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The AAUP has signaled its dissatisfaction with university administrators' decision not to bring the union to the table when drafting its vaccine mandate.

TNR File Art

UC professors' union claims administration did not negotiate over vaccine mandate

Quinlan Bentley | News Director

The University of Cincinnati (UC) chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) says administrators did not reach out to negotiate whether the university would implement a COVID-19 vaccine mandate.

"The University did not approach the AAUP to negotiate whether or not it would implement a vaccine mandate," reads a Sept. 24 post on the AAUP's website, adding there has been nationwide debate surrounding whether public institutions are required to bargain with unions over vaccine mandates.

In its post, the AAUP cited opposing state rulings in California and New York. A judge in Boston recently ruled against a lawsuit filed by the State Police Association of Massachusetts, which sought in part to halt the governor's COVID-19 vaccine mandate for state workers while the two parties negotiated terms.

Regardless of whether such negotiations

are required, the AAUP has clearly signaled its dissatisfaction with university administrators' decision not to bring the union to the table when drafting its mandate.

However, the union did commend the administration for its collaboration with Faculty Senate in surveying faculty support for the mandate. The majority of faculty and staff who participated in that survey supported such a mandate.

Nearly two weeks after the university announced its vaccine mandate, the AAUP reached a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the administration.

Part of that agreement states university-provided vaccines and testing will be offered at no charge to union members. The agreement also states that faculty who fail to follow the vaccine mandate or testing requirements could be subject to disciplinary action.

Ultimately, the union said it supports vaccinations, mask guidance and

regular testing, citing an August statement from the national chapter of the AAUP.

"Institutions of higher education exist to serve the common good," the statement reads. "As sites of knowledge creation and scientific discovery, our colleges and universities are uniquely situated to provide leadership by amplifying and promoting trust in CDC guidelines and putting in place sound public health policies and practices, which should include making vaccination easy and convenient for all members of the campus community."

The deadline for students, faculty and staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 is Nov. 15.

ABOUT THE GUIDE

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What joining the Big 12 means for UC sports

Landon Bartlett | Sports Reporter

On July 1, 2024, the University of Cincinnati (UC) and all its athletic programs will be leaving the American Athletic Conference (AAC) and moving to one of the "Power Five" conferences in the Big 12. After a decade in the AAC, the move will bring fresh competition, recruiting, finances and fans to the university.

Big 12 athletic programs have been decorated as well as any over the last decade, something the Bearcats will have to adjust to quickly. UC women's basketball head coach Michelle Clark-Heard started her coaching career in the Big 12 and knows that the competition will be tough.

"It's going to be really important that we all go in and be able to try to compete [in the Big 12] from day one," Clark-Heard said.

Since 2018, the Power Five conference has



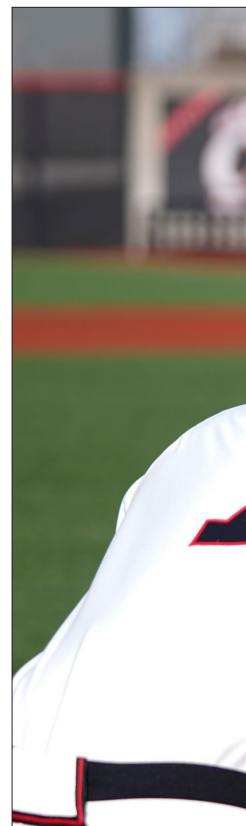
Provided | UC women's basketball head coach Michelle Clark-Heard

seen women's basketball, men's basketball, men's golf, men's track and field, men's swimming and women's tennis teams all win national championships representing the Big 12.

"The name recognition, the tradition those schools have, it'll be exciting," Cincinnati baseball head coach Scott Googins said. "Not only football and basketball, but baseball-wise you'll be able to come out and see Oklahoma State play, TCU or Texas Tech. It's been seven years in a row that the Big 12 has had a team in the college world series."

With Big 12 teams playing at the high level they are, Cincinnati's recruiting process could see change throughout all of its sports. The UC baseball team and coach Googins recruit primarily in the Midwest region but often compete against

UC baseball head coach Scott Googins





southern Power Five schools and lose out on top names. Due to the new label, coach Googins believes new opportunities will come.

"There's name recognition, there's a lot of tradition, they've got great venues," Coach Googins said. "They draw good crowds, so from that standpoint, we're hoping that increases our recruiting in being able to keep local kids here."

