemic — were common, with “comedy parties” every weekend.

“Everybody in every club is invited, and we get to mingle and meet with other people who are in different clubs,” Hatfield said. “I think all of comedy is a very social thing. It involves a lot of feeding into each other’s energy.”

Hobbs said she feels as if the closeness of the comedy groups on campus may be unique to Penn State. When visiting comedy conferences that invite clubs from universities across the United States, Hobbs noticed that other schools often did not have the same feeling of community she said she experiences here.

“When we go to other schools for comedy conferences, the clubs are so individual from one another,” Hobbs said. “And I could be wrong, but it always seems they aren’t as close to each other. They’ll live with people who aren’t in comedy, and we’re always like, that’s so strange.”

Hobbs, Gaus, Lu and Hatfield all said the closeness between

the groups helps creatively in different ways as well.

“You can think of an idea for one club and realize it works better for a different one,” Gaus said. “Sometimes, I can think of a set idea for Second Floor but realize it works better for a Derby show.”

Spending so much time with each other allows the comedians to constantly test out new material as well.

“Even when we’re not doing practice or just talking in a group of people, you’re constantly doing bits, jokes, acting out comedy routines,” Hatfield said. “I think that’s just what’s so thrilling about being in the comedy community for me. I just get to be around so many funny people.”

Hobbs admitted that, while the three clubs she’s in often feel like “they overlap,” the experience may differ for those who are only in one club.

Additionally, Hobbs said clubs like The Nittany Wits and Full Ammo Improv have an audition process, which may impede the sense of community as well.

“I think there’s less room for collaboration when you’re a team, because you have to focus [just] on the team,” Hobbs said, “versus Derby, Phroth and Second Floor which are more collaborative in nature.”

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, collaboration between the groups has lowered with the lack of live shows, according to Gaus.

“We’re all still friends, and we all still collaborate, but it’s a bit more separate because we’re filming now,” Gaus said. “We all still feel a sense of community watching and supporting each other. I know the people in the comedy house will watch the shows together.”

Even as the pandemic continues and activity in the group falters somewhat, Gaus said the group is confident the community will continue to thrive.

“Tour guides used to say to me, ‘Once you find your niche in the school, it seems a lot smaller,’” Gaus said. “I would say comedy is its own little niche. I think people’s need to laugh and express themselves will always be greater than what’s going on in the world, so comedy isn’t going anywhere.”

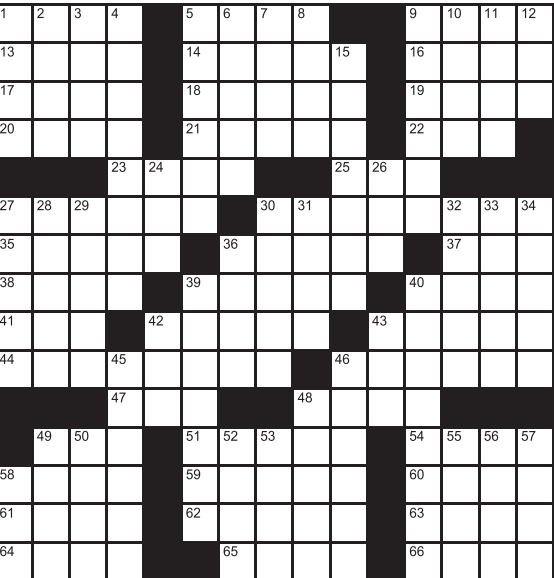
To email reporter: jjc6267@psu.edu. Follow him on Twitter at [@josh_chu74](https://twitter.com/josh_chu74).

Puzzles

Across

- 1 Financial predicament
- 5 Hurt badly
- 9 Pandora’s boxful
- 13 Footnote word
- 14 Thespian
- 16 Secluded spot
- 17 New Zealand bird
- 18 Christopher of “Superman”
- 19 “Peanuts” character
- 20 Partner of odds
- 21 Packing heat
- 22 Biblical boat
- 23 ___ a toe
- 25 Propel a boat
- 27 Scared
- 30 Government department
- 35 Live’s partner
- 36 Sales booth
- 37 Good name for a lawyer?

