

Bill curbs FAFSA confusion

By Lulu Douglas
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The University Park Undergraduate Association announced in November it would be financing a campaign to help students understand changes to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

The bill was passed unanimously on Nov. 29, 2023.

Matthew Roy, a co-author of the bill, said the campaign focuses on researching FAFSA, but the “main focus” is advertising.

“A lot of times the national congressional stuff is not very easy for people to find,” Roy, a third-year studying geobiology, said.

Prior to Dec. 31, the day when the FAFSA form opened, advertisements funded by the bill ran on Penn State Stall Stories, Instagram stories and several other sites.

The United States Congress made several changes to FAFSA for the 2024-25 academic year with the release of the FAFSA Simplification Act.

According to Roy, the bill honed in on the two “key” changes that were relevant to Penn State students.

“First is that Pell Grant eligibility has expanded,” Roy said. “It is going to include more people at the poverty line.”

According to The Office for Federal Student Aid, “610,000 new students from low-income backgrounds will be eligible to receive Federal Pell Grants.”

Zion Sykes, chair of the Governmental Affairs Committee, said UPUA has been attentive to Pell Grants, and initiatives pertaining to them are “on the docket.”

“Pell Grants are something we are definitely looking forward to working on,” Sykes, a third-year studying political science and global and international studies, said.

The second main FAFSA change addressed in the advertisements was the removal of the expected family contribution (EFC) metric.

“Essentially (this) removes the number of family members from the payment calculations,” Roy said. “This allows, again, more lower-income houses to get financial aid because it creates a lower minimum score (Student Aid Index).”

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Kate Hildebrand/Collegian

Fans storm the court after the Penn State men's basketball game against Wisconsin on Tuesday in the Bryce Jordan Center. The Nittany Lions beat the Badgers 87-83.

Penn State storms court after upset of Wisconsin

By Spencer Ripchik
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The clock hit zeros. Penn State had the ball and the game was over.

From both sides of the court, students flocked toward the center of the court where Ace Baldwin Jr. stood with the rest of his teammates on the Penn State logo. The Penn State community jumped up and down in the center of the court, celebrating its highest-ranked win since 2019.

“I ain’t going to lie. I have never been in a situation like that,” Baldwin said. “It was like a great feeling ... that’s exactly why I came here. Just for that experience. It was a great experience.”

Mike Rhoades had a different immediate reaction to his team knocking off No. 11 Wisconsin. He searched through the crowd to find his sons, who came to the game without their mother and sister. Once he spotted them, the emotions and magnitude of what he just accomplished set in.

“This is what college basketball is all about,” Rhoades said. “These are the moments where you’re in the office at 6 a.m. or stay past midnight or you’re on the road recruiting. Moments like this are why you do that stuff. It’s pretty cool.”

Penn State beat Wisconsin 87-83, giving Rhoades his first ranked win at Penn State since he took over in the spring.

The conditions for the game weren’t ideal. There was a couple of inches of snow on the ground that canceled classes, and it had a school-night tip at 9 p.m., but the students still came. The Bryce Jordan Center was on its feet for most of the game and especially the final minutes.

“Our students were awesome,” Rhoades said. “I think they fueled us down the stretch and were a part of it. That’s what I want as a coach here. I want our students and our fans to sweat with us, be involved with us and make it bigger than basketball. Tonight it was.”

Penn State’s not known for court stormings. The Nittany Lions haven’t had a major ranked

win at home since December 2019 when Penn State beat No. 4 Maryland in State College. Since then, Penn State is on its fourth head coach.

A lot has changed since then, but this caliber of moment is what the Nittany Lions want to use to change the narrative at Penn State.

“As you know, Penn State has been historically a football school,” Penn State’s leading scorer Kanye Clary said. “Coach Rhoades always said, ‘We’re gonna be bold, different and aggressive,’ ... I think going forward this is going to help us because we showed a lot of people what we are capable of. We are just going to do our part. Just try to be consistent and continue what we got going.”

Rhoades has done a lot to change the “football school” narrative. Before the game, he put out a new rule that when Penn State takes the floor, he wants the Bryce Jordan Center to be standing. During the game, Rhoades waves his arms up and down when the Nittany Lions are on defense to get the crowd going.

He also told his players that it’s important when they are out in the community to shake people’s hands, ask them how their days were, take photos with them and make them a part of the team. After the game, Rhoades had a line of people wanting to take photos with him, and he answered their requests. Right behind him were his players taking photos with fans, too.

Rhoades called it “selling the program.”

Most of the selling is going to be the success on the court. Fans are happiest when their team wins and Tuesday night was an example of that, but there is still a lot of season to go and Rhoades understands this is just the beginning.

“Let’s see how many times we can do that,” Rhoades said. “Let’s put ourselves out there for the heck of it. Let’s see what else we can do this year and have fun ... That’s the fun of it. Let’s not just do this for ourselves, but let’s do it for everybody.”

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Expanding education for incarcerated students

By Reece Coren
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Times are changing. Perhaps it’s time for education to change, too.

In July, incarcerated students across the United States received access to federal Pell Grant aid for the first time since 1994 due to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid Simplification Act.

In response, Penn State’s Restorative Justice Initiative will begin offering accredited courses for the first time in 2024, kickstarting its for-credit degree program.

Alongside Villanova, Penn State will be the second university to offer a bachelor’s degree to individuals incarcerated in a Pennsylvania prison, according to Prison Education Program Manager Liana Cole.