The branding and recruitment strategies have already started to take place, as the scoreboard of Cincinnati's Gettler Stadium dons the Big 12 logo, with Big 12 flags also waving in pride during home football games.

"We just don't get the notoriety or the respect that the Big 12 or SEC gets," coach Googins said. "So getting in with the Big 12 will bring name recognition."

UC women's basketball head coach Michelle Clark-Heard

Provided | UC baseball head coach Scott Googins



With name recognition comes a potential influx of cash flow that could upgrade sporting facilities around the university. Even with the pandemic, the Big 12's total revenue reached \$409 million during the 2020 year.

"[UC] have invested in us already, and I know that's something they'll continue to do," coach Clark-Heard said. "I know they're already working to raise money to be able to do the things that they need to do across the board for every sport."

An underrated aspect of the move is the impact on the Bearcat fans throughout Cincinnati and the surrounding areas, who will have the chance to watch big-name programs come to Clifton to take on the Bearcats in various sports. Re-sparking the old rivalry with West Virginia University and facing off against schools such as Oklahoma State or Kansas will excite fans while still playing AAC rivals UCF and Houston, who will be joining the Big 12 along with Cincinnati.

The Big 12's dominance in basketball over the last five years is hard to skim over. Adding one of the most decorated basketball programs in NCAA history in the Cincinnati Bearcats along with an ever-growing Houston Cougars program will solidify the men's and women's Bearcat basketball home games as a must-watch.

Around Clifton, shirts have been made with Big 12 branding, and the Bearcats have been receiving support on all social media platforms on an astronomical level. It is evident that UC fans are ready to face the new competition and will be with the Bearcat athletes every step of the way.

"I think it's huge [for the community]," coach Clark-Heard said. "Overall, I think it's something this city has been waiting for and to be able to embrace."

Pilot program continues work to imp

Quinlan Bentley | News Director

After experiencing a slight setback due to the coronavirus pandemic, a city program is pushing ahead to improve conditions of residential rental properties near the University of Cincinnati's (UC) main campus.

Cincinnati's Residential Rental Inspection pilot program was processing nearly 400 dwelling units in Clifton Heights, University Heights and Fairview (CUF), one of the city's largest student enclaves, in August, according to data provided by the city manager's office.

The four-year pilot program was established by an ordinance passed by the Cincinnati City Council in October 2019, with the goal being to improve "troubled rental properties" in neighborhoods with high rates of persistent code violations, according to the city's website. Neighborhoods targeted by the pilot program include CUF, East Price Hill and Avondale.

"This is part of a larger effort around ensuring everyone, including students, have safe, quality housing," Councilman Greg Landsman told The News Record.

City officials say common violations encountered by the program's inspectors are "missing or inoperable smoke detectors, leaking plumbing, leaking roof, plaster damage, obstructed fire escapes, electrical violations, defective decks or stairs and similar conditions."

CUF is consistently near the top of the city's ranking of neighborhoods with the most code enforcement cases, according to data from Cincinnati's Buildings & Inspections' Property Maintenance Division.

Over three years, the neighborhood had more than 3,500 code enforcement cases, data shows. In the last six months, there have been 446 code enforcement cases recorded by the city, though most of those cases are for trash, litter or tall grass complaints.

More than 80% of the CUF's occupied housing units are renter occupied, according to census estimates.

Though expected to start in May 2020, the emergence of COVID-19 that spring pushed the program's launch back until the fall, meaning the program has been in effect for around a year.

Under the pilot program, landlords or property owners were required to apply for a rental inspection certificate if their property:

- Is subject to a delinquent lead hazard control order issued by the Cincinnati Health Department;
- Has been ordered vacated by the city's building department but is still partially occupied;
- Has been determined a public nuisance;
- Has been the subject of two or more orders issued within a period of 12 months by city officials for code violations;
- Has been the subject of at least four validated complaints "received by the department of buildings and inspections of housing or zoning code violations within a twelve-month period;"

· Has been declared a chronic nuisance by the city of Cincinnati;

· Is currently facing, or has faced in the last two years, civil or criminal prosecution for violations of state, municipal or building code;

· And if the property is certified tax delinquent by the Hamilton County Treasurer.

"We are taking the issues that involve serious safety and health related problems as seriously as they ought to be taken by requiring those landlords or property owners who haven't resolved those safety and health issues ... to be part of this inspection program, where we work with them to resolve those outstanding issues," Landsman said.

