

Telling Their Stories

I want to help people learn rather than punishing people and telling them it's bad... Everybody should be educated about sexual assault... I did it as a healing process for myself... Every bad thing becomes a consequence of the victim's choices... It becomes the fault of the woman for being immodest... They really shift the blame on to women for being temptresses... Nobody cares until you make them care... They're not alone, and it's not their fault... We're traumatized alone, but we heal in community... I'm still healing... It's on all of us... Clothing does not equal consent... No matter what you're wearing, you're not inviting any kind of sexual violence... You have the power to say that's not OK... I realized there was a lot I didn't know... Build a culture where people feel safe and seen... Understand the unique experiences of survivors... It's a lived reality... Survivors were silenced by the very systems meant to provide support and justice... Education is a powerful tool for social change... Listen to survivors and believe their experiences... Work toward creating a future free from sexual violence... It's not a part of

Graphic by
Aaron Platt

WHAT IS THE CLERY ACT?

By Leo Frepoli
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Signed in 1990, the Clery Act was created to promote safety on college campuses across the country.

The act was named after Jeanne Clery, a 19-year-old Lehigh University student who was raped and murdered in her college dormitory in 1986. The lack of information provided by the university about campus safety highlighted a need for better campus crime reporting and sexual assault prevention strategies.

Clery's parents — Constance and Howard Clery — lobbied with policy makers to pass the act. Constance serves as co-founder and chairwoman emerita of the Clery Center.

"Clery Center's mission really is to not just talk about what the law requires but to help campuses understand how to implement the requirements," Laura Egan,

the Clery Center's senior director of programs, said. "We really pride ourselves on providing a lot of practical tools and strategies."

Egan said while members at Clery were involved in the creation of the Clery Act, the U.S. Department of Education enforces the law that requires universities to disclose and maintain records of crime statistics on campus.

Egan said the Clery Center maintains a positive working relationship with Penn State. Following the Jerry Sandusky child sex abuse case, the center has used Penn State as a "case study" for how to break down the complexity of the Clery Act.

"What came out of that were a lot of really positive lessons learned for other campuses about how important it is to identify all the right people as campus security authorities, make sure that they are being trained regularly ... and that those folks are appropriately passing information

along to public safety or campus police," Egan said.

The Clery Act requires campus officials to evaluate if a Timely Warning is issued to all staff and students. The Clery Center notes that Timely Warnings are to be sent if a Clery crime reported to campus security or local law enforcement poses a serious or ongoing threat to the community.

There have been 26 Timely Warnings at University Park since January 2022, according to University Police and Public Safety. The warnings included: one aggravated assault, two burglaries, two stalking and 21 sex offenses.

The following numbers show the total number of reported forcible sex offenses issued as Timely Warnings for full academic years:

- 2021-22 academic year: 32
- 2020-21 academic year: 16
- 2019-20 academic year: 10
- 2018-19 academic year: 12
- 2017-18 academic year: 16

Although the 2021-22 academic year has recorded the highest number of forcible sex offense Timely Warnings, Jacqueline Sheader, Penn State's public information officer, said there have been no changes in policy relating to how Clery crimes are reported.

For Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, and throughout the year, both the Clery Center and university police inform students and faculty on sexual assault reporting and preventative measures.

Officers Shelly Stevick and Michelle Beckenbaugh are part of the Community Oriented Policing Unit at University Park.

Stevick and Beckenbaugh engage students and faculty through educational active response programs that spread awareness about instances of sexual assault and how to prevent or report it.

Stevick and Beckenbaugh have also attended related events organized by groups on campus.

Stevick said it can be difficult for police to make their presence felt at University Park compared to branch campuses due to its size.

"I think we've worked really hard in the past couple of years to be more visible and try to build those relationships ... people are recognizing us more and for good things," Stevick said.

During New Student Orientation at University Park, Beckenbaugh said she and Stevick inform students about the importance of the Safe Walk Program, a service that students or staff working late on campus can use if they feel unsafe.

"Even though you might not see us all the time, we're always out patrolling," Stevick said. "We're on bikes, we're out on foot ... in our vehicles. It's something we've always done, now we just advertise it a little bit more."

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Understanding where victim blaming comes from

By Kahlie Wray
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Jillian Cowart's understanding of the phenomenon of victim blaming revolves around the false concept that assault is the natural consequence of fun.

"Oh, you went to that party? Then you should have expected that," Cowart, a third-year studying biology and incoming co-president of the Gender Equity Coalition, said. "Every bad thing becomes a consequence of the victim's choices."

Victim blaming, also known as secondary victimization, is best understood as the undue placement of accountability on survivors of sexual crimes rather than the perpetrators. According to research conducted by Git-nux, an independent market research platform, around 30% of respondents said an individual is

partially responsible for an assault if they go out and get intoxicated.

