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LEGACY IN TRAINING

How Nittany Lion Aiden Fink entered the national spotlight

By Lexie Linderman
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

On June 29, 2023, Penn State freshman Aiden Fink awoke in his dorm bed and made his way to class as if it were any other day, but in reality, it was far from that — the beautiful summer day marked the second and final day of the NHL Draft.

Going into the draft, there was one main question mark surrounding Fink: his size. At just 5-foot-10, the forward is on the smaller side, causing debates on whether he was built to handle the physicality of the NHL. All Fink could do was hope his creativity and goal-scoring ability was enough for a squad to select him.

After not being selected on Day 1, all Fink could do was anxiously wait for his phone to ring.

“Draft day was stressful,” Fink told The Daily Collegian. “It was such a weird day. I was obviously in English class, trying to keep up with it, and then once I got out of English class my agent gave me a call.”

That call fulfilled one of Fink’s lifetime goals — being drafted into the NHL. It was the Nashville Predators who picked up the elite goalscorer with the 218th pick, making Fink the 15th Nittany Lion ever to be drafted by an NHL team.

The draft buzz began for Fink in

a small town called Brooks within Alberta, Canada. Brooks, which is home to just over 14,000 people, is best known for its aqueducts and food-processing, but to Fink, the town means so much more.

Just 7.5 miles from one of the most famous beef processing facilities in Canada lies Centennial Regional Arena, home of Canadian Junior A powerhouse, the Brooks Bandits. The arena was also home to Fink, who played for Brooks from 2021-23 before heading to State College.

It was his 2022-23 season in Brooks, however, that really put Fink on the map. In just 54 games, Fink put up a league-best 97 points with 41 goals, including 21 on the power play, and 56 assists. He led the Bandits to back-to-back Alberta Junior Hockey League championships and was named the AJHL’s Most Valuable Player.

When asked about his time with the Bandits, Fink’s eyes lit up, his smile unwavering as he recalled what Brooks meant to him, going as far to say that he loves the organization with his “whole heart.”

“You just don’t see anyone else being like Brooks,” Fink said. “The coaching staff there ... they really helped me develop my game on and off the ice, just kind of teaching me the life lessons of what hockey really is ... I’ll always love Brooks and the development

they did for me, I just can’t ever repay them.”

Fink’s play at Brooks even resulted in a nod from Team Canada. Serving as an alternate captain, Fink skated for Team Canada West at the 2022-23 World Junior A challenge, where he totaled a tournament-best 12 points.

However, for the Calgary, Alberta, native, the main highlight was the experience of representing his country. Fink said it had always been a dream of his to don the Canadian maple leaf on his chest and the tournament was an experience he’ll always cherish.

Now, rather than a maple leaf or the red, white and blue Bandits’ jersey, Fink dons the Penn State blue and white each time he takes the ice, which the freshman certainly made the most of during his first season.

In just 34 games with the Nittany Lions, Fink cemented himself among the elite college hockey players. The freshman tallied 34 points, which is tied for ninth in the Big Ten, and are third-most ever for a Penn State freshman.

Additionally, Fink’s one point per game is eighth among the nation’s freshmen. His eight power-play goals also broke the Penn State single-season record and are tied for 11th nationally.

Fink’s play on the ice has resulted in unprecedented national

recognition for a Nittany Lion, including being named HCA Rookie of the Month in November, a selection to the Tim Taylor Rookie of the Year Award watch list and most notably, a nomination for the prestigious Hobey Baker Award, which Fink was most pleased with.

“Growing up and seeing everyone win Hobey Baker, ... that’s been a dream of mine,” Fink said. “So even to be nominated for that, it’s really cool ... definitely a check off my bucket list.”

Nevertheless, that success was not without hard work. Before his first season at Penn State, Fink knew he needed to start preparing for Big Ten competition during the summer, as the conference is one of the most competitive in all of college hockey. For the forward, the summer work began with quickening the release on his shot.

“I know from last year coming into this year, college hockey is a lot faster,” Fink said. “You don’t have much more time with the puck, so that’s what I kind of worked on (in the summer), just the shot release and the accuracy on it, and it’s translating to the game, which I’m very proud of.”

Secondly, Fink also worked to build chemistry with his new teammates during the summer, a fact that also translated to the ice. The forward spent the whole

summer with fellow freshmen and future linemates Reese Laubach and Matt DiMarsico, and the trio shared plenty of success as a line this season. DiMarsico, along with Fink, said the on-ice play is a result of the off-ice chemistry they built in summer.

“Once we’re playing fast, our chemistry as a line and the talent we have on there ... that really takes over and allows us to have the games that we’ve had,” DiMarsico said.

While Fink impressed and caught the eye of so many this season, no one was more in awe with Fink’s freshman campaign than coach Guy Gadowsky, who all season couldn’t find enough good things to say about his No. 18.

“His play has not only been excellent and productive, it’s been inspiring,” Gadowsky said. “The way he plays is so fun to watch ... I think the points that he’s putting up is probably what people are focusing on, but he’s an all-around player. I’ll tell you that.”

All-in-all, Fink’s first season at Penn State is just the beginning for the “undersized” kid from Calgary, who was a memorable spot amid the Nittany Lions’ forgettable season and has already begun building a legacy of his own in Hockey Valley.

To email reporter: ajl7167@psu.edu.
Follow her on X @lexieleigh28.

Students reflect on sorority rush

By Kate Hildebrand
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Editor’s Note: One of the names in this story has been changed to protect the identity of the individual involved. The Daily Collegian has verified through fact checking this individual exists.