- 38 Jet black
- 39 Strong wharf posts for mooring lines
- 40 Insect stage
- 41 Hotshot
- 42 Worth
- 43 Tender spots
- 44 Congressional periods
- 46 Small child
- 47 Computer key
- 48 Blow off steam?
- 49 Debate position
- 51 Trip planner’s aid
- 54 Ruler unit
- 58 Mixed bag
- 59 Full of chutzpah



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- 60 Essence
- 61 Canine tooth
- 62 Nick name?
- 63 Like Jack Sprat’s diet
- 64 Youngster
- 65 Chick’s sound
- 66 Shade trees

Down

- 1 Scouting outing
- 2 Scandinavian war god
- 3 Off-color
- 4 Go-between
- 5 Plunder
- 6 Having a bite
- 7 Gossip tidbit

- 8 Relocate
- 9 Some relatives
- 10 Scowl
- 11 Wrestling hold
- 12 Wild blue yonder
- 15 Compensate
- 24 Bolivian export
- 26 Common deciduous tree
- 27 Assumed name
- 28 Palisade
- 29 Gathers leaves
- 30 Emperor of Rome from 39 to 81
- 31 Learning method
- 32 Take forcibly
- 33 Indian coin
- 34 Brewer’s need
- 36 Pottery oven

- 39 Monkey-bread trees
- 40 Frozen dessert
- 42 By way of
- 43 Letters of distress
- 45 Larry, Moe or Curly
- 46 Accident
- 48 Undue speed
- 49 Frolic
- 50 Milieu for Lemieux
- 52 Catch-22
- 53 Narrow street
- 55 Wassailer’s song
- 56 Pull an all-nighter
- 57 Coop group
- 58 Frequently, in verse

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WORD SEARCH

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Landforms

- Arch
- Arroyo
- Atoll
- Badlands
- Basin
- Beach
- Bluff
- Butte
- Canyon
- Cavern
- Cliff
- Dale
- Desert
- Dune
- Gorge
- Gully
- Hill
- Island
- Mesa
- Mountain
- Peak
- Plateau
- Playa
- Prairie
- Ravine
- Sandbar
- Tundra
- Vale
- Valley
- Volcano

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YOU CAN’T SIT WITH US



Lily LaRegina/Collegian

Kaylie Withrow (senior-geography) and her dog Lola, Alyssa Leshner (senior-finance), and Leevi Placek (senior-earth sciences) enjoy the warm weather from Old Main lawn Tuesday, March 9.

Kakuro (Cross Sums)

The rules are easy to learn: A number above the diagonal line in a black square is the sum of the white squares to the right of it. A number below the diagonal line is the sum of the white squares in the sequence below it. You may only use the digits 1 to 9, and a digit may be used only once in any sequence.

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PSU fumbles Blue-White

OUR VIEW

Seniors should be given priority over freshmen for the Blue-White game

In a bout of ill-conceived and ill-considered strategic thinking devoid of both strategy and thought, Penn State declared that only freshmen can attend the famed Blue-White football scrimmage.

Seniors are barred from attending the first display of the new season while their last semester draws near to official closure. For sports-minded students, the decision appears unsportsmanlike and nothing less than a slap to the face, leaving them reddish rather than blue and white.

Though we imagine a fair number of students were also left simply blue by this announcement.

To add insult to injury, the university is referring to the game not as the Blue-White match but as the vaguer “final practice of the spring” — despite the game having all the trappings of the traditional in-house match-off, and resembling it in everything but name only.

Perhaps Penn State thought that its allowance of in-person graduation ceremonies this year — after the seniors of yesteryear understandably had this festivity denied to them — satisfied the obligation owed to the class of 2021. Maybe it rightfully concluded that first-year students were dealt a Mulligan-worthy hand after they spent thousands of dollars only to stare at computer screens.

No matter the reasoning or rationale, however, the decision is neither reasonable nor rational. Penn State’s obligation to both first-year and final-year students is not met by this scrimmage screwup.