The program will consist of a small cohort of students earning a bachelor’s degree in rehabilitation and human services. Once the organization establishes a foundation, Cole said RJI hopes to eventually offer a variety of types of degrees and majors.

She said Congress signing the FAFSA Simplification Act has created a “moment of opportunity” to expand access to higher education.

RJI Director Efraín Marimón said the group is “a broader umbrella organization that supports multiple efforts and initiatives for individuals who are incarcerated, formerly incarcerated

ated or system impacted.”

“We believe education is a human right,” Marimón said. “Everyone should have access to education.”

He said RJI initially began with members teaching classes at the Centre County Correctional Facility during the 2015-16 school year. Within the next few years, RJI was collaborating with multiple state correctional facilities, Marimón said.

While working with state correctional facilities, members of RJI started thinking about how to evolve the initiative to lead to a “degree-type program,” Marimón said. In 2019, RJI received a grant to pursue a prison education program.

Since then, Cole said RJI has been hosting workshops in a variety of subject matters — including art education, creative writing, entrepreneurship, legal literacy, theater, philosophy and more.

Although the workshops aren’t for credit, Cole said they provide the opportunity to learn and build on various skills.

In all, Cole said RJI teaches around 200 students each year in the workshops. She said RJI offers about 10 to 15 workshops per semester, each consisting of a range between five and 20 students.

Aside from providing education, he said RJI is in the process of developing services for formerly incarcerated individuals in

additional aspects of life including housing transitioning and mentorship support.

Along with Rising Scholars, a three-day program to help prepare formerly incarcerated people who are interested in going to college, Cole said RJI hosts Justice Education Week every year in April to raise awareness about the United States’ incarceration crisis.

Marimón said RJI partners with the nonprofit furniture store CentrePeace, which provides social and vocational skills to people incarcerated at CCCF by selling used furniture and household goods to the general public, according to the Chamber of Business & Industry of Centre County.

RJI also partners with community organizations like the Centre County Criminal Justice Planning Department and the Rock Ethics Institute, Divine Lipscomb, a graduate assistant with RJI, said.

He said RJI also hosts a Reentry Simulation that allows people to walk through a month in a formerly incarcerated person’s shoes.

He said members of RJI currently teach in six correctional facilities: CCCF, the Quehanna Boot Camp and State Correctional Institutions — Benner

Township, Rockview, Albion and Huntingdon.

Education has been proven to lower recidivism rates and increase a person’s chance of being employed, Cole said.

“Everybody deserves access to (education) — even people with life sentences,” Cole said.

A former RJI instructor herself, Cole said students who’ve experienced incarceration often help facilitate dialogue.

Continue reading here:



Chris Eutsler/Collegian

The Centre County Correctional Facility in Bellefonte is the initial site where members of the Restorative Justice Initiative began teaching classes. Now, RJI is offering accredited courses.

On-campus recycling boosts sustainability

By **Elbia Vidal Castillo**
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Editor’s Note: Some of the names in this story have been changed to protect the identities of the individuals involved. The Daily Collegian has verified through fact checking these individuals exist.

Penn State has implemented a recycling process across campus, which includes an organized division of recycle bins that aim to help with environmental sustainability.

Everywhere around campus, students and faculty members can see the waste stations with different recycle bins designed by Penn State Sustainability.

Each waste station has six different waste stream bins, intentionally organized by food waste only (compost), trash (landfill), mixed paper and newspaper, metal (aluminum cans), glass and plastic bottles.

Ayodeji Oluwalana, waste reduction and recycling program manager, said the bins are emptied daily and taken to each building’s loading dock, where a crew comes to pick them up.

Each recycling bin is then transported to the Centre County Recycling and Refuse Authority, where they are processed, compacted and sold to companies that will use them as raw materials for new products.

On occasion, Oluwalana said recyclables are thrown into the

wrong bin and need to be sent to the landfill with the regular trash.

Every recycling bin is collected and separated independently in the source-separation process.

The process doesn’t allow mixing of different recycling bins, since this contaminates the landfill and cannot be recycled.

“I will say that our recycling streams are fairly OK, but we are still experiencing an average weekly contamination rate of about 40%,” Oluwalana said. “This is not acceptable, and we are working on continuously educating students about the importance of this process.”

According to Oluwalana, the majority of the contamination is coming from the residence halls and dining locations across campus.

One of the main issues concerning the contamination in dining hall areas is food waste since it’s part of the recycling and composting process on campus.

In partnership with Student Affairs and Sustainability, the dining halls limit food waste by using a menu management system called FoodPro to accurately predict the amount of students and food portions served during any meal period.

This, combined with batch cooking during the meal period, allows them to limit food waste and leftovers.

“Some leftover food can be re-utilized into additional meal peri-

ods,” Jim Meinecke, the director of residential dining, said. “We try to recover food and deliver these meals to various local organizations supporting those in need.”

In order to track compost, the staff also uses Leanpath as a food waste management tracking system.

“This allows us to track compost, both pre-consumer and post-consumer,” Meinecke said. “Pre-consumer information allows us to follow up with kitchen staff to better understand why something was composted. It also allows us to better educate on how to limit food waste.”

This information is shown to students by educational signs and shared on the Penn State Sustainability webpage.

Sammy, a student who wished to remain anonymous, said in order to inform students about the process, the university “need(s) to show them how important it is.”

As a former resident assistant and alumna, Sammy said “most students don’t notice the recycling bins.”

“Some may think it’s not even worth it to separate the trash,” Sammy said. “But with this process, we are actually contributing with something that can help not only us, but the whole planet in the long run.”