Property owners are charged a base fee of \$100 per unit for initial inspections. Compliant buildings receive a four-year certificate, whereas buildings with non-compliant units will receive a one-year certificate after the issues are addressed.

"Those that fail to make the necessary corrections will be placed on a re-inspection schedule at 30-day interval, with the inspection fee per unit increasing each time a unit remains non-compliant," the city's website states. Re-inspection fees can reach as high as \$280 for persistently non-compliant units. City officials say these fees "are calculated only to support this program and cover the estimated implantation and administrative costs making it revenue neutral."



Prove 'troubled' housing near campus



A neighborhood bordering the University of Cincinnati's main campus is part of a city pilot program aimed at reducing evictions by addressing persistent code violations.

TNR File Art

Property owners who fail to reach compliance through re-inspections can potentially face legal action. Though the program "is not intended to be punitive," Landsman said.

But, persistent health and safety issues have deeper ramifications for the city's eviction rate, which is what this program seeks to address.

"... The relationship between the landlord

and the tenant starts to fall apart, like the building," Landsman said. "And that's when you start to see people get evicted."

"And so, those buildings where there's serious code violations are also the buildings where there's [a] high eviction rate," Landsman said, "meaning we can help lower, reduce evictions, if we can deal with these code violations."

Similar approaches have been effective in other cities, Landsman said. If the pilot program proves successful in Cincinnati, it will be implemented in more neighborhoods, he added.

While only certain properties are subject to the pilot program, city officials say students living in off-campus housing with suspected code violations can file a complaint by calling 513-352-3275.

Registration, regulation, promotion

How UC's Student Activities Board aides campus organizations

Kathleen Hornstra | Multimedia Director

At the University of Cincinnati (UC), campus is home to over 500 student organizations with a variety of interests. However, these opportunities would not be available without starting at the beginning with an organization that usually goes unnoticed – UC's Student Activities Board (SAB).

While also a subsection of UC's Undergraduate Student Government, SAB oversees almost every student organization on campus, excluding fraternities, sororities and club sports. If you're a registered student organization, they're here to help you out.

Fourth-year medical sciences student and SAB regulations and violations committee chair Angelo Bucci says one of the biggest things he likes to see is when new organizations are approved.

"Once we approve somebody's organization, particularly people who are really passionate or really excited to get an organization started," he said. "When we tell them that they've been approved, their faces light up and they get really excited."

SAB works and operates off three pillars – registration, regulation and promotion.

Starting with registration, students have the right to meet on campus for any reason, but if they would like to be recognized by the university and receive the perks of funding from the university's funding board, SAB will guide through the approval process. SAB is also required by federal and state law to reregister every student organization every year.

The next pillar is regulation, known for prevention and outreach. SAB must ensure that student organizations align



SAB oversees almost every student organization on campus.

Provided | Donovan Pugh

"I have been able to make lasting impacts to [many] organizations"

with university policy and follow the correct precedents, especially with recent COVID-19 guidelines implemented throughout campus.

Last is promotion, where SAB supports and connects students to organizations throughout the year. SAB hosts the Fall and Spring Organization Fair as well as the Student Organization Awards. The awards occur annually near the end of the spring semester to celebrate student involvement to recognize

those who have gone above and beyond and truly impacted the university.

Bucci feels like he has found his "spot" on campus. "I have been able to make lasting impacts to [many] organizations," he said.

Applications to become a part of SAB open in the fall and interviews promptly follow. However, SAB can have no more than 30 members at a time, and the same application process may happen in the spring, depending on member numbers.

"We are looking for people who don't have an ego and are selfless," SAB president and fourth-year operations management and business analytics student Donovan Pugh said. "Our entire organization is built off helping others." SAB wants members who can



The Student Advisory Board (SAB) is an organization that allows students to work with the Office of Student Activities & Leadership Development and Student Government to get UC students involved on campus.

Mary LeBus | TNR File Art

be impartial and be able to establish communities that the university needs.

Any student can apply to become a part of the SAB team, as the organization supports and prefers a diverse mix of majors and colleges. "We really like a diversity of majors [and] diversity of thought because it really helps us when we have discussions," Pugh said.

Every SAB member is required to join one of three committees within the organization. The new organization committee focuses on new student

organizations and helps them grow and thrive early on. The regulations and violations committee focuses on the regulation pillar.