Freshmen deserved a better introduction to Penn State than the one offered by Zoom, and they were denied the freshman experience in all its awkward haphazard glory. But the solution to this unfortunate circumstance is not the denial of another timeless tradition to the departing class.

Consider the muddled mathematics of the situation and its shoddiness becomes ever more apparent. If first-year students attend this final practice of the spring and are able to attend in-person football games next fall, they would technically have the ability to attend Nittany Lion games all four years.

Maybe you’re more stingy with your hypotheticals and prefer not to count the scrimmage as an actual Nittany Lions experience. Even in this case, freshmen are still left with three years of Beaver Stadium brouhaha.

How many years of football fun can the class of 2021 claim? Also three. But the key difference lies here: whereas the freshmen can look forward to another three years of Nittany Lion rampage, seniors will soon lose the ability to attend football matches as undergraduates. Their time is up.

Penn State is showing them the door, but not before asking

them to pay the bill.

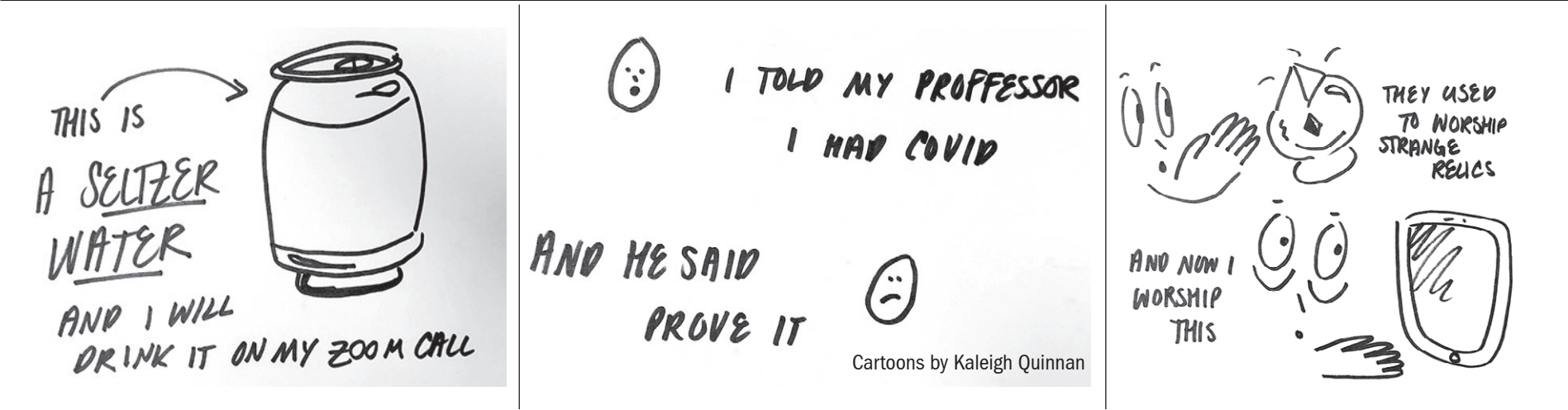
Next time seniors enter Beaver Stadium, it will be as either alumni or graduate students.

You can push back a first chance, but you can’t push back a last chance. Freshmen have the rest of their collegiate careers ahead of them. Seniors, in contrast, only have a month and a half before retirement beckons.

And if Penn State wants to please both sides of the street, it could open the stadium to freshmen and seniors alike for the scrimmage. After all, the third-most populous city in Pennsylvania can surely accommodate such a crowd.

It’s not too late for Penn State to remove all salt from the wounds torn open by its pronouncement. Seniors already lost so much amid the pandemic and are slated to enter an equally sick economy.

The university should at least grant the visceral pleasure of football before seniors are tackled by the job market.



MY VIEW | Jeremiah Hassel

My journey with bisexuality

“Faggot.” “Cocksucker.” “Femboy.” “Abomination.” Gay. The list of names I’ve been



Hassel

called since coming out as bisexual in June 2020 doesn’t stop there — nor did it stop when I went public with my sexual identity either.