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Alexandra Antoniono/Collegian

A man argues with supporters of Palestine at the March for Gaza at the Allen Street Gates in November 2023.

Israel-Hamas war sparks reactions from Penn State community

By **Abigail Shanley**
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Editor’s Note: Some of the names in this story have been changed to protect the identities of the individuals involved. The Daily Collegian has verified through fact checking these individuals exist.

Over 20,000 deaths and three months later, the latest Israel-Hamas war continues to unravel.

Though the war is over 5,800 miles away, members of Penn State’s community aren’t immune to its effects.

As a first-generation immigrant, John, a Penn State Palestinian student who chose to remain anonymous due to fear of retaliation for pro-Palestinian activism, said the conflict in Gaza has been affecting him his entire life.

John said he was “lucky” to have been able to go back to Palestine three times to visit extended family but has not always felt welcome when he’s there.

With his extended family living in the West Bank in Palestine, John said they’re “all at risk.”

He said his cousin was going to university in the West Bank, but her college got shut down because it was too dangerous due to the conflict in Gaza.

“I can’t imagine what (my family) is going through,” John said. “But even here, it’s unfair (Palestinians) have to hide our faces from being doxed online just at protests.”

Through the past three months, John has remained “hopeful.”

“I hope there can be a two-state solution. We’ve tried to do things peacefully in the past,” John said. “But every time it always ends in conflict, I just hope for the best I really do.”

When Alyssa Kleiner graduated from Penn State in 2019, she moved to Israel and enlisted in the Israel Defense Forces.

Kleiner said she first felt her connection to Israel from her birthright trip in 2017 and saw herself living there after her internship in 2018.

“I didn’t believe that I could live here, reaping all the benefits of the country without doing my part to serve and protect the Jewish people and the people of Israel,” Kleiner said.

In March 2020, Kleiner said she was drafted to “special forces artillery corps,” where she worked with drones used for reconnaissance.

After Kleiner finished her time in the IDF, she stayed in Israel and started working for Aeronautics Group, an aerial defense company.

“Being a part of the IDF gave me connections to people all over Israel, and it’s what essentially integrated me completely into Israeli culture,” she said.

Even in Israel, Kleiner said she found several Penn State

alumni who went to Shabbat dinners, where Kleiner’s “deeper connection” to her Jewish heritage began.

“I loved being a part of the Jewish community at Penn State,” Kleiner said. “It really gave me a feel for community, it was like my small little Israel.”

Kleiner’s personal connections to Israel stem past it being her home.

“Everyone in this country, every single person, either knows someone directly who has been murdered or kidnapped,” Kleiner said. “This (conflict) has been going on for 75 years, but this time everyone is witnessing it on live TV.”

Tamir Sorek, a Penn State liberal arts professor who teaches HIST 140: The History of the Israel-Palestine Conflict (1917-Present), said he has a personal connection to the war, since he’s lived through it.

“I was born in Western Galilee, Israel,” Sorek said. “Growing up, we had Katyusha missiles flying above our heads.”

While Sorek was born and raised in Israel, he said he doesn’t “subscribe to the ideology of the state.”

“I grew up as a Jewish Israeli, and I remain a Jewish Israeli,” Sorek said. “I do not consider myself a Zionist and do not identify with the policy of the state. I do not share my political view with the vast vast majority of Jewish Israelis.”

Sorek said learning to separate what he was told and what he knows took years of educating himself through reading documents, writing books and mainly listening to people who had different life experiences and see the same thing from a different point of view.

Many years later, Sorek came to learn that those who lived on the other side of the border, lived in his childhood community before their families were forced to leave.

“The (Palestinans) were expelled. So they’re frustrated they’re angry. They have rights that they want to take back,” Sorek said.

The war has nothing to do with Palestinian or Israeli identity, Sorek said.

The events since Oct. 7, 2023, have reminded him that “humans are a shitty species.”

“Humans can do horrible things to each other — this isn’t new to me,” Sorek said.

Sorek said what’s happening in Gaza shouldn’t be considered “war” but rather “as hell.”

“The vast majority of people who are dead are civilians,” Sorek said. “But that is not shaking my belief in shared humanity. ... I do not stand with Israel, and I do not stand with Palestine.”

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Kate Hildebrand/Collegian

Professor of music Mark Lusk plays trombone during a faculty recital. “He’s really committed a large part of his life to music and to bringing others together. It’s his message — it’s his calling,” student Brian Johnson said.

Music professor enters 37th year at Penn State

By **Daniela White**
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

As a Penn State professor of music for 37 years, Mark Lusk has impacted many of his students’ lives, most of whom are part of the PSU Trombone Choir.

“The trombone choir is right at the heart of everything we do,” Lusk said. “I see these people individually on a regular basis in their lessons throughout the week, but the trombone choir is really our dinner table, and that’s where we all get together and play and talk.”

As the father of seven, Lusk said the choir and his students are his second family, and every Sunday, the choir gathers to play as one.

“What we’re trying to do is take a piece of music, pick it apart and piece it back together,” Lusk said. “I try to help them with whatever journey they’re on individually, but that Sunday night experience is so galvanizing. It just makes them all connected.”

Andrew Zall, the teaching assistant of the PSU Trombone Choir, said Lusk taught him and members of the choir to “always ‘put the music first and good things will happen.’”

“There’s a lot of things that you can’t control in the world and life, but when the time comes to making music and getting the

job done musically, if you put the music first, then good things will happen,” Zall, a graduate student studying trombone performance, said.