On Jan. 16, Penn State’s 21 social sororities began recruitment activities. For the next two weeks, first- and second-year students went through “rush,” which entails a whirlwind of parties, rankings and very early mornings.

This year’s recruitment class was one of the largest in Penn State history with over 1,900 first- and second-year students participating.

“With this unexpected number of potential new members,” the Panhellenic Council said in a statement, “the recruitment team was tasked with editing our original primary recruitment schedule in hopes of creating the best experience possible for all who participated.”

The Panhellenic Council was “extremely excited” to have a “record number” of students participate in the recruitment process.

After the first two rounds of rush, around 1,000 students were dropped, according to Brooke Dougherty, a new member of Phi Sigma Sigma.

The first round, values, was held virtually. Dougherty, a first-year studying advertising and public relations, said people who were rushing sent in one-minute videos discussing their proudest moment in life.

A lot of people thought the virtual round was unfair, she said.

“It’s hard to gauge someone’s personality off of a video,” Hannah Hughes, a new member of Alpha Phi, said.

Jane, a student who wished to remain anonymous for fear of

retaliation, said her roommate, a current sorority member, had to watch about 200 of those videos.

Potential new members uploaded their videos to YouTube, and when Jane looked at the analytics of her minute-long video, the average watch time was around eight seconds. Based on that data, she said she felt like she was being judged only on her looks.

Sara Nouhan, who “rushed” but chose to “drop,” or withdraw from recruitment before Bid Day, wanted to join Greek life to find a new circle of friends. Her major is very small and a lot of her friends are within the same program as her, so she wanted to branch out.

Nouhan, a second-year studying architecture, said it was tough to rank the sororities from their videos.

“You’re making decisions about them, and you don’t even talk to them first,” Nouhan said.

The only things potential new members (PNMs) had to rank a sorority were a short video and the sorority’s social media.

The next round of recruitment, philanthropy, was held in person. Sororities held 20-minute parties over the course of two days to talk about service opportunities in their organization. PNMs could be invited to a maximum of 13 parties.

Sorority recruitment works on a mutual ranking system. After every round, PNMs ranked the sororities and vice versa. On the first morning of each round, PNMs would receive their schedule.

If a PNM missed a party without a valid excuse, like a class conflict, they were no longer eligible to receive a bid to join a sorority.

Jane said there are clear “tiers” within the 21 sororities.

The “top five” are Kappa Delta,

Alpha Phi, Kappa Kappa Gamma, Kappa Alpha Theta and Pi Beta Phi, according to Jane. Some girls dropped recruitment when they didn’t get invited back to one of these sororities, she said.

“People aren’t purposely trying to make you feel bad,” Dougherty said. “But it’s — dare I say — a mindf—.”

Hughes, a first-year studying biobehavioral health, said recruitment was “very stressful, but very fun.”

For her and many others, the stress was well worth it for the end result.

Following philanthropy was the sisterhood round, during which PNMs could be invited back to a maximum of eight sororities. In an effort to level the playing field, PNMs all wore the same shirt for the philanthropy and sisterhood rounds.

Preference was the last round in the recruitment process. PNMs could be invited back to two sororities for 45 to 50-minute parties. The next day, PNMs and current sorority sisters gathered in the Bryce Jordan Center for Bid Day.

“Bid Day is the best day,” Dougherty said.

The BJC turns into a “ball of energy” as the PNMs count down, she said. When the countdown hits zero, they open their envelopes to receive their bid, a formal invitation to join a sorority. Afterward, members celebrate with their new sisters.

Catherine Goldberg started recruitment for social sororities but ended up dropping. Instead, she went through recruitment for service sororities and joined Trilogy, which is a THON organization.

See **SORORITY**, page 3.



Courtesy of Penn State Libraries

The original caption of this September 1957 photo read: Saga of a freshman woman arriving on campus for Orientation Week.

COLLEGIAN ARCHIVE DIVE

Looking back on Penn State women’s history

By Kahlie Wray
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Women weren’t considered in the university’s initial vision for what used to be known as The Farmer’s High School, which was founded in 1855.

However, around 45% of Penn State’s undergraduate student body is currently female, according to the university’s admission statistics.

The presence of women on Penn State campuses have come a long way since first being allowed to attend in 1871. In celebration of Women’s History Month, here’s a look at the progression of Penn State women through Collegian reporting.

1889

Due to a growing presence of women on campus, the first women’s residence hall known as “The Ladies Cottage” began construction in fall 1889.

The cottage was described as “a model of architectural beauty” and contained a gymnasium

on the third floor.

According to Collegian archives, the cottage was erected as a part of an effort to increase the advantages afforded to women which were at the time described as “meager.”

Residents of “The Ladies Cottage” were under strict rule. They were not allowed to work nights in the library, entertain callers without permission and chaperone or leave campus with a male.

1891

The winter of 1890-91 saw the creation of a student organization, “State College 400,” which aimed in “purifying and pruning State College Society.”

Around the time less than 10 ladies lived in the Cottage, and they received frequent callers. Fueled by “jealousy” of the chosen callers, the “State College 400” was created in an attempt to “crusade against the Cottage.”

See **HISTORY**, page 3.

Developing digital textbooks

By Maggie Day
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Charles Prebish arrived at Penn State in 1971 after receiving his Ph.D. in Buddhist studies from the University of Wisconsin.

When he came to Penn State, religious studies was a department with 15 tenured-track positions, offering a bachelors, masters and doctoral degree.