Cowart said her best analogy explaining the questionable nature of victim blaming involves comparing the situation to living "in a high crime rate city."

"No one asks, 'What were you doing being mugged last night?' ... 'Why did you get shot?'" Cowart said. "You don't ask people that sort of thing."

While Cowart is hesitant to assign the roots of victim blaming to religion, she said there's a connection between the phenomenon and certain "Christian sects' values." In particular, she believes at times purity culture enforces victim blaming.

"It becomes the fault of the woman for being immodest," Cowart said. "Oh you shouldn't have tempted that person.' ... It's

like making them stumble."

In the past, Cowart's fellow incoming co-president Stefany Newkirk-Johnson took PHIL 14: Love and Sex, a course that touched on the same idea of common threads between victim blaming and religion.

"They really shift the blame on to women for being temptresses," Newkirk-Johnson, a third-year studying neurobiology, said.

Newkirk-Johnson said she also thinks it stems from this belief that a person could "never be in such a position of vulnerability."

"It really comes from seeing yourself through the eyes of the perpetrator rather than the victim," Newkirk-Johnson said. "A lot of people believe that it wouldn't happen to them."

In terms of combating this type

of mentality, Newkirk-Johnson said advocacy is an important first step.

"My mother has a saying, 'Nobody cares until you make them care,'" Newkirk-Johnson said.

Jennifer Pencek, executive director of Centre Safe, said victim blaming "leads to the normalization of rape culture."

Centre Safe is a nonprofit organization based in Centre County, which is dedicated to "(empowering) survivors of sexual or domestic violence."

"I think the No. 1 barrier for why someone chooses not to report something right away is because they blame themselves in some way," Pencek said. "Can we blame them when we consider the pervasiveness of victim blaming?"

According to Pencek, when it comes to working toward the re-

duction of victim blaming, everyone needs to acknowledge their prejudices.

Pencek said simply acknowledging where a person's biases come from is the first step to the victim-blaming mindset.

Pencek also believes the "see something, say something" phrase has value in these conversations.

"Ideally, if you're going to reduce victim blaming, you can start by calling people out when they're making inappropriate jokes," Pencek said.

According to Pencek, bystander intervention is a "huge" necessity in order to accomplish the dissipation of this mentality.

"I would just like to let people know they're not alone, and it's not their fault," Pencek said.

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ADRIENNE WILLIAMS’ STORY

The Penn State alumna shares her story decades after being attacked by former linebacker

By Maggie Day
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Editor’s Note: The following article discusses sexual assault and misconduct. If you or someone you know needs support, call RAINN at 1-800-656-4673 or Penn State’s confidential Counseling and Psychological Services line at 814-863-0395. The Penn State Gender Equity Center can be reached in-person at 222U Boucke Building, by phone at 814-863-2027 or by email at genderequity@psu.edu.

Adrienne Williams arrived at Penn State in 1976 as an art education major.

One night during her college career, former Penn State linebacker Todd Hodne attacked Williams in an attempted sexual assault. Later, Hodne was charged as a serial rapist and murderer.

In January, Williams participated in a Rape Culture on Campus panel discussion hosted by the Gender Equity Center and the Department of Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies. This event marked her first time back on campus since she graduated in 1979.

Williams agreed to tell the Collegian her story for this year’s Sexual Assault Awareness Month edition of the paper. The following is a modified version of the conversation, edited for ease of reading and understanding. Italicized sentences aim to provide added context.

Q: When did you arrive at Penn State, and what did you study?

A: “I was old. I was 22 when I came to Penn State. Most of the people I was with were 18, 19, 20. So Alice took a special interest in me, and because of that, I flourished in art education. I loved it, every minute of it. I had already completed all of the — excuse my language — bullshit courses. So when I got to Penn State, all I had were my major courses.”

Alice Schwartz was Williams’ guidance counselor and taught art education.

Q: Could you tell me about your story and your experience at the university?

A: “I was flourishing at Penn State. For a long time — from 18 to 22 — I was really confused about what I wanted to do with my life. When I found art education, it was like a dream come true. I was living off campus ... off Atherton, and I was also living at the time with my to-be first husband.

“In the fall of ‘78, I was working as a waitress at the Train Station. I never paid attention to the people in the bar. ... I was a hippie. ... I did not follow athletics. ... I never went to a football game the entire time I was there, so that’s how interested in sports I was.”

The Train Station restaurant, opened in 1974 and closed in 1986, was formerly located at 418 East College Ave.

“I think it was a Thursday night. ... It was during the week, I remember that. I was wearing



Tyler Mantz/Collegian

The Pennsylvania State University sign stands outside Beaver Stadium in 2023. Survivor Adrienne Williams came back to campus in 2024 for the first time since she graduated.

a pair of black slacks, and I had a yellow, long-sleeve Train Station shirt on with its logo. I wore a sweater — a zip-up sweater that was beige and had suede elbow patches and suede in the front. I remember the sweater ... and a hood.