Having spent six years in the trombone choir, Zall said the choir provided him with lots of musical opportunities, as well as friends he could call family.

“It’s a very close, tightknit group of people,” Zall said. “And Professor Lusk is a friend — he’s more like family than a professor.”

Zall said a trombone choir concert will “take you through a range of emotions.”

“To experience a trombone choir concert here will have moments that bring you to tears, moments that have you laughing and moments that are really powerful,” Zall said.

President of the PSU Trombone Choir Colson Board said Lusk isn’t only a professor but a mentor as well.

“(Lusk) teaches the trombone, but more importantly he teaches music,” Board, a third-year studying musical performance, said. “He always says, ‘The world needs more musicians, the world doesn’t need any more trombone players.’”

Board said Lusk tries to provide members of the choir with all of the musical resources they need to become successful

musical educators or performers.

Third-year choir member Brian Johnson said there are an “infinite number of ways” Lusk has impacted him.

“I’ve had many great teachers, but (Lusk) is a visionary in his own characteristic way,” Johnson, a third-year studying supply chain and information systems, said. “He’s really committed a large part of his life to music and to bringing others together. It’s his message — it’s his calling.”

Johnson said Lusk encourages members of the choir to utilize their sound.

“That’s why (Lusk) teaches trombone choir as a literal choir because it is,” Johnson said. “We play songs that are sung. We just recently did a Frank Sinatra theme, and we’ve done operas in the past.”

Johnson said Lusk openly shared his personal struggles with his students, telling a message “not of suffering, but things to learn from.”

“(Lusk) had such a measurable impact on my life,” Johnson said. “One last thing I could say just to describe Mark is that he is vintage beyond valuation.”

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UPUA

FROM Page 1.

The EFC was “replaced” by the SAI, which is an index used by colleges to determine how much federal student aid a student would need in order to attend a school.

Mark Brown, a first-year council member who shadowed representatives on the bill, said this alteration would change “what the government thinks parents should contribute” in terms of college payments.

Additionally, Brown, a first-year studying political science, noted the decrease in the number of required questions.

According to FAFSA,

applicants can now skip up to 26 questions depending on their personal circumstances.

The premise for the bill was to “let people understand what is changing and how they should go about it,” Sykes said. “It will be a good thing to keep it on the minds of people, and show them what might be a little different.”

Following UPUA’s campaign, Brown said, the organization plans to continue informing students about these changes via word of mouth.

The advertisements are no longer running; however, information on FAFSA changes will still be located on the Penn State’s Student Aid site and Federal Student Aid platforms.



Tyler Mantz/Collegian

Penn State University Park Undergraduate Association Vice President Giselle Concepcion, left, and President Nora O’Toole listen to remarks during the weekly meeting at the HUB-Robeson Center on Jan. 10.

Capturing vs. living in the moment

On Sunday night, I embarked on my third-ever concert experience and joined the electrifying atmosphere of Travis Scott’s performance at the Bryce Jordan Center for “Utopia — The Circus Maximus Tour.” Initially holding tickets in the nosebleed section, fortune smiled upon my friend group as we snagged pit tickets, just 30 minutes before the concert started. We promptly sold our original tickets, enhancing our



Seelig

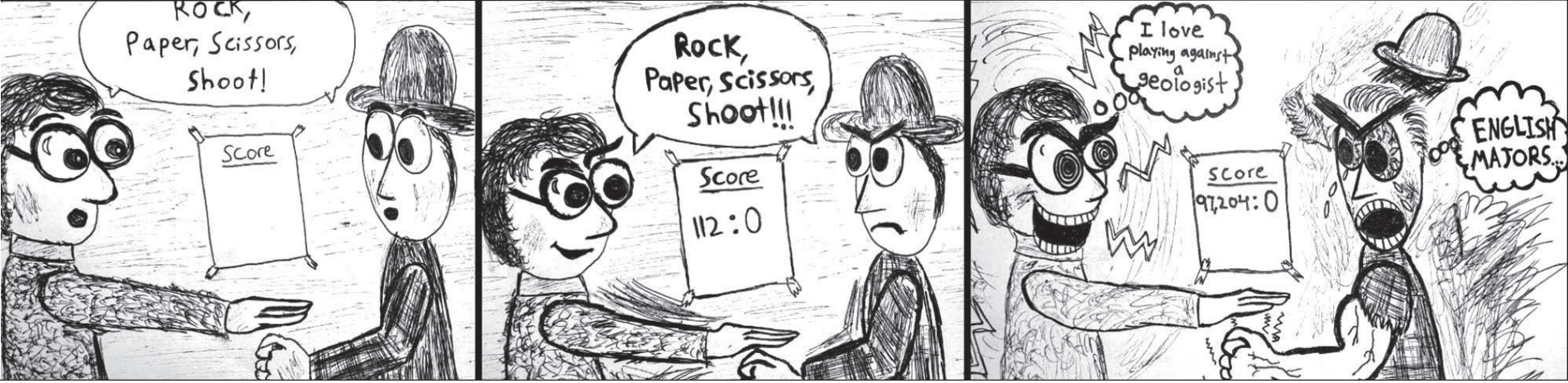
concert adventure. Stepping onto the floor, I found myself engulfed in an entirely unexpected experience. The fire from the stage pricked my face with heat, smoke wafted into my nostrils and the music made the floor beneath me pulsate. Amidst the crowd of enthusiastic concertgoers, we collectively bounced to our favorite songs, immersed in the buzz of Scott’s words filling the arena. Yet, a bittersweet observation colored my concert euphoria: the prevalence of phones. Despite stashing my phone in my back pocket to fully savor the life moment, a glance around revealed that many in the