The external committee focuses on planning external events. SAB also has two social media chairs who run the social media pages. They are even starting an initiative where different organizations can take over the page and promote themselves.

These committees are ways to be a

part of the team without necessarily having an executive position. "I really try to stress that even if you don't have a formalized position, you can make an impact just because you have to do so much while working in committee," Pugh said. "If there's something you want done, you can get it done without a title."

SAB hosts its regular board meetings, which are open to the public, on Thursday evenings from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in TUC 425.

From Notre Dame to Michael Young Jr. on being part of the Cincinnati Bearcat family

Owen Racer | Sports Editor

A love for the game of football and the desire for a change of scenery is all it took for a hungry leader to walk through the doors of University of Cincinnati football.

After three seasons and a degree at the University of Notre Dame, Michael Young Jr. arrived in Cincinnati with one request: "Jr." must be included on his new red and black jersey.

"It's only fair I'm listed as 'Jr.' so people know there's a Sr.," said Young Jr. on the representation he credits to his father, Michael Young Sr.

Young Jr. says his jersey is his way of giving credit where credit is due, admitting that his father has meant "literally everything" to him.

Young Jr. said his arrival in Clifton was a culture shock, later discovering that Clifton is its own entity in Cincinnati. Coming to play football was his first time in Cincinnati, arriving to a supportive receiving corps and familiar coach in offensive coordinator Mike Denbrock. Denbrock played a crucial role in Young's career, recruiting him to both Notre Dame out of high school and to Cincinnati as a transfer.

Despite putting on loud performances on the field, Young Jr., a soft-spoken wide receiver of the Cincinnati Bearcats football team, prefers to watch

football over going out. While earning a graduate degree in sports administration at the University of Cincinnati, Young Jr. leads the wide receiver's room of the No. 8 undefeated Cincinnati Bearcats football team.

"This is probably the most fun I've had playing football in my entire life," said Young Jr.

While being utilized as a resource on and off the field to his teammates, Young Jr. described being a part of the Bearcats success as a "heartwarming" feeling.

After admittedly labeling the receiver's room as the "cool" position group of the team, Young Jr. said the selflessness is contagious among the receiving corps.

To Young Jr., facing his former school on Oct. 2 was seemingly much bigger of a deal to the public than it was to him. Young Jr. said it was "business" and that he was prepared to do his job to the best of his ability. Young Jr. admits that he still gets to play football at the end of the day, which is why he is at peace with everything and able to keep moments small.

Regarding the College Football Playoff (CFP) noise that Cincinnati is rumored to "crash," Young Jr. admits he and his teammates hear it on the back burner, but do not let it affect them.



"This is probably the most fun I've had playing football in my entire life"

"When it's all said and done, you look back and your like - man, yeah we did that," said Young Jr., on when the rankings and noise will matter.

In his eyes, campus life has been the most significant difference between the two schools, and as far as football, he admitted experiencing the "Clifton-style" of win against Indiana University.

"We're not supposed to go on the road into a hostile environment and win," said Young Jr. on Cincinnati's back-to-back road appearances at top "power five" schools.

Young Jr. assured that another road win would be short-lived and that he and his teammates like to keep most moments small.

With a constant and contagious smile, the humbled "home-body" in Michael Young Jr. can be seen representing a quick jersey number eight on the field.

UC:



Landon Bartlett | Sports Reporter



Landon Bartlett | Sports Reporter

'It's the best decision I've ever made'

UC students find family through acapella group

Joí Dean | Life & Arts Editor

Founded in 2014, Vocaholics is a gender-inclusive, competitive pop acapella group at the University of Cincinnati (UC). Since then, they have had various members come and go due to graduation, but their value for a family-oriented atmosphere continues to permeate throughout each year of competing.

Ruby Cimmarusti, a fourth-year marketing and business analytics student and the president of the Vocaholics, has been a part of the acapella group since her freshman year at UC.

When she isn't handling her obligations as president, Cimmarusti can be found singing on stage as an alto. Aside from altos, Vocaholics a range of voices from sopranos to tenors and baritones and vocal percussionists, usually known as the beatboxer.

"[Acapella is] just like 'Pitch Perfect,'" said Cimmarusti. "We actually compete in the same competition that they do in the movie. It's called the ICCA."