From a young age, I knew I was different from my peers. Maybe it was the way I walked. Or the way I talked. Or the way I dressed. I just knew I stood out to them like a sore thumb — or perhaps a rainbow of color in a sea of dull gray.

My differences became evident to me when other children at the preschool I attended in suburban San Diego, California, would forsake my company in favor of each other, already forming cliques and inciting drama at such an innocent age.

When my family and I moved to dreary Erie, Pennsylvania, I knew my struggles would only get worse.

Many of the children in my kindergarten class had already known each other for several years before I entered the picture.

They quickly noticed differences in my mannerisms, speech patterns, thoughts and ideas. I wasn’t like the other boys, but I wasn’t like the girls either. I was an outlier, a foreigner and a stranger considered dangerous and unwelcome.

Though I made friends the following few years — including some who would become lifelong companions — most of those primary friendships

mirrored the kernels of a neglected ear of corn: delicious when ripe but quick to harden, rot and flake off.

By my fourth grade year, I was teased and bullied nearly daily for being too feminine, too weird, too annoying to fit into my school’s social circles.

When I told my teachers about my struggles, their solution was to attempt to masculinize me by placing me in groups of athletic boys in my class, boys I had nothing in common with and who certainly had nothing in common with me.

Even my grandparents — then and now my caretakers — noticed my un-boyish behavior and enrolled me in the local little league baseball team — whether to also attempt to instill in me a sense of masculinity and male toughness or to help me make new friends I knew not.

I would grudgingly participate in the sport for six, nigh on seven grueling years, never making a single lasting friend and crying almost weekly from the torment it caused me.

Needless to say, I felt like a floundering fish without fins in a sea of angry, hungry sharks during those years.

It wasn’t until the final year of my elementary education that I was introduced to the concepts of puberty, adolescence and sex.

I was told that very soon, I would start noticing the girls in my class and would begin to want to form meaningful relationships with them. Eventually, I would become sexually attracted to them and want to have children with them.

But in those coming years, though many girls would pique my interest, it wasn’t them who ignited the fire in my soul and

“I wasn’t attracted to or passionate about girls like the other boys in my class were. I was obsessed with men.”

Jeremiah Hassel

made me feel the burning passion of desire — it was men.

I quickly realized it was this that set me apart from my male peers and resulted in me being shunned by the girls. I was a boy — soon to be a man — in every physical way, but I wasn’t attracted to or passionate about girls like the other boys in my class were. I was obsessed with men.

But I couldn’t possibly be gay, could I?

Growing up in a household of religious relatives, I was always taught that sex before marriage was a wicked abomination and that being anything but straight was a sin comparable to none.

I distinctly remember watching a news broadcast with my family around the time I was transitioning to my middle school years. The ABC World News clip showcased LGBT marriages being performed out west and contained affirming remarks from then-President Barack Obama on the matter.

“The Bible says marriage is between a man and a woman,” I remember my aunt saying in utter disgust at the television, murmurs of agreement echoing her around the room.

I resolved then to hide my feelings and my pubescent curiosity from my family at all costs, lest I be scolded, shunned or worse: abandoned.

During middle school, I relentlessly dug deep within myself and attempted to alter what I thought was but a simple mental barrier to social normality. All thoughts of being with men were forcibly suppressed in my mind before they could even become tangible, and each of my increasingly urgent bodily needs went ignored and unsatiated.

I even resorted to religion, the only weapon I thought strong enough to aid me in the war raging inside myself.

Day and night, I attempted to “pray the gay away,” but to little avail. Much to my chagrin, I realized that even divine intervention could not “help” me: My homosexuality seemed to be an immortal, malignant tumor infecting each and every one of my thoughts.

Thus, the preliminary years of my second decade of life became miserable and unfulfilling — I was engaged in a fierce battle with an integral aspect of my identity and was inadvertently shattering the chains that bound a beast capable of obliterating every fiber of my cognitive being — anxiety.

By my high school years, men — mean, nasty and indifferent but awe-inspiring, mystifying and oh-so-gorgeous men — had begun to control my deepest, darkest desires and fantasies. My lust had grown large enough to thwart even my most furious attempts at diminishing it.