Since the focus of the Ph.D. program was “religion in America,” Prebish began to investigate Buddhism in the United States, alongside teaching regular courses on Buddhist studies.

“One of the things I discovered as I went along is that book prices kept going up ... throughout all of my career here,” Prebish said. “It got to the point where even introductory books were just so expensive that students were really getting ripped off.”

Even in 2006 when Prebish retired from Penn State as a professor emeritus, students were having a “great deal of difficulty” finding the funding to get through college “without having a huge student debt,” he said.

“I wanted to do anything I could that might help them,” Prebish said.

Along with a friend in the religious studies department at the University of London, Prebish began thinking about “a project of e-books” that could possibly increase course material affordability for students.

“We managed to get really top-notch scholars in each of the major religious traditions to do a book,” Prebish said.

Then, Prebish said, the goal was to put all of these e-books on a webpage and encourage their professional network to use the site instead of traditional physical textbooks.

After working with Blue Banana Designs, a local State College company, to help develop the website technologically, Prebish and his colleague established world religions e-books in 2004.

The first e-book they created was on Buddhism.

Embedded throughout the digi-



Megan Miller/Collegian

Rows of textbooks sit in Pattee and Paterno Library. Penn State Professor Emeritus Charles Prebish started an online textbook project to make course materials more affordable.

tal textbook are links to the ‘best sites’ on the Internet to expand readers’ resource pools, which is common for most of the e-books on the site.

“At that time, most of the books in Buddhism that were available weren’t even in paperback,” Prebish said. “They cost anywhere from \$50. At that point, introductory textbooks on world religions cost like \$125.”

On the contrary, Prebish said each e-book costs around \$25 or \$30.

“The project wasn’t designed for us to make profit, it was designed to help students,” Prebish said. “From our standpoint, anything we do that saves the students money is worth it.”

However, students weren’t the only ones who benefited from the project, according to Prebish.

“It’s a good deal for the authors,” Robert Ellwood, a professor emeritus from the University of Southern California and author of the Japanese religions textbook on the site, said. “It’s much more than I get from virtual copies from other publishers, even some big time publishers.”

According to Prebish, it “wasn’t only the students” that were affected by major publishing companies, but the authors, too, because they were paid a “puny royalty.”

If an author received an 8-10% royalty, for example, they were receiving around \$2 or \$3 per book, Prebish said, which “isn’t a lot of money considering all the time that goes into writing a textbook.”

Authors of e-books on this site receive “anywhere between 25-40% of the full price,” which can result in up to \$12 per book for the author.

Ellwood, who has written numerous books on religion, said he was “slightly hesitant” when Prebish first asked him to write a textbook for his new e-book website.

“A virtual series like this was a new thing and I didn’t really know how it would work or what kind of impression it would make,” Ellwood said. “The second thing that I was hesitant about was — and I don’t blame him for this it’s just the way it was — he wanted a great deal of study help in the book.”

For Ellwood, study questions and chapter reviews are “not the fun part of writing.”

“But, I finally found that it was overall a good idea and needless to say, I liked the ... royalty payment he was giving writers,” Ellwood said.

Hillary Rodrigues, a professor emeritus at the University of Lehigh who wrote the Hinduism e-book for the website, was similarly taken aback by the digital nature of Prebish’s project.

While talking at a religious studies conference and discussing textbooks, Rodrigues said Prebish “dropped the bomb” that the textbook would be virtual.

“I was like ‘What? Come on!’ because this was long ago when e-stuff was still very suspect,” Rodrigues said.

However, Rodrigues said he began to see the possibilities of creating a textbook online.

“Just because it’s electronic doesn’t mean it’s lousy — it’s something good,” Rodrigues said. “The books themselves turned out to be much richer entities than a printed textbook.”

Specifically, Rodrigues noted

the benefits of having color photos and embedded links to expand students’ access to resources.

“Chuck was at the forefront of going to digital technology,” Rodrigues said, referencing Prebish’s The Journal of Buddhist Ethics, an online peer-reviewed journal Prebish started in 1994.

“It’s quite impressive what he has done and the struggles he has faced trying to make these things available,” Rodrigues said.

For Rodrigues, the process of writing the digital textbook was “much more challenging” than he thought but a “rewarding” thing to do nonetheless.

“You’ve got to keep reading just so that you can understand where the cutting edge of scholarship is,” Rodrigues said. “Then you’ve got to translate it, and put it down into a level that is correct, yet accessible and understandable to undergraduate students.”

“They only have good things to say about it,” Rodrigues said. “So it’s like, ‘How is there this strange disjuncture between profs who’ve adopted the e-books who like it?’ Students are happy about it, and yet somehow these two worlds haven’t come together.”

Prebish said sales for the site have been declining over the last couple of years.

“I think what’s happening is that professors, at Penn State and elsewhere, aren’t even assigning textbooks anymore because there’s so much availability of the internet,” Prebish said. “It may come to a point where even our project will stop in the next couple of years if the sales go down to nothing because it will then cost more for us to maintain the website and so forth than we actually earn money out of it.”

The site is currently home to about a dozen e-books covering multiple world religions. While they have not recently added a new book to the site, some of the authors have updated their books by writing sequential editions.

To email reporter: m1m7227@psu.edu.
Follow her on X @ [maggie_dayy](#).

SC receives housing grant

By Vida Lashgari
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Rep. Scott Conklin, D-Centre, announced \$827,476 in state funding for State College Borough Friday.

According to the release, the funds are aimed toward making housing “more affordable for residents.”