“I closed my shift. I walked outside, and I walked out the back to Calder Alley (*now East Calder Way*) ... That’s where my car was parked at the time. ... I got to the car, and as I was putting the key in the lock to unlock it, I felt this force behind me, pushed me to the passenger side of the car and immediately blindfolded me, so I couldn’t see anything.

“I’m really short and always have been, so the seat in my car is always way up. Knowing it was Todd Hodne now, there was no way he could fit behind the wheel of my car.

“So he’s trying to tie up my hands behind my back, and I’m just talking nonsense the whole time. Like, ‘I have my period.’ ‘You can’t take me.’ ‘Don’t take me to the golf course.’”

Williams had heard rumors that students were being raped at the golf course, according to ESPN.

“And as he was trying to tie up my hands with this sweaty ACE bandage, I pulled my hands apart behind my back, reached over on the right-hand side. The lock of the car was on that little console you put your arm on, and I pulled the lock, opened the car, got out and started screaming.

“At that point, the person ran away. I never saw this person. And I remember screaming and this ACE bandage that had been around my eyes was like falling down my face, and it was around my neck.

“I ran back into the Train Station and told somebody, I don’t

remember who, who then called the police. The police came. They took down what I said. It seemed to me, when I was talking to them, that they had some idea of who it could have been, or might have been. Because by that time, I think he was on their radar.

“That’s the last I ever heard from them again. Never heard from the police, never heard from anybody ... any prosecutor, nobody. And I get it, I couldn’t identify him. So anything I had to say was ... you couldn’t prove it was him.

“Nobody notified me about Betsy’s rape and subsequent trial, and then catching him. I don’t know why. I guess they — I don’t know — did they not care? Or, you know, did they think that because

I wasn’t raped, I was less of a victim? Those are the kinds of things that run through your mind on why nobody followed up with me, ever.”

According to ESPN, Hodne attacked and raped Betsy Sailor, a then-senior at Penn State, on Sept. 13, 1978. Williams was made aware that Hodne was the person who attacked her after his conviction was written in the local paper. She said she received more information during her interviews with ESPN.

“(The cops) took me back to the car ... to show them what had happened, and lying by the driver’s side door was a pair of scissors. They weren’t mine. To this day, if I had known he had a pair of scissors, would I have done the same thing? I don’t know, but I didn’t feel threatened by a weapon, which is why I did what I did. I didn’t know that he had a pair of scissors with him. After that, I called Joe, who came and picked me up and took me home.”

Joe was her first husband,

“And life was never the same after that. It’s like all the color in my world just drained out into this black-and-white world that was not conducive to art.”

Adrienne Williams
Penn State alumna, survivor

whom she lived with during her time at Penn State.

“And life was never the same after that. Penn State was never the same after that. It’s like all the color in my world just drained out into this black-and-white world that was not conducive to art.”

Q: What was the aftermath of the incident?

A: “So that semester, I had weaving and bowling, and I remember spending hours in the weaving studio. We had big looms, 6-foot looms. And I still remember this weaving that I made, it was so ugly. When I think about it today, I’m like, ‘What were you thinking?’ but it was the mindless activity that allowed me to keep going — because I had to keep going.

“I am by nature a pretty strong person. I’ve overcome a bunch of obstacles in my life, and this one changed the way I saw Penn State.”

“Again, I was there for another year and walked through my classes ... like sleepwalking through them, the best way I can put it.”

Adrienne said she didn’t go to any classes for about a week after the incident.

“After that week, I went to bowling, and I went to the teacher, this wonderful, wonderful man. He came up to me, and he said, ‘You passed, you don’t need to come back anymore.’ He was the only person that acknowledged what had happened to me, and it’s interesting that he was, of course, part of the athletic department. ... I don’t know if they knew at that point who this guy was, I think they did. And it seems like maybe this coach knew. And that’s all I remember of the active part of the incident.

“After that, like I said, I never heard from anybody ... I was left to finish, which I did. I graduated in January. I don’t remember anything after that incident. I don’t remember my classes. I don’t remember graduating. I don’t remember being a part of anything.

“It was a sad time for me. Just sad.

“I left physically and never came back. I really just never wanted to go back on campus. I didn’t, I didn’t feel a part of the school anymore, and I graduated with honors. I mean, I worked hard and I did well. ... But after that, things kind of went downhill from there. I don’t need to go into any details, but the ensuing years were pretty difficult.

“And you know, I’m 70 now, I’ve been through a lot, and it’s the one thing that I remember like it was yesterday. ... I didn’t go back to work either, at the Train Station. I stopped working. I couldn’t go out. I wouldn’t go out without Joe. I wouldn’t go anywhere by myself. So, it had a pretty big impact on me in ways that did not come until later, basically.