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DAILY COLLEGIAN

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THE LEE FAMILY TREE

How the bond of Penn State brothers and wrestlers Nick and Joe Lee makes each better

By Jake Aferiat
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

In brothers Nick and Joe Lee, Cael Sanderson has an interesting dichotomy.

The Hoosier State natives are just the latest pair of brothers to don Nittany Lion singlets, something that is simultaneously a rarity in the college athletics landscape but a relative norm for Penn State's program over the decades.

The odds of becoming a Division I wrestler hover right around 1%.

The odds of becoming a Division I wrestler at Penn State are even slimmer — this most recent roster features just 35 wrestlers.

Obviously, not all 35 of those wrestlers will start with only 10 collegiate weights in play, and so for two of those spots to be occupied by brothers only increases the scarcity of what Nick and Joe Lee have been able to do lately.

And yet, they're far from the first siblings to crack Penn State's lineup at the same time and likely won't be the last members of a list that includes Big Ten champions, All-Americans, NCAA champions and current college coaches.

It's a situation that Sanderson, who has three brothers — including two who competed with him at Iowa State — knows well.

It's also one Sanderson said presents unique challenges.

"Anytime you have brothers on the same team, that's a challenge for the individuals because they wrestle each match — they wrestle their brothers' match," Sanderson said. "Personally, I had two brothers on the team that wrestled before I did when I was in college and it's something you have to manage. You have to manage your emotions because you want them to win so bad."

Nick, the eldest Lee, is often in



Samantha Hendrzak/Collegian

Nick Lee wrestles Iowa's Jaydin Eierman during the Big Ten Wrestling Championship on March 7. Both he and his brother, Joe, are key members of the Nittany Lions' program.

the position to give advice to Joe and youngest brother Matt.

Whether they choose to heed Nick's advice and listen to it or not is ultimately their prerogative.

But to Nick, a three-time All-American and two-time Big Ten runner-up at 141 pounds, there's one adage, a cliché if you will, about actions speaking louder than words that resonates more than anything he could ever say to his brothers.

"I can give as much advice as I can, but, at the end of the day, I think just having the actual experience out there is the best way to get better at competing," Nick said on Feb. 10. "As far as advice I give those guys, I just tell them to relax and keep things in perspective."

Joe is 6-5 so far as a freshman and is one of nine NCAA qualifiers for the Nittany Lions this season after finishing eighth at 165 pounds at the Big Ten Tournament.

He travels to St. Louis for the NCAA Tournament seeded No. 23 at 165 pounds and is set to take on No. 10 seed All-American Travis Wittlake from Oklahoma State.

Though Joe has struggled at times, one thing Nick has stressed to him and the other freshmen on the team is that early struggles aren't necessarily predictors or indicative of what's to come in the future.

There is one thread from his early days that Nick said is important to carry through for the totality of one's time competing for Penn State.

Coincidentally, it's one of the things Nick feels is also the hardest to grasp as a freshman.

"Whenever you look back, those first matches in your freshman year are helpful, and they feel like a huge deal at the time. Then, looking back on the back end of the career, it was fun, it wasn't a huge deal," Nick said. "It was a lot of fun. But telling those guys to relax and have fun is the

biggest deal for them, and it's the hardest thing to do as freshmen."

That's just some of the advice Nick is prone to give, and he concedes anytime his brothers take his advice it's "a good day," and Nick's advice isn't lost on Joe.

And as Joe will quickly admit, it's not lost on the other members of this Penn State team, either.

"I look up to my brother for just about everything. He's got an answer for just about everything. I think he's helped me a lot," Joe said Feb. 22. "He always has good stuff to say and good advice, so I think most guys can agree he's a good guy to turn to for just about anything."

Joe's willingness to heed his brother's words and take them under advisement also isn't lost on Nick.

And it's in that willingness by Joe to listen, thus signifying the bond and relationship the brothers have, that perhaps rubs off on the whole team.