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development awarded the borough:

\$418,000 for rental unit construction in partnership with State College Community Land Trust

\$254,000 for homebuyer construction in partnership with Temporary Housing Foundation

\$82,681 for a Community Housing Development Organization grant on behalf of State College Community Land Trust

\$72,795 for a Community Housing Development Organization operating grant on behalf of Temporary Housing Foundation

“The funding from DCED will assist State College Borough residents in need, especially as Centre County works to address a surge in people experiencing homelessness,” Conklin said.

Through the Pennsylvania HOME Program, DCED distributed more than \$12 million in funding, which provides municipalities with funding to “construct and rehabilitate affordable housing units for low-income Pennsylvanians.

To email reporter: v15102@psu.edu.
Follow her on X @ [vidalashgari](#).

HEAD TO OUR WEBSITE
FOR MORE BOROUGH
COVERAGE



Graphic by Carson Schultz

Saint Patrick’s Day is right around the corner. For those living in State College, festive foods and fountains can be found downtown — like at Snap Custom Pizza and Irving’s.

State College snacks, sips for Saint Patrick’s Day | Blog

By Cearra O’Hern
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

We’re all Irish on Saint Patrick’s Day. We’re even a little green afterward.

Saint Patrick’s Day is near. The religious and cultural holiday is full of all things green, gold and Gaelic.

I dream of Saint Patrick’s Day celebrations in Ireland, polishing off pints and pinching poor-spirited pedestrians. But I’m celebrating the holiday underage and unfortunate in State College.

I’m not completely out of luck, though. State College has a few festive foods and fountains for the holiday.

Here are some green goodies and gulps for Saint Patrick’s Day in State College.

Shamrock Shake from McDonald’s

I’m Lovin’ It.

The Shamrock Shake is the iconic, sensational sip of the season. The shamrock-shade shake was first invented in 1967 by Hal Rosen, a McDonald’s owner in Connecticut.

From vanilla to lemon-lime, the flavor profile of the Shamrock Shake has changed over time. Now, the shake is flavored mint,

to match its glorious green tint.

I’m trying the McDonald’s Shamrock Shake for the first time this Saint Patrick’s Day. Here’s hoping the trendy treat brings all the boys to the yard.

Bianco Verde Pizza from Snap Custom Pizza

Leprechauns love parades, pots of gold and pizzas.

The Bianco Verde Pizza from Snap Custom Pizza is the most festive flatbread of the holiday. The Spanish translation of “green” is in the title of the dish.

The ears of drunken lads and loves perked up with that last graf.

Intoxicating ingredients of herb butter, shredded mozzarella, house-made fresh mozzarella, ricotta and fresh basil compose the Bianco Verde Pizza. The pie is the perfect pizza for St. Patrick’s Day.

Going Green Smoothie from Irving’s

On Sunday, this smoothie will just be a blend of clovers, chocolate and corned beef.

I’m only kidding. The Irish wouldn’t even drink that beverage.

The Going Green smoothie is a

healthful, refreshing swig for the holiday. Fresh ingredients of banana, mango, spinach, lemonade and coconut intertwine to create the cool concoction.

I’m Going Green this Saint Patrick’s Day — and in more ways than the smoothie.

Leprechaun Lemonade from Raising Cane’s

The Chicago River is dyed green for St. Patrick’s Day. Raising Cane’s does something similar — but with its lemonade.

The restaurant dyes its freshly squeezed lemonade bright green to honor all things good and Gaelic. Although the Leprechaun Lemonade doesn’t introduce new flavors to the Raising Cane’s menu, the beverage is a simple and sweet way to implement an Irish twist for Sunday.

If you drink enough Leprechaun Lemonade, you may transform into a mischievous, bearded mythical creature. I can’t think of anything more festive than that.

Mayweather Bowl from Roots Natural Kitchen

Leprechauns are told to eat their greens, too.

The Mayweather Bowl from Roots Natural Kitchen is full of

leafy, starchy vegetables fit for all Irishmen. The bowl is decorated in different greens, oranges and whites, like the palette of the flag of Ireland.

The bowl contains kale, bulgur, roasted sweet potatoes, roasted beets, red onions, goat cheese, lemon tahini, pesto vinaigrette and adobo chicken.

All that’s missing is corned beef and cabbage. That would be the best bowl of Gaelic greens.

Green Apple Pitcher from Cafe 210 West

There’s no longer a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Instead, there’s a chilled Green Apple Pitcher from Cafe 210 West.

The Green Apple Pitcher fills the celebratory color and cocktail of St. Patrick’s Day. The flavor of the pitcher stings the taste buds of all indulging lads, loves and leprechauns.

But be warned. Old Irish folklore says too many Green Apple Pitchers may leave you green long after the holiday.

May your pitcher be ever full, and your face never green. Happy Saint Patrick’s Day, State College.

To email reporter: ceo5312@psu.edu.
Follow her on X @ [CearraO’Hern](#).



Courtesy of Brooke Dougherty
Brooke Dougherty (left) poses with one of her new sisters on Panhellenic Primary Recruitment Bid Day on Jan. 29.

Sorority

FROM page 1.

Goldberg, a first-year studying history, wasn't set on joining a social sorority and said the financial and social responsibilities were a lot. She wanted to do Greek life to get more involved with THON.

She said recruitment for Trilogy was "a lot more low-key." There was no Bid Day, Goldberg just received an email that said she'd been selected to join.

Jane said social sorority recruitment was "the most stressful week-and-a-half of (her) entire life." She started the philanthropy round with invites from four out of the "top five" sororities, but only received one invite for preference.