“Anyway, here I am. It wasn’t a part of who I was until ESPN came knocking a couple years ago.”

ESPN reporters Tom Junod and Paula Lavigne published a story about Todd Hodne, the survivors of his rape and sexual assault, as well as the university’s handling of the situation.

“Paula and I spoke a few times, and she was wonderful. She really was, and I really couldn’t believe that they were that interested to make a story out of it. But they did, and they did an amazing job.

“I’m extremely happy that this has helped to push people to recognize really how bad it is. And the fact that Penn State, in the list of big schools, is not doing very much to make athletes more aware.

“Scholarship athletes, who are most of the D1 players, are all on scholarship, and they all receive money. They make up 3% of the school population, and yet they’re responsible for almost 20% of the rapes that happen on campus.”

Williams is referring to the 1990s when research on violence against women showed a connection to intercollegiate athletes. A study conducted from 1991-93 showed that male student-athletes comprised 3.3% of the total male student population but represented 19% of reported perpetrators.

“Athletes are a unique group that need special attention, especially in an environment like Penn State, who cares so much about their football and their team but don’t care enough to make those athletes understand this culture and what they can do to make it better. They just don’t care, and it’s frustrating and it’s sad. In 2024, I find it very difficult to believe that Penn State, as a D1 school, has not required their athletes to go through this training. I’m sarcastically surprised.”

See **WILLIAMS**, page A4.

Jessica Browning’s voyage to ‘playing again’

By Kate Hildebrand
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Jessica Browning has a soft voice, but that doesn’t mean people shouldn’t listen.

Penn State’s Gender Equity Center and the School of Music co-hosted a concert and conversation with Browning, a singer, songwriter, harpist, activist and survivor on April 3. This was the first of many events hosted by GenEq for Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

From age 4 when she first started playing the harp, she knew it would become her voice.

Six years later, Browning’s

uncle moved in with her family. While he lived there, she said he repeatedly sexually assaulted her.

After that, Browning told the Collegian she “didn’t play in the same way” and completely stopped playing the harp at 13 years old.

Browning went to Bryn Mawr College and moved to New Zealand after graduation, where she lived in a Buddhist monastery.

“I was in this silent little hut in the forest,” Browning told the Collegian. “I realized it was time to start playing again.”

She moved to Tasmania and began to take harp lessons. Now, years later, she’s a professional

electric harpist. Browning lives in Saint Martin and travels the world as a professional harpist, playing at weddings and concerts.

“(Survivors of sexual assault) have safe spaces when we talk about our stories,” Browning said. “We’re traumatized alone, but we heal in community.”

The conversation portion of Browning’s performance didn’t center around her experiences with sexual assault, but instead her healing process and the importance of a community to heal within.

It was aimed to target survivors of sexual assault. Early on, she established that “this is a safe space” and regularly reminded audience members to breathe. She focused on the physical effects of traumatic events and what the brain goes through to process them.

Browning wore a long, flowing teal dress with matching thread braided into her hair — the official color for sexual assault awareness month. She spoke softly, soothingly and seemed aware of how the audience was feeling throughout the entire talk.

“I’m still healing,” she said. “I’m still pretty broken sometimes.”

Between sections of her talk, Browning played three original pieces of music. While she may have seemed quiet during the talk, all of that went away when she began to play.

It was clear that Browning feels most at home in her music. With her eyes closed, her fingers flew across the strings of her two harps in a knowing, expert fashion. Her voice filled the room



Kate Hildebrand/Collegian

Jessica Browning practices harp before her concert and conversation on April 3.

easily. It often felt like Browning was taking the audience through her personal healing journey with her music.

She told the Collegian she’s “incredibly connected to the emotions that went into writing the song” when performing.

Browning performed her last song, “Whale,” with a video playing behind her. There were visualizations of water, wind and nature — all of which Browning felt were integral to her healing process.

“I think we’re all, in many ways, hungry for trees and ocean and forest,” Browning said during the performance.

For years, she’s lived on a sailboat with her husband and 4-year-old son. Browning wrote her newest album, “Her Odyssey,” during her most recent crossing of the Atlantic Ocean.

“You can’t stop at the 7-Eleven and get snacks,” Browning said.

On a sailboat, someone has to be awake at all times to adjust the sails and keep watch.

During her watches, which were often in the middle of the night, she would take her harp outside and play. The ocean and stars and sky, she told the Collegian, “created this empty space where (she) could create.”

It wasn’t until she finished the crossing and the album that Browning realized the album was about healing from sexual assault.

“(Artists) just need to be open to the process and trust that what is within us will come forward,” she said.

This July, Browning will be sailing to New Zealand to begin work on a master’s degree and doctorate in music therapy.