"Joe's been really good, I think

just more so than a lot of his life, at just being a young kid and still being receptive," Nick said. "I think that having brothers in the room is special for anyone, just because it's your family and I think it does bring the team that much closer."

That closeness that Sanderson knows so well and the situation of the three Lee brothers that closely mimics Sanderson's own collegiate experience, is one the 41-year-old feels will pay dividends down the road.

Part of it is because of their innate talent, sure.

But there's something more abstract and less quantifiable — a brother's bond and relationship — that Sanderson said gives both an edge.

"They obviously grew up training together talking about their plans, their goals and everything together," Sanderson said. "I think Nick's probably a great big brother just in that he leads by example and, as a result, they definitely feed off of each other."

For his sake, Sanderson's assessment and premonition could prove correct when the NCAA Tournament kicks off Thursday.

And Sanderson being Sanderson and Penn State being Penn State, it's hard to bet against them.

But Nick and Joe Lee being brothers and so bonded together makes it hard to bet against them as well — Joe in particular as he looks for an improved performance after the Big Ten Tournament.

"I think Nick's been important to help Joe bounce back after the Big Ten Tournament," Sanderson said. "It'll help Joe just believe in himself in knowing that he's capable of going in there and doing big things."

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Roster remix

Transfer portal shakes up program

By Evan Patrick
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

It looks like newly-hired head coach Micah Shrewsberry will have his work cut out for him

when he gets to Happy Valley. Six Penn State players reportedly entered the NCAA Transfer Portal Tuesday, including four starters and its leaders in points, assists, rebounds and steals.

Seniors Jamari Wheeler, John Harrar and Trent Buttrick, who all have an extra year of eligibility, are looking to move elsewhere.

Junior guards Izaiah Brockington and Myreon Jones, along with sophomore forward Seth Lundy, are the remaining players to reportedly be in the transfer portal.

The Nittany Lions' roster could look like a shell of its former self come the start of next season if all six players end up transferring, but that's not a certainty.

There is still the possibility that the aforementioned players return to Penn State despite entering the transfer portal.

There will also be plenty of opportunities for Shrewsberry and his staff to bring in their own transfers.

With the 2020-21 season not counting toward a player's eligibility, there will be an influx of players available in the transfer portal in the same situation as Wheeler, Harrar and Buttrick as they look to grad transfer.

But as of now — assuming all six decide to take their talents elsewhere — this is what the roster could look like for Shrewsberry next season.

Sam Sessoms and Myles Dread are the only players that were consistently in the rotation this past season who are not currently in the transfer portal.

Sessoms played arguably his best game of his Penn State career when the Nittany Lions lost to Wisconsin in the Big Ten Tournament, a game that resulted in a one-point loss that ended their season.

In that game, Sessoms put up 18 points on 7-for-11 shooting in just 16 minutes.

The transfer from Binghamton averaged 8.2 points per game

off the bench as one of the top reserve players in the Big Ten all season long. He appears poised to take over the starting point guard role next season if Wheeler eventually leaves the program.

Dread was moved into the starting lineup for Lundy midway through the season, and despite being just 6-foot-4, he played a majority of his minutes at the four spot.

The junior averaged 7.3 points per game on the year, and he is in a position to start once again next season.

Those two would have to carry the team, as they are the only players not currently in the portal that averaged over two points per game last year.

Freshman big man Abdou Tsimbila was used situationally as a backup behind Harrar and Buttrick, and he'll likely step into an expanded role in his second season with the team.

Outside of those three, the Nittany Lions will be reliant on a ton of young, inexperienced talent to fill the potential void.

Freshmen Caleb Dorsey, DJ Gordon and Dallion Johnson all saw minutes during Penn State's blowout loss to Purdue, and they'll likely be slotted into the rotation if a majority of players in the portal end up taking their talents elsewhere.

Redshirt freshman big Patrick Kelly also saw minimal time on the floor and could step into a role off the bench, as the Nittany Lions will be slim at the forward spot.

For the incoming recruiting class, there is currently only one player committed to the program, and that's Elijah Hutchins-Everett, who initially decommitted when former coach Pat Chambers resigned prior to the start of the season.