She said she felt she was only invited back for sisterhood because she's from a beach town in California. Jane was dropped from a sorority because her GPA, at a 2.8, wasn't high enough.

"You have to remember that this doesn't define you ... but they're literally giving you a number ranking as soon as you walk out the door," Jane said.

Dougherty said it felt like she was getting "chewed up and spit out" when she didn't hear back from her top sororities, but the most important thing during recruitment is to be authentic.

When Dougherty visited Phi Sigma Sigma during the preference round, she instantly connection with the girls.

"I found my place," Dougherty said. "I feel loved."

History

FROM page 1.

Members of the organization weren't allowed to enter the Cottage regardless of circumstance. According to Collegian archives, a number of members were expelled for disobeying said rule.

Moreover, in an attempt to further ostracize the ladies and their chosen gentlemen callers, the 400 barred them from attending an organized mask ball in February 1891.

1907

In 1907, Penn State began offering a new course, Home Economics for women. The course aimed "to provide scientific and technical training in all matters connected with the administration of a household."

While the course's purpose was to make "efficient homemakers," the course also strived "to give graduates a broad and liberal education."

1943

At the height of World War II, Curtiss-Wright and Hamilton Standard Propellers sent young women to different participating institutions to learn the mechanics of engineering, aerodynamics and design.

Seventy-eight women known as "lady engineers" were enrolled at Penn State by Hamilton Standard Propellers for "specialized instruction in aeronautical engineering," according to Collegian archives.

1949

Grace Henderson was appointed as dean of the College of Home Economics. She was the first woman to receive an academic deanship appointment, according to Penn State News.

In her tenure, Henderson brought attention to the low enrollment rates of women and advocated for a female students' rights "to take concentrated study in the field which most appeals to her," according to Collegian archives.

"Education should aid a woman to become what society and the community demand of her," Henderson said.

1985

The University Commission for Women and President Bryce Jordan initiated a focus group on the status of Penn State women. The group was to explore pay equity, sexism and the low number of female faculty and staff, according to Collegian archives.

Members of the group said they hoped "the administration will act on the recommendations to resolve the problems women face at the University."

1989

Kim Alberter became the first woman from Penn State's Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps Detachment 720 to be selected for pilot training.

Alberter, the daughter of a former U.S. Air Force pilot, had "been flying all her life" before the opportunity. She decided she wanted to be a pilot during her second year of high school.

"I really like (the Air Force ROTC) because they are really friendly. We're like one big family," Alberter said. "But there's a typical male attitude — they think women can't do anything, but we put them in their place."

1991

Mimi Coppersmith Fredman is elected as the Board of Trustees first female president.

According to Collegian archives, her predecessor J. Lloyd Huck said, "She's not there because she's a woman, she's there because she's very competent."

2008

The Smeal College of Business along with the student organization, Women In Business sponsored a weekend conference, "Powerful Women Paving the Way: Penn State Celebrates Women in Business."

The conference was held at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center and featured several keynote speakers including Sue Paterno. Topics covered at the conference included managing crisis, marketing and finding success.

The Smeal College of Business continues to host the conference annually.

2021

President Neeli Bendapudi was appointed by the Board of Trustees to be the university's 19th president. Bendapudi is the first woman and person of color to hold the position.

Her tenure began in 2022 and is scheduled to end in 2027.



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Should I get a tattoo?

My mother recently pointed out that she observed more people my age are getting tattoos than when she was in college.



Vargas It would make sense that I wouldn't notice this trend in my own generation — if it is a trend— but regardless, she's right: Tattoos are commonplace for American adults.

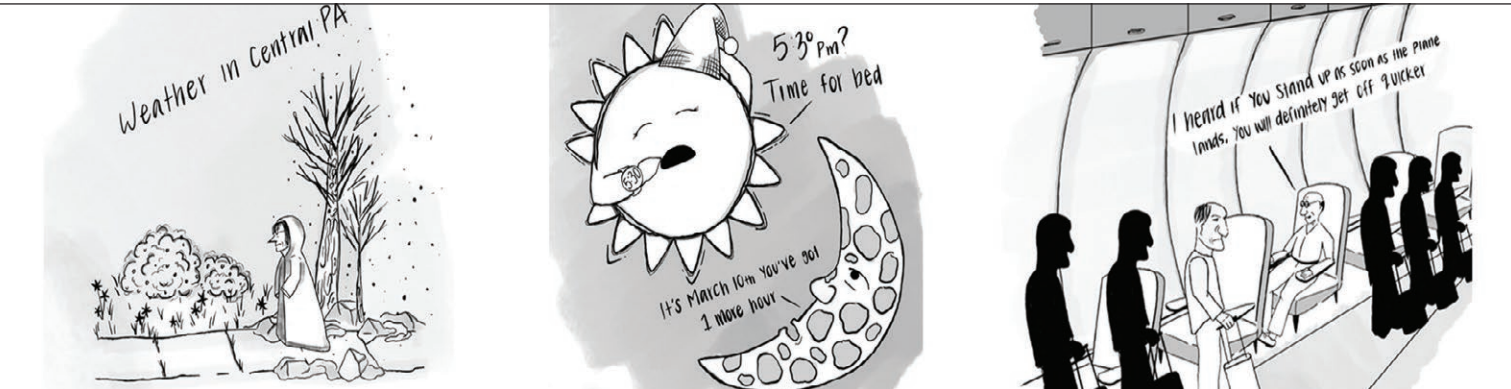
A Pew Research Center study from last August found 41% of adults under 30 have at least one tattoo. The same study found 80% of Americans say people have grown “more accepting” of tattoos over the last 20 years. As a Penn State student, it's not a rarity to see tattoos or hear that a friend just got a new one. A lot of my friends have tattoos, and many have more than one. There even are five different tattoo shops in downtown State College. It's popular enough to encourage a whole marketplace of tattoo studios with plentiful competition. This has left me wondering: Should I get a tattoo? And my deliberations took me through