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Kate Hildebrand/Collegian

Jessica Browning performs original music in Freeman Auditorium. She has been playing the harp since she was 4.

What Were You Wearing?

Art installation showcases the many outfits of sexual assault survivors

By **Reece Coren**
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Standing beside a display of jeans and a t-shirt with a slice of pizza and the words, “a slice of heaven,” Sophia Mills said she tried to use her exhibit to expose “rape myths” that blame survivors of sexual assault for being assaulted.

As the Gender Equity Center’s program coordinator for outreach and prevention, Mills said she tries to combat those narratives through education.

“Oftentimes, whenever you are talking with someone after an assault occurred, (they will) say something to the effect of, ‘Well, what were you wearing,’” Mills said. “This art installation shows that it doesn’t matter what anyone was wearing. Clothing does not equal consent.”

In honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, Penn State’s Gender Equity Center showcased the What Were You Wearing? Survivor Art Installation in the HUB-Robeson Center’s Charlotte Ray Lounge on Friday.

Ranging from a sweatshirt and sweatpants to a button-down shirt and jeans, Mills’ exhibit entailed a maze of about 50 pairs of outfits paired with corresponding anonymous quotes detailing experiences being assaulted.

“I was 3 years old the first time he raped me. Winnie the Pooh was my favorite show at the time, so I was wearing Winnie the Pooh overalls,” one display said. “He said it was a game and I shouldn’t be scared, but games aren’t supposed to hurt. It continued for years. I thought family was supposed to protect you, not hurt you.”

Other outfits displayed included a child’s princess nightgown and an oversized Penn State



Megan Miller/Collegian

A sign for the “What Were You Wearing?” exhibit at the HUB-Robeson Center on April 5. The Survivor Art Installation was held in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

hoodie. Another display featured a bathrobe.

“I had just gotten out of the shower and was on my way back to my room,” it said. “I said no. He didn’t listen.”

“When people say, ‘What were you wearing,’ it’s insinuating that you had revealing or provocative clothing on, and that, because you wore that clothing, someone was invited to commit acts of sexual violence,” Mills said. “No matter what you’re wearing, you’re not inviting any kind of sexual violence.”

In addition to the outfits displayed, tables hosting various community organizations dedicated to fighting sexual violence lined the perimeter of the exhibit.

Ena Foreman, the outreach

and education manager for Centre Safe, a local nonprofit organization that offers free and confidential services to survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, said the number of outfits displayed that weren’t “provocative” showed that sexual assault “is never the (survivor’s) fault.”

“Sexual assault is so much more common than we would like to think it is,” Foreman said. “Instead of turning a blind eye, let people know that it’s here and it happens.”

Gary Zembower, the sexual assault response coordinator for the Pennsylvania National Guard, urged students to be on the lookout for signs that their friends or peers might have been assaulted. This can include: becoming

withdrawn, preferring isolation, declining to attend social gatherings and exhibiting noticeable depression, he said.

Instead of waiting until after assaults happen, Mills encouraged Penn State students to be proactive in their fight against sexual violence and support for survivors.

“You have the power to say ‘that’s not OK,’” Mills said. “You have the ability to make a difference.”

One way to support survivors and prevent future assaults, Mills said, is to get involved. She highlighted the Gender Equity Center’s two peer education groups — It’s on Us and Greeks CARE — as examples.

“About 1 in 3 women and near-

ly 1 in 6 men experience some form of sexual violence in their lifetimes,” Mills said. “Whether you recognize it or not, someone you know (or) someone you have class with (or) someone you interact with has gone through something like this.”

Aside from the peer education groups, Mills said students can also make that difference by calling out problematic behavior; initiating conversations and directing people toward resources.

“It’s on all of us,” Mills said. “Don’t let our friends (and) fellow students suffer.”

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Assistant professor talks sexual assault education

By **Elbia Vidal**
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Kamaria Porter, an assistant professor for Penn State’s College of Education, brought a wealth of experience and expertise to her role as an advocate for social justice and equity.

With a career spanning from community organizing in Chicago to academic research at the University of Michigan, Porter’s journey reflects a commitment to addressing systemic injustices.

When she was a community organizer in Chicago, she was actively engaged in social justice campaigns to expand healthcare access and build affordable housing for marginalized communities.

Transitioning to academia, Porter pursued a Ph.D. at Michigan, focusing her research on campus sexual assault, particularly its impact on Black women and nonbinary students.

Through her dissertation, Porter shed light on “barriers that perpetuate silence and isolation” by writing about the challenges faced by survivors in reporting incidents of sexual violence.

“Sexual assault on college campuses is not just a statistic; it’s a lived reality for far too many individuals,” Porter said. “My research sought to understand the unique experiences of survivors, particularly those marginalized and silenced.”