But Hutchins-Everett recently recommitted, and he would provide a huge boost to Penn State's front court.

At 6-foot-10 and 210 pounds, Hutchins-Everett is rated as a 3-star recruit by the 247Sports composite rating.

The Nittany Lions struggled with their lack of size on the interior all of last season, and the New Jersey native would provide just that.

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Rick Bowmer/AP

Micah Shrewsberry coached for the Boston Celtics prior to his time at Purdue. He was hired to be Penn State's next men's basketball head coach.

What will Shrewsberry provide Penn State?

By Justin Morganstein
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

It appears Penn State has found its head coach of the future, and it did so within the Big Ten.

The Nittany Lions have reportedly hired Purdue assistant coach Micah Shrewsberry to take the permanent head coaching job, first reported by Stadium's Jeff Goodman.

Shrewsberry, a 44-year-old from Indianapolis, is set to become the full-time head man and brings with him a storied basketball pedigree to State College.

His Division I coaching days began in his hometown, where he worked under Brad Stevens as an assistant at Butler.

While he worked as a head coach previously at NAIA Indiana University-South Bend, Shrewsberry's time at Butler is what was able to advance him, as he developed a close relationship with Stevens.

The relationship grew so close that in 2013, Stevens brought Shrewsberry on his staff with the Boston Celtics, giving him his first whiff of NBA air.

During his time in Boston, Shrewsberry quickly became one of the more respected young coaches in basketball, as his role in developing future stars such as Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown became

noticeable.

After his stint in the NBA, the assistant returned to his old stomping grounds at Purdue for a prominent role as the Boilermakers' associate head coach.

With a complex offensive mind-set paired with his extensive background of the game, Shrewsberry is someone who has been sought after by multiple college programs after he was brought back by Matt Painter's staff last season.

Penn State fans can expect Shrewsberry to bring with him a new identity, one that differs from the Pat Chambers/Jim Ferry era on multiple levels.

First, he is the first head coach Penn State has hired that had not been a head coach at the Division I level since Jerry Dunn in 1995.

But with that being said, his prior knowledge of the Big Ten comes with an interesting perspective.

It would be difficult to bring in someone completely unfamiliar to the conference, as it has been the most talented in the country over the past two seasons.

Just this season, the Big Ten sent an NCAA-best nine programs to the NCAA Tournament.

Another added benefit of hiring Shrewsberry is his recruiting ability, which has been a glaring issue at Penn State for decades.

Shrewsberry has two verbal 4-star commits ready to go to Purdue, including Jameel Brown of The Haverford School near Philadelphia.

If Shrewsberry can bring that type of talent to Penn State, it

could not only help the program in the long term, but it also could set the standard for Pennsylvania recruits to seriously consider becoming Nittany Lions.

Another slight change up from the previous regime Shrewsberry brings is an offensive mind.

While Ferry was brought in as the offensive coordinator under Chambers when he arrived, Shrewsberry was that guy for Painter.

Ferry didn't really have a chance to see if his offensive minded philosophy could work in University Park long term, but Shrewsberry will be able to carry over that experiment — provided he can keep most of Penn State's current roster intact.

That will be his first big task, as key contributors like Myreon Jones, Myles Dread and Izaiah Brockington are set to be seniors next season while Jamari Wheeler and John Harrar are eligible for one more year as fifth-year seniors.

Shrewsberry could do some pretty creative things with that group, all of whom have specific aspects of their game that can be improved with a new perspective at the helm.

But keeping those guys in Happy Valley will be priority No. 1, as building the foundation of a program can take years for any coach in college basketball to achieve.

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Lipscomb looks to diversify council

By Phoebe Cykosky
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

In order to raise awareness for issues that align with the 3/20 Coalition’s mission, Divine Lipscomb — a 38-year-old formerly incarcerated Penn State student — decided to run for a seat on the State College’s Borough Council.

Throughout his childhood, Lipscomb endured abusive step parents, molestation, and substance and drug abuse, but after his second release from prison, he made changes in his life.