three levels of consideration to come to a decision. My answer may not be a simple yes or no, but it's close enough for my liking. Right from the start, there are a few reasons I'd consider a bit superficial or trivial but worth thinking about. Depending on different factors, tattoos can be painful, time consuming and costly. But the monetary price of something that will last forever on my skin is one of the most basic considerations. The best things in life require struggle and maybe some degree of pain. This is not a good reason to say no. Time is more valuable than money to me, but even the scarcity of time isn't enough to rush me to the tattoo parlor nor steer me away. The next level of my tattoo thought process is still not quite on the interior. Tattoos are an outward expression, so the people who perceive my external showing are worth considering. Immediately, my mind jumps to what a potential employer may think. If it gets in the way of me achieving professional ambitions, then I'd likely argue

it's not worth it. But that's not my final stance. An employer who believes their opinion of my appearance, my hypothetical tattoo, is more important than what I offer professionally is not an employer I likely want to work for. Then there's my family. I think my parents, the ones responsible for my being here, have a valued opinion on the matter. So I texted my mom, and she said: “I am not sure I'd give a 'blessing' unless it was something meaningful and well done and thought out and on the smaller side.” (Thanks, Mom.) But the decision is ultimately mine, no matter what friends, family, professors or potential employers think; my opinion will play the central role in my decision. The third and final level of decision making comes down to meaning. Tattoos don't necessarily need to have a straightforward meaning of some transcendent depth. In other words, it doesn't have to be dedicated to a dead relative or my conversion to a religion. But no matter what, an image — an image permanently etched upon my flesh — has meaning.

Tattoos aren't a new haircut. They aren't an edgy leather jacket. Even when you die, your skin will still exist without animation. The power of lasting gives it meaning. It has symbolic power whether it's more meta than a literal denotation of an image or nothing more than the face value of an image. Symbols have the power to change over time. They can transform and transcend. I am forced to consider that something permanent on my skin can not be the exact same thing it was when I first put it there. Even the most internalized meanings, definitions and stories I can apply to a tattoo will be remolded and reunderstood with time. I'm not the same man I was yesterday. I'm not the same man I was three years ago. I expect, and fully hope, I won't be the same man in the decades to come. Still, that's not enough to make my final decision. Some symbols are resilient or rigid enough to change more slowly than others, and there are parts of my person that will never change.

This leads me to my final answer: I would get a tattoo if the symbol is strong enough. The tattoo would have to be of something and for something that couldn't be moved in my lifetime. My mind races into its deepest corners: my religion, my family, my future family, etc. But if I got a tattoo it'd likely be based on my race. I'm Filipino and Latino. I always have been that and always will be. My race is not something clearly displayed on my skin. Actually, it tends to be an enigma to most people. But I wouldn't get a tattoo just to more clearly identify which boxes I check off on official documents. This hypothetical tattoo would honor my people, my heritage. It'd be made in the traditional method of my people. Finally, it would coincide with a visit to the place my people are connected to. Its shape or precise form is a mystery, and I have no idea if I will get it at all. But at this moment in my life, my answer is yes — I'd get a tattoo. Grammy-nominated country artist Jelly Roll, who has tattoos all over his body and face, recently said in an interview with GQ that he regrets “almost all” of his tattoos. Jelly Roll, now 39, got his first tattoos when he was a teenager and continued to add ink throughout his life. “I realized almost all of my tattoos represent who I was,” Jelly Roll told GQ. “None of them represent who I am.”



Cartoons by Maddie Seelig

MY VIEW | EMILY GOLDEN

Being a Jewish student abroad

I never take my jewelry off. I honestly don't even realize I'm wearing it sometimes. The silver Star of David necklace accompanied by my Hebrew name, Tzviah, on the chain above. I bought these necklaces while abroad in Israel this past summer and haven't even thought of taking them off. That is, however, until I came abroad to Florence, Italy. This is the reality of being Jewish abroad. A place where I no longer feel comfortable wearing my Jewish culture around my neck. A place where I took my jewelry off for the first time in my life. Here, I choose safety over proudly wearing my Jewish identity. When I first arrived back in January, I was immediately greeted with graffiti that read “Assassinate Israel” in Italian. A few weeks later, one of my Jewish friends was at a bar and a local approached her and did an antisemitic salute. I won't go into this any further. For the first time in my life, I often feel like a target. I no longer speak about being Jewish in public and I refrain from talking about Israel because I simply never know how some-



Emily Golden/Collegian

Being a Jewish student abroad brings both fears and challenges, Golden said. one might respond. Taking off my jewelry felt like I was removing a part of who I was and hiding it from the world. Many people don't know this but I was actually supposed to be studying abroad in Tel Aviv, Israel, this semester. Obviously, due to extenuating circumstances, I had to pivot in early November to a different location. Israel would have been a very Jewish forward experience, and I knew that I would not be getting the same experience in Florence. However, I don't think

I realized the extent of how lonely being Jewish here would feel. To any other Jewish student studying abroad in Europe or anywhere else in the world, I encourage you not to lose hope and find your Jewish culture and community in whichever city you are in. There are Jewish people everywhere, and that is something that will not change no matter how the world feels about us. Thankfully, I am abroad with a lot of my Jewish friends from both Penn State and camp. They've all helped me keep the sanctuary of my community and still stay true to who I am. It is hard to be Jewish right now. No matter where you are abroad or back in the United States, there is an intense wave of anti semitism that does not discriminate based on where you are located geographically. This is the reality of being Jewish anywhere and I really hope that one day soon I can once again wear Tzviah and my Magen David around my neck.