Cimmarusti referred to The International Championship of Collegiate Acapella (ICCA), where the Vocaholics compete against other acapella groups in the spring.



Provided | Vocaholics

According to Cimmarusti, there are two main goals for Vocaholics. One of their goals includes emphasizing the group's professionalism. Whether they are performing at school or off campus, they focus on representing UC to the best of their ability. Their other goal is for everyone to enjoy doing what they love, surrounded by the people they love.

Caleb Gringnon, a fourth-year nutrition and dietetics student, is a vocal percussionist and has been a part of Vocaholics since freshman year.

He still remembers how nervous and anxious he was the day of auditions. "I was just this little kid who didn't put himself out there," he said.

He only knew that he loved show business due to being in show choir in high school. So, he thought that maybe he should give Vocaholics a try.

"[I] definitely messed up a lot, but I was really excited to be a part of something like that," he said.

Throughout his time being a part of the Vocaholics, he has many memories and many cherishable moments to choose from. Although Gringnon loves performing, some of his favorite moments aren't on the stage under the bright lights.

One of his favorite activities with Vocaholics is going on a retreat. It's a small getaway for the group to get to know each other and maybe even rehearse a couple of songs.

To Gringnon, there's something special about being able to build bonds with new people and continue to grow his current friendships while uniting through the power of music.

"We're like a family, and every new member who's a part of it comes together," he said. "We all become really close, and it's just a great group and I love it," he said.

Cimmarusti would agree. "[It's] the best decision I've ever made," she said.

Visit @vocaholicsuc on Instagram for more information.



"We're like a family, and every new member who's a part of it comes together"



Provided | Vocaholics



Provided | Vocaholics

New org brings students together through fermented foods

Joe Frye | Life & Arts Reporter

During their freshman year at the University of Cincinnati, Nick Shaw, a third-year medical sciences student, and Joseph Bertrand, a third-year computer engineering student, were discouraged by the lack of student organizations that they found interesting. Both Shaw and Bertrand were looking for an organization where they could hang out, have a good time and meet other students. This gave them the idea of starting their own student organization, but they didn't know what they wanted the club to focus on – until the pandemic hit.

Like others stuck at home, Shaw took to the kitchen to pass the time. While most people were making banana bread and whipped coffee, Shaw was fermenting food to make kombucha and sauerkraut. Bertrand was already familiar with the fermentation process but hadn't tried it himself and was intrigued by Shaw's kombucha making. From there, Shaw and Bertrand had an idea to turn a pandemic pastime into a student organization.

"[We thought to ourselves] wouldn't it be so cool if we created a student organization about fermenting your own food," Shaw said. "I had never heard of anything, anywhere that's like that. So, I

thought it would be a cool idea." "There's not too much to it," Bertrand said. "Just an idea of 'Let's start this club for fun.'"

After several months of brainstorming, Shaw and Bertrand came up with the idea of learning about fermentation with making friends. Last March, they presented their idea to the Student Activities Board (SAB) for official approval and have been hosting bi-weekly meetings since, with the club growing to nearly 60 members.

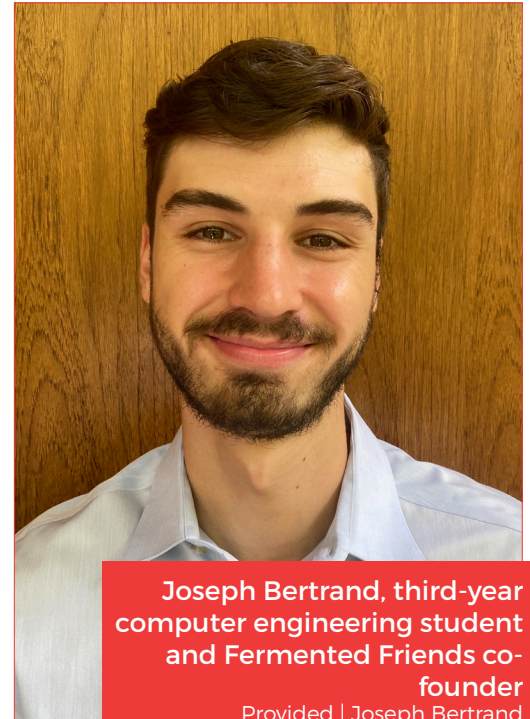
"We thought it would be great to bring people with niche interests together because those types of people are generally compatible," Bertrand said. "We've seen people from all different backgrounds coming together."