Lipscomb was accepted to Penn State in 2017 and is now a senior majoring in rehabilitation and human services. His life experiences, along with “local issues” of diversity and inclusion, were what led him to run for council.

“The growing issues and levels of disrespect toward women and police brutality are some of the main reasons why I was inspired to run for council,” Lipscomb said. “The unacceptable death of Osaze Osagie and my work with the 3/20 Coalition are a big part of why I want to be on the council.”

The 3/20 Coalition formed after the death of Osaze Osagie two years ago. Osagie was a 29-year-old Black State College resident who had autism and a history of schizophrenia. He was shot and killed by State College Police officers on March 20, 2019.

When three officers arrived at Osagie’s apartment to serve a mental health warrant, Osagie allegedly ran at the officers with a knife. After an unsuccessful attempt to deploy a Taser on Osagie, he was allegedly shot by Officer M. Jordan Pieniazek.

Lipscomb said he is running for a State College Borough Council seat as a part of the “Our Communities Can’t Wait” campaign alongside two other candidates for local positions.

The “Our Communities Can’t Wait” slate includes co-leader of 3/20 Coalition Tierra Williams for Ferguson Township supervisor and Artistic Director for FUSE Productions Richard Biever for the State College Borough Council.

The campaign is sponsored by the PA United PAC, a member-led organization that strives to build a multi-racial, multi-generational grassroots movement that can run and win people-powered, people-funded campaigns across western Pennsylvania, according to its website.

“Since I’m a part of a slate candidacy, it may seem like we’re approaching things differently,” Lipscomb said. “But, we all have the same ultimate goal of seeing a happy, productive and flourishing community despite coming from a different background.”

Jesse Barlow, council president, said it is a “rare oc-



Lindsey Toomer/Collegian

Divine Lipscomb speaks at a protest organized by the 3/20 Coalition at the Allen Street Gates Sunday, June 7, 2020. The protest was one of many across the country following the death of George Floyd by a police officer.

currence” for students to be on the council, but he “wouldn’t be against it.”

“A student on council could give us a broader perspective on issues that students face,” Barlow said. “The older members of council have our own understanding of student issues, but a student could tell us what is truly going on.”

However, Barlow said students running could face difficulty from the community’s perceptions.

“The weaknesses of a student on the council could be how they are perceived by the community,” Barlow said. “The student on council might be distrusted by the community members that have a different perception of students.”

The borough has not had a student on the council since 1973. Dean Phillips served three out of the four years of his term before moving from State College to law school. In 2019, Tom Dougherty ran unsuccessfully as a junior at Penn State for the council.

Deanna Behring, a councilwoman and assistant dean of Agricultural Sciences and International Programs at Penn State, said there’s strength in diversity of having students on the council, though there are

“vulnerabilities” as well.

“Having a student’s voice helps diversify the voices at the table since they are typically much younger and come from a range of different backgrounds,” Behring said. “They bring fresh ideas but there’s a vulnerability rather than a weakness because students tend to be transient.”

Behring said she ran alongside Dougherty in 2019 when she was first elected onto the council and saw his campaign process as a student first-hand.

The council members, who are volunteers, encourage students to reach out regardless if they are interested in running for positions. According to Behring, the council holds graduate, undergraduate and high school representative seats to hear official student feedback, but councilmembers are “accessible” through email and social media.

“Any student who has an idea

or a concern should never feel shy to reach out to anyone on council for advice or an ear or action,” Behring said. “That’s our job to listen and help the people of this community — regardless if they are students or community members.”

According to Lipscomb, he’s been involved with social justice projects throughout his time at Penn State and served as the coordinator for the Restorative Justice Initiative at Penn State. However, he said he wants to see more of the community involved.

“I think it’s time to reimagine, renew and reinvest into the possibilities within State College,” Lipscomb said. “We cannot go wrong if we focus politics on people because that’s what’s missing today, but we typically leave the people out.”



Lily LaRegina/Collegian

Lipscomb participated in social justice projects at Penn State and served as the coordinator for Penn State’s Restorative Justice Initiative.

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