Emily Golden is a junior studying digital and print journalism and is an abroad-columnist for The Daily Collegian. Email her at emg6033@psu.edu or follow her on X at @emilygolden03.

DAILY COLLEGIAN

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Championship takeaways

By Kaleb Boyer
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

With the Big Ten Championships now in the rearview mirror, it's time to reflect on what the wrestling world discovered about this season's Penn State squad.

Braeden Davis is a major title threat

After a rough stretch in February where Braeden Davis lost two matches to Drake Ayala and Caleb Smith and had a close controversial bout against Vincent Kilkeary from Ohio State, Davis' momentum from early in the season had halted.

However, Davis didn't let the rough patch unwind his entire freshman campaign.

Instead, he rolled into the Big Ten Tournament as the No. 6 seed and defeated Illinois' Justin Cardani, Michigan's Michael DeAugustino, Wisconsin's Eric Barnett and Minnesota's Patrick McKee en route to a Big Ten title at 125 pounds.

Davis' victory marked the first time under coach Cael Sanderson, and the first time since 1999, that Penn State had won a Big Ten at 125 pounds.

Now, Davis finds himself on top of InterMat's 125-pound rankings. It remains to be seen if he will also get the No. 1 seed at NCAAs when the seeding is announced on Wednesday.

Regardless of where the true freshman is placed, he seems ready to challenge a 125-pound class where the only constant has been chaos across the board.

Mesenbrink may go down, but he's never out

Mitchell Mesenbrink has been



Sienna Pinney/Colegian

Carter Starocci stands on the mat at the Big Ten Wrestling Championships on March 9 in College Park, Maryland. Purdue's Brody Baumann won by injury default over Starocci.

a huge transfer addition for Penn State this season, culminating in a Big Ten title at 165 pounds as a redshirt freshman.

After rolling through his first two bouts at the Big Ten Championships with a tech fall and a pin, Mesenbrink faced off with Wisconsin's Dean Hamiti in a highly-anticipated matchup for the title.

Things didn't look great off the jump for Mesenbrink when he fell behind 9-2 to Hamiti in the second period before Mesenbrink got a takedown of his own.

Hamiti got a reversal to go up 11-6 in the third, but those were his final points. Mesenbrink got a takedown and near-fall points to

win the bout 13-11.

This isn't the first time that Mesenbrink has clawed his way back this season. While it's rare for the high-octane freshman to fall behind in bouts, he always seems to fight his way back into them.

That skill should prove to be useful as he travels to Kansas City for NCAAs. It will be very interesting to see how he can perform against wrestlers like Keegan O'Toole, David Carr, and Julian Ramirez.

Mesenbrink, who is now the No. 2 ranked wrestler at 165 pounds, should be one of the top seeds at his weight when the NCAA an-

nounces seeding on Wednesday.

Carter Starocci's 'next chapter'

Penn State star wrestler Carter Starocci has been dealing with a lower body injury that he suffered against Edinboro in the final dual meet of the season on Feb. 25.

That injury saw him get sidelined at the Big Ten Tournament, where he injury defaulted out of the tournament, despite initially planning to compete.

The decision left a lot of questions regarding Starocci's future after he posted a message on his X, formerly known as Twitter,

thanking Penn State for the time he spent there.

Only a few days later, he made another post saying he plans to compete at NCAAs. The social media posts surely caused a wave of emotions for many Penn State and wrestling fans alike.

The NCAA has since awarded Starocci an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament, where he can compete for his fourth national title if he's healthy enough.

To email reporter: kjb6273@psu.edu.
Follow him on X at [@KalebBoyerMI](https://twitter.com/KalebBoyerMI).



Esteban Marenco/Colegian

Head coach Mike Rhoades awaits the arrival of his team before the start of the game at the Bryce Jordan Center in November 2023.

Nittany Lions push for adverse success in Big Ten Tournament

By Seth Engle
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Mike Rhoades took a gamble on a Penn State program with limited historical success and a roster that had been nearly wiped clean from the year prior.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

As Rhoades enters his first Big Ten Tournament, beginning with a tilt against the lowly Michigan Wolverines on Wednesday, postseason opportunities lay flat on the table.

Regardless of the Nittany Lions' fate, Rhoades believes he's already won big.

"When everyone's betting against you, when everybody thinks you stink and thinks you can't win in the Big Ten, but the guys who put it on the uniforms and the coaches that are working with those guys think they can," Rhoades said, "that's house money."

It hasn't been any easy feat for Rhoades to turn around a program that had the wind knocked out of its system just a month before his arrival due to the departure of beloved predecessor Micah Shrewsberry.

In 59 days, Rhoades signed 10 new players from both the transfer and international sectors. His

roster and coaching staff was set, but Rhoades knew winning games with a completely novel crew wouldn't be easy.

Rhoades used the low expectations set by critics for his program to fuel the Nittany Lions on their way to a 15-16 overall record with nine wins in conference play.