crowd were viewing the concert through their screens. It struck me as a paradox — a gathering of people ostensibly united by a shared musical experience, yet disconnected by the glow of their devices. In a sea of screens, I couldn’t help but feel a tinge of sadness while witnessing an audience more focused on capturing the moment than relishing it. The juxtaposition of vibrant energy and digital detachment painted a pitiful picture. As Scott commanded the stage, the pervasive glow of screens seemed to underscore a collective struggle: balancing the desire to document every second

and the importance of truly being present in the moment. There is irony in that people would rather capture memories on their phones while potentially missing out on the genuine, unfiltered magic unfolding right before their eyes. It’s a modern dilemma, where the quest for the perfect shot competes with the richness of the live experience. In essence, the concert became a reflection of a contemporary challenge — finding harmony between the desire to share every moment online and the essence of immersing oneself fully in the now. As the music throbbed around

us, I couldn’t escape the sense that, in this digital age, the real concert is not just on the stage but in the collective ability to embrace the present moment — phones tucked away and hearts tuned in to the live heartbeat of the music. For those reading this, I ask that the next time you find yourself watching an artist live, enjoy being with those around you while singing along to the music you came to hear.

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Cartoons by Kathleen McGill

SATIRE | Surviving State College snow

The name “spring semester” is kind of a lie at the Pennsylvania State University. Snow can last until March in Happy Valley, making it a winter wonderland. Attempting to cross campus in below freezing temperatures is one of the arduous ordeals students can undertake in their time here. Therefore, as a seasoned elder in all things Penn State, I’ve been asking experts for advice on surviving a State College winter, and their research is found below. Stay warm out there.



Dyreson

— especially regarding winter weather. There is nothing humans can do to change the climate (*Editor’s Note: Once again Braden shows no regard for objective reality*), so the only thing left to do is complain. Honestly, complaining is a great awkward-conversation-starter. **Molly** In my humble opinion, almost all of my problems have been relieved by doing Molly. As most of us know, Molly is the street name for a synthesis of heroin and cocaine. She’s also that girl in your Spanish class who you become increasingly more attracted to over the course of the semester. You and Molly aren’t a complete pipe dream, but you only

interact in class. That is, until you and Molly are in the same group for a final project. You give your A-game to the project. Molly even texts an “lol” when you make a joke in the group chat. But that cruel mistress fate never makes the spark fly enough. You smile at each other but then watch as the group chat falls further in your messages app, as no one talks over winter break. The next semester, as you exit Willard, you see Molly with a group of friends. You straighten your posture. Gary’s preaching is like a soundtrack for the scene. You both wave and say hi, asking how your respective breaks were. The conversation is friendly if slightly awkward. You cut it short by saying you have to get to your next class.

“In my humble opinion, almost all of my problems have been relieved by doing Molly.” Braden Dyreson

And as you lay in your bed at night, watching the paint chips fall from your apartment ceiling, you imagine the life you and Molly could’ve had together. You’re not willing to accept that you were in love with the idea of Molly, not the real Molly. That’s one type of Molly, but the drug type of Molly is pretty rad at keeping you warm this semester. When you feel that white-hot lead hit your veins, there’s no chance you’re getting cold. **Wearing Layers** Wearing layers is your best defense against the cold. You want to be able to shed layers — so you don’t get that chilled — when you sweat.

Braden Dyreson is a senior majoring in philosophy, film and classic and ancient Mediterranean studies and a columnist for The Daily Collegian. Email him at bsd5216@psu.edu or follow him on X at @BradenDyreson.



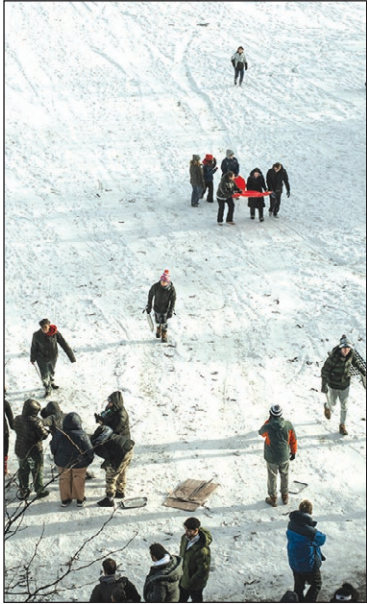
Joel Haas/Collegian

Students spend the snow day by playing football on the Old Main lawn.



Kate Hildebrand/Collegian

Snow covers West residence halls on campus during Tuesday’s snow day. Students received a four-day weekend.



Alexandra Antoniono/Collegian

The HUB-Robeson Center lawn is a popular sledding spot among students.

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NWSL IMPACT

Five Penn State players head to the pros following women's soccer draft

By Lyle Alenstein
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Most kids dream of playing a sport at the professional level. Penn State had five players waiting to hear their names called on Friday in Anaheim, California, and that dream turned into a reality after being selected by several different National Women's Soccer League teams.

Kate Wiesner got the party started by being the first Nittany Lion off the board when she was selected seventh overall by the Washington Spirit. Her teammates continued the blue and white draft train, as Payton Linnehan, Ellie Wheeler, Cori Dyke and Katherineman heard their names called throughout the night.