From her interviews with survivors, Porter studied the complex reality that shapes survivors’ perceptions of available reporting options.

“For Black women, neither of these options seemed useful to

addressing both the issues that underlie the sexual harm they experienced,” Porter said. “Survivors were silenced by the very systems meant to provide support and justice.”

In the absence of specific initiatives within the College of Education, Porter’s advocacy efforts continue with persistence. She attempts to empower faculty and staff members with the tools to create safer, more inclusive learning environments through partnerships with organizations.

“I’ve always believed that education is a powerful tool for social change,” Porter said. “My journey from community organizer to academic researcher has been driven by a desire to create a more just and equitable society.”

As part of the College of Education, Porter said every educator has a “responsibility to address the systemic issues that perpetuate sexual violence on college campuses.”

“Integrating this awareness into the curriculum is essential to fostering a culture of empathy, support and empowerment,” Porter said. “By integrating discussions of consent, gender-based violence and systemic inequities into the curriculum, we can empower students to become agents of change in their communities.”

With a focus on curriculum development, Porter envisions a future where students have the knowledge and tools to navigate complex social issues with “confidence and compassion.”

“While there is still much work to be done, I am hopeful for the future,” Porter said. “By working together, we can create a world

where every student feels safe, valued and empowered to pursue their dreams.”

From hosting webinars for campus leaders to collaborating with external organizations, Porter’s impact extends beyond Penn State, believing that research should both inform practice and drive meaningful change.

Porter also emphasizes the importance of fostering a culture of awareness, empathy and empowerment.

“Listen to survivors and believe their experiences,” Porter said. “Support survivors in whatever way they feel comfortable, whether by offering a listening ear or connecting them with resources.”

Porter said it’s important to educate students on observer intervention, a proactive approach to preventing sexual assault by intervening in potentially harmful situations.

In addition to individual action, Porter highlights the importance of collective advocacy and systemic change. Issues of sexual violence need to be addressed consistently and institutions need to be held accountable, she said.

“It’s essential to engage students in discussions about consent, gender-based violence, and systemic inequities throughout the year, not just during April,” Porter said. “By amplifying awareness and advocacy efforts, we can work towards creating a future free from sexual violence.”

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Kate Hildebrand/Collegian

Audience members watch Matt McGorry, actor and activist, in Heritage Hall on April 10, 2024 in University Park, Pa.

Men’s role in sexual violence prevention

By **Kahlie Wray**
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Acknowledging the difficult nature of conversations surrounding sexual violence, actor and activist Matt McGorry led attendees of his moderated conversation in a practice of grounded meditation prior to his discussion around the role of men in sexual violence prevention.

Attendees connected in Heritage Hall on Wednesday evening through their desire to end sexual violence. The attendees wore masks out of respect for McGorry’s health and collectively took deep breaths while wiggling their toes.

The conversation was moderated by Colin Gibson and Aiden McGuire, who are both members of Greeks CARE, which is a program that aims “to provide students (with) a comprehensive understanding of sexual assault, constituting consent, appropriate alcohol use, bystander intervention, and much more.”

The event was part of a series from Penn State’s Gender Equity Center and partners in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

Due to health issues, McGorry entered a sort of self-imposed retirement regarding public speaking ventures. The invitation to speak at Penn State was the first he accepted in a long time.

“I was really excited but also a bit nervous,” McGorry said. “I feel like getting to talk to college students and young adults at this age is so important.”

Filled with anxiety about the event, McGorry said he naturally went back to what drew him to this line of activism in preparation.

“I went back to some of the books that really shaped me,” McGorry said.

“The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love” by Bell

Hooks is one such novel and was first introduced to him through Laverne Cox, who he worked with on the show “Orange Is the New Black.”

While books played a significant role in McGorry’s activism journey, so did his own personal experiences.

Years ago, he attended a video conference with a female author, and he recalled commenting on her “not so warm nature” when he was asked how it went.

“That was the first moment I realized my own sexism,” McGorry said.

“I had this expectation of her that I would not have had of a man, and it was from that I realized there was a lot I didn’t know.

“A lot of the work is being committed to unlearning our own ways in which we have internalized sexist ... patriarchal beliefs,” he added.

In his daily life, McGorry is a firm believer in the practice of calling in versus calling out. Humility, he believes, should be an important aspect of these conversations “with other men.”

“Instead of shaming or blaming someone for not knowing something, we can say ‘you know actually, I had to unlearn something like this myself not too long ago,’” he said.

Though McGorry stresses the importance of using one’s voice, he isn’t immune to the feeling that it isn’t enough.

“I definitely fluctuate,” he said. “The moments where I feel most optimistic are when I’m in community with people and seeing other people do the work to learn and transform.”

Above all, McGorry said he hopes conversations like this continue “to build new tools and new ways of thinking about consent and how to build a culture where people feel safe and seen.”