"We knew that people weren't going to think highly of us," said forward Puff Johnson, who transferred from North Carolina last offseason. "There are many new players and new coaches and it's a whole new situation and new organization with however many people we grabbed that weren't at Penn State last year."

We knew that we were going to have to just come to work every day and just give it our best and see how things roll."

It took time.

Rhoades and his players likely expected a slow start to mesh out a firm chemistry, but it's unlikely anyone could have predicted a 76-67 loss to Patriot League bottom-feeder Bucknell on Dec. 2.

And even after an 83-80 comeback victory over Ohio State two weeks after the loss to the Bison, the Nittany Lions once again lost momentum due to a last-second phantom foul call on Ace Baldwin Jr. that led to another

nonconference defeat.

"That Georgia Tech game, that's always gonna bother me because I think that guy blew a call," Rhoades said. "But that's how it goes. That's life and how you react to it and then go from there has a lot to do with where we're at right now."

As the tournament approaches, Penn State has yielded about as much potential as it's had under Rhoades.

The team's bracket layout is promising, as the Nittany Lions look to restore their postseason magic from a year ago. With a win over the Wolverines, who Penn State defeated on Jan. 9, the program would play again Thursday against Indiana, which fell twice to the Nittany Lions over the regular season.

Rhoades isn't worried. He's working his dream job in his home state of Pennsylvania, helping to turn around a program that has seldom made the NCAA Tournament in his lifetime.

In this job, Rhoades is playing with house money, just as he's done all year.

"If I'm gonna bet on anyone, I'm gonna bet on us," Rhoades said.

To email reporter: sre5190@psu.edu.
Follow him on X at [@bigsengtweets](https://twitter.com/bigsengtweets).

Recapping free agency

By Joel Haas & Sam Woloson
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

NFL free agency is off and running, and several former Nittany Lions have found their new homes.

FOOTBALL Here's where some ended up.

Saquon Barkley

A Penn State fan-favorite is heading back to the Keystone State.

On Monday, Saquon Barkley agreed to a 3-year, \$37.75 million deal with the Philadelphia Eagles, including \$26M guaranteed, according to ESPN's Adam Schefter.

Barkley has spent his previous six professional seasons with the New York Giants, where he amassed 1,201 carries for 5,211 yards and 35 touchdowns across 74 games. He added 288 receptions for 2,100 yards and 12 scores through the air.

The former Nittany Lion legend, Barkley eclipsed 1,000 yards each season from 2015-17. He totaled 3,843 yards which ranks second in team history and added 43 touchdowns on the ground to claim the program record.

With Penn State, Barkley earned first-team All-Big Ten honors twice and second-team honors once, as well as claiming Big Ten Offensive Player of the Year in 2016.

Yetur Gross-Matos

A former Penn State defensive end inked his second contract on Monday.

Yetur Gross-Matos signed a 2-year, \$19 million contract with the San Francisco 49ers, according to NFL insider Ian Rapoport.

Gross-Matos was drafted in the second round by the Panthers in 2020, playing 55 total games. He totaled 142 tackles, 13 sacks and four fumble recoveries.

Gross-Matos ranks 10th all-time in Penn State history with 19 career sacks. He'll now reunite with Nittany Lion safety Ji'Ayir Brown in San Francisco.

DaQuan Jones

As players are moving across the country during the NFL free agency frenzy, a former Penn State player will be remaining in the same spot.

Ex-Nittany Lion defensive tackle DaQuan Jones agreed to terms on a two-year deal with the Buffalo Bills on Tuesday, doubling his tenure with the Bills.

Jones previously played for the Carolina Panthers in 2021 and the Tennessee Titans from 2014-2020

after being selected in the fourth round out of Penn State.

As a Nittany Lion, Jones recorded 84 tackles and 4.5 sacks across four seasons from 2010-13.

Mike Gesicki

A former Penn State tight end is in for a change of scenery.

According to a report by ESPN's Adam Schefter, Mike Gesicki is headed to Cincinnati on a one-year deal with the Bengals.

The deal is reportedly worth \$3.25 million, sending Gesicki to his third team in as many years.

In 2023 with the New England Patriots, he recorded 29 receptions for 244 yards, his lowest totals since his rookie year with the Miami Dolphins.

Gesicki was a second-round pick in 2018 after four seasons at Penn State. As a Nittany Lion, he posted a program record for career receiving touchdowns by a tight end with 15 and was named All-Big Ten twice with first-team honors in his senior season.

Blake Gillikin

One of the biggest legs in Penn State history is staying in Arizona.

Former Nittany Lion punter Blake Gillikin re-signed with the Arizona Cardinals on a two-year deal, according to a report by MLFootball on X.

Gillikin spent the 2023 season with Arizona after two seasons with the New Orleans Saints. Last season, he averaged 50.6 yards per punt on 51 tries with a long of 77 yards.

At Penn State, Gillikin ranked among the best in program history in several metrics, including tying for second in average punt yards with 43.03. He remains the only Nittany Lion with four punts of over 70 yards in a season.

Jordan van den Berg

Former Penn State defensive tackle Jordan van den Berg has found his transfer destination.

Van den Berg committed to Georgia Tech on Tuesday, he announced on X, formerly known as Twitter. The graduate transfer will have two seasons of eligibility.

A depth player at Penn State, van den Berg tallied 26 total tackles and two sacks over three seasons. His claim to fame was in the weight room, where he set the Penn State record with a 615-pound squat last July.

Born in South Africa, van den Berg played high school ball in Lilburn, Georgia. Now he'll be returning to Georgia for the next chapter of his career.

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