"I am incredibly proud of Kat, Cori, Payton, Ellie and Kate, and I fully believe that each of them will bring something special to the NWSL," coach Erica Dambach said. "When these young women first picked up a soccer ball when they were little and hit the field for the first time, they all dreamed of this night."

The selections broke the previous program record of three drafted players in 2016. The team also tied BYU for the second-most selections from a single team in this year's draft, trailing North Carolina who had six.

As the players prepare to join their new teams, they will be added to the extensive list of Penn State alumni who heard their name called on draft night and headed to the NWSL.

With the 2024 draft concluded, the recent class of blue and white graduates will make it 22 total players that have been selected to play at the highest and most competitive level.



Forward Payton Linnehan celebrates scoring a goal with her teammates during the NCAA Tournament soccer game against Central Connecticut State at Jeffery Field.

Penn State was the only team in the Big Ten with multiple selections on Friday, and was just one of 11 teams to have more than one player chosen.

As evident by the recent draft's showing, the Penn State women's soccer program has proven to be a factory for talent on the big stage.

Happy Valley to the NWSL has become a pipeline. That's become evident for multiple teams at the next level, who have a keen eye for talent coming from Jeffery Field.

Continuing the trend from last year's draft when Ally Schlegel and Penelope Hocking found themselves reunited with the Chicago Red Stars, several of

the newest batch of professional Nittany Lions will be alongside former Penn Staters.

Linnehan and Asman will once again suit up together, only this time on the other side of the country playing for Portland Thorns FC. They will join forces with Sam Coffey, who the duo played with from 2019-21.

Dyke will also reunite with another former blue and white member in Kerry Abello, as they laced up the cleats together from 2019-21.

The now-teammates for the Orlando Pride faceted after Dyke was selected, and there was nothing but excitement on the call.

"There's no way this is real,"

Dyke said. "Bro, you spoke it into existence."

"I literally haven't stopped smiling since I heard the news," Abello said. "I literally have been manifesting this."

While getting to the NWSL is a hard task in itself, the Nittany Lions have made their presence known upon arrival, as they continue to perform.

Penn State alum Ali Krieger has brought home two gold medals from World Cups back in 2015 and 2019.

She recently retired after winning the 2023 NWSL championship for Gotham FC alongside former Penn State defender Ellie Jean.

This year, Coffey solidified a

roster spot on the United States Women's National Soccer Team, where she made her name known right away by scoring a game-tying goal against China.

Penn State women's soccer has a proven track record of churning out talent to the NWSL, and the recent group of five draft picks will be ready to make their mark.

"What a night for these five women and their families and the entire Penn State women's soccer program," Dambach said on her X account. "Blessed to be a part of their journey and can't wait to see them spread their wings and fly."

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Dynamic duo downs Badgers

By Joe Tuman
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Guard play has been at the heart of Penn State's offense all season, but the duo of Kanye Clary and Ace Baldwin Jr. was on another level during their team's upset win over No. 11 Wisconsin on Tuesday night.

Despite being faced with one of the Big Ten's best defenses, the backcourt combined for 47 points in a 87-83 victory for Penn State. Clary's measured scoring from mid-range and inside the paint meshed well with Baldwin's red-hot display from beyond the arc, allowing both to find their groove early on.

"When we're both aggressive, it opens the floor up for us and for our teammates," Baldwin said.

Though both excelled, it was Baldwin who set the tone early. By nailing two shot clock-beating jumpers in the opening minutes, he gained confidence shooting the ball that would last throughout the matchup's 40 minutes.

Finishing with 20 points and five assists, while also shooting 4-of-5 from beyond the arc, the senior impressed coach Mike Rhoades with his command of the offense.

"I loved his approach today, I thought his talk to his teammates was high-level," Rhoades said. "He was a high-level point guard

today, and that's one reason why we won."

Baldwin also made some great passes in addition to his scoring. Whether it was zipping the ball to Zach Hicks in the corner or finding bigs Qudus Wahab and Demetrius Lilley under the basket, Baldwin played the part of scorer and facilitator against the Badgers.

That strong playmaking was another reason he and his teammates walked away with a win. Penn State recorded just six turnovers while forcing Wisconsin to surrender the rock 13 times.

Successful offense and defense is what Clary said got the job done for the blue and white.

"We came out and attacked them early," Clary said. "I think we took care of the ball very well, we controlled the pace and executed the game plan coach Rhoades envisioned."

In Clary's case, he was attacking all night long. Showcasing his speed and finesse around the rim, he finished with a team-leading 27 points.

Downhill scoring is Clary's specialty, but he also sprinkled in jumpers and floaters to keep the opposition guessing. Yet, it wasn't

just on offense where he made an impact.

Alongside Baldwin, Clary proved disruptive defensively. The duo's ability to pressure Wisconsin's ball handlers was essential, as they even held Badgers' point guard Chucky Hepburn scoreless in his 37 minutes.

"That was definitely the scouting report — make them uncomfortable," Baldwin said. "They like everything easy, slow. And that's why me and (Kanye) heated the ball up full-court and kept disrupting them."

By mixing that intensity with a game-long scoring punch, Penn State's backcourt proved a difference-maker. With their momentum building, Clary said this performance can serve as a catalyst for the Nittany Lions.

"I think, going forward, this is going to help us because we showed people what we're capable of," Clary said. "We've just got to do our part, be consistent and continue what we've got going."

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Penn State men's lacrosse celebrates a win against Johns Hopkins at Panzer Stadium.