Each meeting, the club focuses on a topic while going into a deep dive on the subject. At a recent meeting, the members were given a presentation on kombucha - addressing its history, health benefits and how to make it at home safely. Samples of different kombucha flavors were also provided for members to try.

The club also takes an active role in helping to protect the wider fermented food community. The club recently voted to ask Ohio's senators to support the Kombucha Act in Congress, which seeks to raise the alcohol by volume percentage that determines whether a drink is alcoholic. This would protect kombucha makers from taxes aimed at alcoholic beverages due to fluctuations in kombucha's alcohol by volume during shipping.

To remain inclusive to all members, the club avoids discussing perhaps the best-known fermented food, alcohol.

"We just want to make sure that we



Joseph Bertrand, third-year computer engineering student and Fermented Friends co-founder
Provided | Joseph Bertrand

are compliant and true to our mission of making this a safe place for anyone to be," Shaw said. "Many of our members are under the drinking age, so we don't want to exclude them."

The club isn't solely about learning about fermented foods but also fostering a sense of community through spending time with one another. The club recently hosted a BYOK (bring your own kombucha) hammock hang in partnership with the mountaineering club and will host Fermented Fiesta, focusing on fermented salsas. These meetings help the club create a spot where anyone can come and feel welcome while also adhering to the common interest of fermented foods.

"It's been amazing to watch something that we came up with in our dorm room grow and blossom into this organization that I see people excited to come to our meetings and to be able to have this place that was able to facilitate building friendships, having a good time and learning about fermenting foods," said Shaw.

Visit @fermentedfriendsuc on Instagram for more information.



Nick Shaw, third-year medical sciences student and Fermented Friends co-founder
Provided | Nick Shaw

Meet the president of UC's Programs and Activities Council

Emma Segrest | Features Editor

At the University of Cincinnati (UC), they are always unique events and activities students can attend, such as concerts, trivia, crafts and more. These events didn't magically appear on campus; behind the fun facade is a dedicated team organizing, promoting and scheduling everything to the minute. This dedicated team is called the Programs and Activities Council (PAC), the "premier event programming board" of campus.

From bringing big-name speakers and performers to campus to inventing the wackiest activities for students to check out, PAC is well established on campus. Leading PAC this year is fourth-year economics student Austin Woods.

Woods felt drawn to PAC as a first-year and remembers attending the activities fair and feeling overwhelmed at the choices available. Then, he saw the PAC booth.

"I wanted to find a small community with whom I shared values, respected and wanted to spend time outside of school," said Woods. "I approached the PAC table, saw what it had to offer and immediately wanted to learn more."

This year Woods is the president of PAC. Overseeing one of the largest groups on campus seems like a daunting challenge to many, but for Woods, it's all part of the fun. Woods describes PAC as dedicated and many members of PAC would describe Woods the same way.

Grace Deerad, a psychology and organizational leadership student, serves as social media chair for PAC.



PAC is UC's premier event programming board and is one of the largest groups on campus.

Provided | Austin Woods

"Austin has elevated PAC's dedication by being one of the most dedicated PAC members that I've ever seen in the organization and that's incredible for morale," said Deerad.

Woods' dedication springs from his love of creating zany events for students, one of his favorites is ziplining in the spring.

Woods believes that PAC truly amplifies what it means to be a Bearcat at UC. He wants to make this experience accessible to all students, as PAC is more than just flashy events.

"We know that life as a college student isn't as easy as some may think; we always work toward providing a safe space for students to enjoy positive experiences and hopefully make some friends along the way," said Wood. "We value student opinions and take feedback about our events seriously."

Other students involved with PAC share Woods' beliefs as well. Deerad sees PAC as a way for students to be recognized and feel included on campus.

"My favorite PAC event we've had was when we brought Karamo Brown from *Queer Eye* to speak and do a moderated Q&A," said Deerad. "We had an incredible turnout and the event was very uplifting. The community was so inclusive and wonderful."

Woods knows that PAC has heightened his college experience in more ways than one. Not only did he learn to establish himself on a team and expand his perspectives, but he has discovered a found family as well.

"This being my fourth year in PAC, I've been able to grow along with other members and the organization itself," said Woods. "I wouldn't trade my experience or workload for anything. I really feel like I have found the community I have been looking for."



Provided | Austin Woods

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