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Courtesy of Kamaria Porter

Kamaria Porter, assistant professor for the College of Education, works to shed light on the challenges faced by survivors in reporting incidents of sexual violence.

It's On Us combats sexual violence

By Daniela White
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Affiliated with the Gender Equity Center, It's On Us is a student-led movement in sexual violence awareness and prevention.

The organization holds conversations about sexual violence and educates people on the matter in room 322 HUB-Robeson Center every Wednesday from 6-7 p.m.

Using resources from GenEq, Graduate Adviser Leah Pope said It's On Us provides professional staff and a space where peers can be educated on how to work together to combat sexual violence.

"I think seeing your peers engage in this work is sometimes a lot more profound than seeing staff engaging in the work," Pope, a graduate student in the higher education program, said. "It's showing that we can stop this, too. It's everyone's fight."

As the adviser of the organization, Pope said if the student members and executives have ideas, they help them execute them and let them take the lead.

President of It's On Us Sophia Wasserman said she first discovered the organization in her second year of college during the "What Were You Wearing" exhibit.

"I was going into that event already knowing I was passionate about that mission, and that I wanted to work in preventative work and education," Wasserman, a third-year studying edu-



Graphic by Ritamarie Montagna

It's On Us is a student-led movement in sexual violence awareness and prevention affiliated with the Penn State Gender Equity Center.

cation and public policy, said. "(I want to) help people learn rather than punishing people and telling them it's bad."

Pope said sexual violence is an issue that impacts everyone, and It's on Us provides students with a community of peers.

While It's On Us hosts many of its own events, Pope said it also collaborates with Greeks CARE, which focuses on changing the culture in fraternity and sorority life. The organization has a Denim Day coming up for Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

According to Pope, It's On Us has received many grants throughout the years. The first one was given to create videos to make Title IX resources more accessible and another to host events and create workshops. This year, It's On Us received \$60,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Education in the statewide "It's On Us PA" campaign.

The grant will further the goal of the organization to increase reporting of sexual violence incidents and improve awareness.

To add to the mission of the or-

ganization, Wasserman said the goal of It's On Us is to educate as many people as possible and serve as a resource for students.

"Everyone has a mind and can learn anything — I think people are open to learning," Wasserman said. "We teach topics that some people are uncomfortable with, so we make sure people are comfortable with these topics and make sure everyone learns about the things that we teach about."

The biggest thing with It's On Us, Wasserman said, is that it lets people know it's an "all people issue." Whether students come

and sit in on an event or come to a meeting every once in a while, she said students will always leave learning something new.

Since its inception in 2022, Vice President Cassandra Blasi said the organization currently has a small outreach program that doubles as a workshop where anyone can request to join.

"I think that (students) should know that there are peers out there that are helping with issues," Blasi, a third-year studying supply chain and information systems, Chinese and Asian studies, said.

"I think everybody should be educated about sexual assault. If it does ever happen to yourself or somebody close to you, you can share the resources that we have about such an occurrence."

Joining as a challenge to herself, Blasi said she grew up in a conservative town where she wasn't educated on issues that It's On Us discussed. Since she's been in the club, she said she's seen herself grown as a person and has become more accepting and gained a wider mindset on perspectives she's never thought of before.

"I did it as a sort of healing process for myself, in addition so that I could learn more," Blasi said. "I feel like I have come so far and developed so much as a person, so I'm so glad I joined."

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MY VIEW | OLIVIA ESTRIGHT

Education on sexual assault is imperative

Editor's note: This story contains a recollection of sexual assault.

Every April, organizations across the country establish an open environment for learning about sexual assault awareness and prevention.

Throughout this month, the University Park Undergraduate Association collaborated with the Penn State Gender Equity Center to host events, programs and workshops to educate the Penn State community.

In light of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, reporters for The Daily Collegian produced a special edition focused on sharing survivor's stories and educating the Penn State community on sexual assault.

Reporters attended events and workshops. Current and former Penn Staters shared their stories and experiences with them. Organizations and individuals elaborated on how they plan to generate conversations surrounding awareness and prevention.

People used their platforms to share their stories, so I feel I would be remiss if I didn't share my own.

Three years ago, I woke up in a then-friend's basement after a night of drinking. I didn't remember what happened the night before.

He spoke with me about the events of the night, gave me permission to feel "embarrassed," told me he "enjoyed it" and asked me to "finish him off."

There are chunks of my memory missing, but I've realized that's just my brain's way of trying to protect me.

For days, I didn't know what to do. I convinced myself it was my fault, and the people I initially sought out for support convinced me of the same thing.

My mom told me not to tell my siblings and sent me to the doctor. The doctor diagnosed me with a slew of mental illnesses and sent me to the pharmacy. The pharmacy sent me on a medicated trip, and that was the end of the line.