New season mentality

By Lyle Alenstein
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

"Brick by brick" is a motto Penn State holds true to its heart. The slogan emphasizes the

work put in on a day-by-day basis. Larger goals are

unreachable without living and breathing the grind.

"It's been around for close to 10 years now, maybe nine years," coach Jeff Tambroni said. "In terms of where we just established a physical piece that we wanted to bring a little bit closer to day-to-day memory about what we wanted to represent building of the program."

Last season, the blue and white lost a 16-15 overtime heartbreaker to Duke in the NCAA Final Four.

The NCAA's rule stating that crease calls cannot be reviewed ended the Nittany Lions' championship run.

As Garrett Leadmon sealed the game for the Blue Devils, instant replay showed he was in the restricted zone as he scored. It caused an uproar in the collegiate lacrosse world.

The ability to review a crease violation call has since been changed for the greater good of collegiate lacrosse. However, the lack of the review last season came at the expense of the blue and white.

Despite falling short of the NCAA championship goal, the

squad is out for a revenge tour this upcoming season with the "brick-by-brick" mentality leading the way.

While it is a metaphorical mindset, there's also a physical brick involved.

The brick is a symbol of the program. The characteristics it represents are toughness, reliability and resilience.

"I think the better job that we can unify and that's one of the goals that we asked our guys to take on when they came back for the preseason," Tambroni said. "To not only recognize what the brick stands for as part of the identity, but to create action plans and habits that just resemble these characteristics we talk about every day."

A player that exemplifies the qualities is awarded the brick and hands it to another teammate at the end of the week. The "brick holder" will bring it to practice, team meetings and other events as a testament to the dedication they put in that week.

The squad works to get 1% better each day, trying to be what the brick embodies.

"The goal is to have someone sitting up in the stands and look down and utilize these words when it comes to our team," Tambroni said.

Continue reading here:



Guard Nick Kern Jr. blocks a shot during the Penn State men's basketball game against Wisconsin in the Bryce Jordan Center.

Ashley Owusu makes debut

By Lyle Alenstein
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Ashley Owusu made her presence known right away in her Penn State debut.

Like clockwork, she checked into the game and on the first offensive possession, the guard faked a step-back, mid-range jumper and threaded the needle to find a cutting Shay Ciezki for a reverse layup.

The graduate student notched her first bucket as a Lady Lion with 2:30 left in the second quarter, as she found herself wide open at the top of the key for a 3-pointer, where she found nothing but net.

“We’ve been waiting a while to get this news, so I think the team was so elated all week for her, for

us,” coach Carolyn Kieger said.

Owusu has been a high-profile player her entire college career, but injuries have plagued her throughout. After starting her career at Maryland and a stint at Virginia Tech, Happy Valley is the final destination in her collegiate journey.

“I mean you watch her play, she’s a seasoned vet, right?” Kieger said. “She’s won in the NCAA Tournament. She’s won in the Big Ten Tournament. So I think she gives our team first and foremost a calming presence.”

Her last time stepping on the court was Feb. 26, 2023 for Vir-

ginia Tech, where she played five minutes and shot 0-2 from the field.

After fluctuating between being listed as out or questionable on the injury report the entire season, Owusu drew the questionable tag against Rutgers — except this time she checked in.

The Woodbridge, Virginia, native returned to her 2021 form, when she received the Ann Meyers Drysdale Award, given annually to the nation’s top shooting guard.

352 days after receiving the prize, she notched 18 points, five rebounds, five assists and two steals in the blue and white’s

“My biggest moment was when she stepped in the game, I honestly couldn’t stop smiling. I had to remind myself that I had to keep coaching.”

Carolyn Kieger
Coach



Chris Eutsler/Collegian

Owusu’s career began at the University of Maryland with another stint at Virginia Tech.

94-80 win over the Scarlet Knights.

While the Lady Lions were happy to have their highly-touted transfer join them, nobody was happier than Owusu.

“I haven’t had that much fun playing in a long time,” Owusu said via her X account.

The graduate student made plays through her passing, as she recorded five dimes. Her fluidity as a ball handler and terrific vision allowed her to find her teammates in prime positions for a bucket.

“Ashley provides first and foremost another point guard mentality,” Kieger said. “She’s one of the best passers in the country, the game slows down for her.”

The Lady Lion garnering ample time on the floor should take the pressure off her teammates as well, but still allow the unit to bring home victories. Ciezki had

her third single-digit scoring total of the year, despite being the team’s leading scorer — and the squad still won by 14 points.

“You’re going to see us play 12 deep, and you’re gonna see us have a lot of depth, and you’re gonna see players try to empty their tanks 2-3 minutes at a time, right, playing as hard as they can,” Kieger said.

Owusu will look to keep it rolling, as the heralded transfer will play a key role as Penn State looks to make a push come postseason.

“She’s been through so much, and it’s been a long road for her,” Kieger said. “My biggest moment was when she stepped in the game, I honestly couldn’t stop smiling. I had to remind myself that I had to keep coaching.”

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Ella Freda/Collegian

Lady Lion Ashley Owusu plays her first game Sunday against Rutgers, notching 18 points, five rebounds and five assists in the contest.

Freshmen continue strong year

By Xavier Gussett
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

During Penn State’s 46-0 shut-out over the Hoosiers, it became clear that the Nittany Lions’ young and unranked wrestlers could put up points in dominating fashion.

Three true freshmen saw the mats for the Nittany Lions, compiling two tech falls and major decision for a combined 44-7 score differential.

After the team’s first Big Ten matchup of the season, it’s possible to see the trend of starting true freshmen continue for the season, as Cael Sanderson said good things about the group after big-time performances.

Sanderson said that management has gone to plan so far, as he’s noticed younger wrestlers “opening up” while becoming better at their craft.

Penn State has lineup options between opting for first-year students or veteran wrestlers at multiple spots.

While those decisions haven’t been made yet, each freshman that wrestled stood out in their

own way in Sunday’s victory at Rec Hall.

Out of the three freshmen to see the mats for Penn State, 125-pounder Braeden Davis has seen the most matches so far.

Davis has been consistent, as he holds a 10-0 record. Davis’ bout against Indiana went in his favor once again with a 16-2 major decision that puts him in a place to contend as the season-long starter.

“Confidence is key, and just believing in yourself is something that’s hard to help somebody with,” Sanderson said.

As Davis’ freshman season is rolling, he’s still a redshirt candidate, but only until his next dual showing. Sanderson said there will be “difficult discussion” this week before the squad’s next match at Michigan, so there’s a chance that Davis sticks as the team’s go-to option at 125 pounds.

Davis hasn’t been the only true freshman that’s found success on the mats, as 149-pound wrestler Tyler Kasak arguably had the performance of the afternoon.

Kasak faced No. 14 Graham Rooks in his second consecutive match against a ranked wrestler. After defeating No. 15 Nash Sin-

gleton on Jan. 5, Kasak recorded a 15-0 tech fall over Rooks.

Kasak has wrestled at 141 and 149 pounds this year for the Nittany Lions, but has been exclusively wrestling at 149 pounds since Shayne Van Ness’ injury left an opening.

Even though Kasak is also eligible to be redshirted, his recent outings point to that not happening.

“There’s a pretty good chance that’s the case,” Sanderson said.

Kasak and Davis have been notable names for Penn State recently, but true freshman Josh Barr also made an appearance at 184 pounds.

After No. 5 Bernie Truax was absent, Barr made the most of his opportunity with a 13-4 major decision win.

While Barr probably won’t be a consistent piece of the Nittany Lions’ lineup, he has plenty of potential for the future.

“I think he’ll be a future national champ; a multiple-time national champ for sure. He’s one of those kids you just gotta kill him because he’s gonna keep coming after you nonstop,” Starocci said. “He’s just one of those guys that I think is going to

be really, really good.”

Penn State already has eight ranked wrestlers in its normal lineup, so the fact that its young, currently unranked wrestlers have found consistent success is promising.

“We have more depth now than we’ve had. I think that’s the

way college athletics is going,” Sanderson said. “The top schools are gonna have the roster size the same, you’re just going to have more competitive kids throughout the lineup.”

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Tyler Mantz/Collegian

Tyler Kasak, 149, filled in for Shayne Van Ness following an injury. Kasak is one of three true freshman who’ve excelled this season.

Owen Rose leads Nittany Lions to victory

By Evan Smith
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Owen Rose was all over the court for the three sets it took Penn State to take down Lees-McRae.

The Nittany Lions took down the Bobcats in a clean sweep at Rec Hall on Thursday evening.

Throughout the contest, the depth of the Nittany Lions shined, as every category was lit up on the score sheet in a true team effort.

The team shined in the front-court with multiple kills, on defense by keeping Lees-McRae off the board and on the serve with 10 aces throughout the contest.

Rose shined in each of these categories, putting on a dominant, well-rounded performance to lead the blue and white to a smooth sweep at home.

His impact started on the front-

line defense, where Rose took a share of the team lead in blocks.

The Nittany Lions looked like a brick wall, as three blockers shut down attacks on several occasions.

Rose flew above his colleagues, soaring for two perfectly timed solo blocks in the second set.

Rose showed skill as well in elevating enough to lean over the net for a third block where the ball couldn’t cross into the Penn State zone, and he was able to complete the kill without committing a net violation.

In the middle of the court, Rose accounted for three point-saving digs throughout the match, tying for third on the team in digs.

Further back, Rose held Penn State’s highest share of service aces, slamming down 3 of the team’s 11 aces in the match.

His services were notable for more than the aces, as Rose was hitting the ball hard, multiple times rebounding off the faces of Bobcat defenders.

One ball was clocked on the scoreboard at 71 miles-per-hour before scraping the net and ending in a Nittany Lion point.

“They had some really big jump servers,” Lees-McRae coach Sam Albus said. “We’re not used to seeing that kind of physicality.”

The well-rounded game resulted in Rose being named the man of the match.

Coach Mark Pavlik said that he expects these all-around performances from his players.

“This game forces you to be prepared to make first, second and third contacts, so that’s the kind of guys we’re looking for,” Pavlik said.

Penn State will look to keep up the team play and stay undefeated against King University at 4:00 p.m. Saturday.

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Adaptive Athletics returns

By Lyle Alenstein
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Penn State’s Adaptive Athletics program, which shut down in 2020 due to COVID-19, is making its return.

Since 1999, the mission through the program is to provide competitive athletic leagues and sporting experiences for adaptive and able-bodied students.

On Monday, Adaptive Athletics will begin to return in Happy Valley as the program will host its first get-together for a wheelchair

basketball in the White Building.

The inaugural, recreational wheelchair hoops play, which is open to all adaptive and able-bodied students, will take place every Monday from 4:30-6 p.m.

The play will include both an open gym and clinic with half-court and full-court scrimmaging, rules reviews and more. Wheelchairs will be available to those requiring one.

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