No one in my life knew what to do, and I don't blame them. For

so long, survivors weren't invited into the conversation because people were afraid of what would make them uncomfortable.

If we cannot fix something overnight, we often don't bother trying.

Instead, we throw out numbers.

Call 1-800-656-4673 to report an assault. Every 68 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted, according to RAINN. One in six American women are survivors of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime. 13% of undergraduate and graduate students experience rape or sexual assault.

While the numbers help show us we aren't alone, they fail to validate our experiences.

Before I could acknowledge that I'm part of the 13% or that I should dial the number to report, I wanted to know if my situation even warranted a report.

If I don't think I was raped, was I even sexually assaulted? Was I sexually assaulted or did I lead him on? Am I just being dramatic? Will it always hurt this badly?

My environment didn't know how to handle these questions, let alone initiate a conversation. I learned how to validate myself — I was assaulted. I wasn't leading him on, and I wasn't being dramatic.

I also learned that it won't always hurt.

The isolating process of validating my experiences and convincing myself that something wasn't right was painstaking. But there's a way we can avoid that for others.

By generating conversations, we can continue the dialogue to support survivors. Rather than avoiding the topic or forcing someone to speak, survivors could have the ability to come to terms with what happened on their own time.

Attend the local programs held for Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Support survivors of sexual assault. And most importantly, believe them.

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Kate Hildebrand/Collegian

Students and community members march from Old Main to Pattee and Paterno Library at Take Back the Night on April 4.

Penn State community 'Takes Back the Night'

By Louise Bennett
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Over 100 Penn State students and community members took back the night by sharing and listening to stories of sexual and domestic violence in front of the Pattee and Paterno Library Thursday night.

The annual event, which is hosted by Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc. with the support of Centre Safe and the Gender Equity Center, works to spread awareness about sexual violence and provides survivors with a space to share their stories.

For Larra Lopez, president of Lambda Theta Alpha and co-chair of the event, this event is important.

"This event opens up a space for survivors of sexual and domestic violence to take that time to tell their story and to share it," Lopez, a third-year studying psy-

chology, said. "It allows them to feel like they are heard, seen and believed."

One of those survivors is Lo White.

White, a graduate student studying forensic science, said she was invited to attend the event by one of her classmates and recognized the experience could be both therapeutic and emotional because of her history.

"I hold onto a lot of the things that have happened to me. Talking about it is my way of going, 'It's gone now. It gets to be in the ether. It's not a part of me. It's just a part of someone else's story,'" White said.

While some in attendance shared their stories, other Penn Staters were there in order to show support or solidarity for other people.

Kyle Berlin said he attended the event to be supportive and because he knows a survivor personally.

"One of my friends back home had an extremely rough childhood. It was a good way to show support even though he isn't here right now," Berlin, a second-year studying global studies, said.

Tommy Asbury also said he came to show solidarity with individuals that have experienced sexual or domestic violence.

"I have known a lot of, specifically, women that have gone through these experiences," Asbury, a third-year studying plant sciences, said.

"And it is something that we want to stand in solidarity with them."

The march concluded early due to impending inclement weather.

To conclude the event, students and community members commemorated survivors with a vigil and moment of silence.

Williams

FROM page A2.

"It's almost like, 'What are they afraid of?' That it's true? That some of their athletes may be responsible for this? I think they're blind. I think they do it on purpose. I think they don't see because they don't want to see, period. If they did, they'd do something about it. That's pretty simple to me. But they continue to put their heads in the sand and deny the reality of a rape culture and how they perpetuate it with their athletes, how they can stop it with their athletes. And yet they don't do anything."

During the Rape Culture on Campus panel discussion earlier this semester, organizers said they were given a name of someone within Penn State Ath-

letics to talk about rape culture in sports. After two weeks, the individual said no and provided another name. This employee was new to Penn State Athletics and did not know about the issue. No one from the athletics department appeared on the panel.

"So that leaves people like me shaking their head and wondering how 40 years later, they still can't fix or try to help fix this problem. They need to be woken up, and I don't know how you can do it, how the community can do it. But they need to wake up to the reality of what goes on on campus and what their players are responsible for."

"Until they do, it won't change. Until they even recognize there's a problem, it won't change. And I get the sense that they don't even want to know if it's a problem or not."

Q: What made you decide to return to campus for the panel discussion?

A: "The path to what happened to me was woken up by Paula. I hadn't thought about it for years until Paula got in touch with me. Ever since then, anybody that has asked me to share my story has cared what happened and what happened to me. Paula's article made it public, and because of that, when (panel organizers reached out) through Paula, I wanted to help."

"If they thought telling my story would help them move Penn State in the right direction, then I'll do it. ... I thought about it, and I talked to my husband about it and decided I would go back for this. I mean seriously, I haven't set foot on that campus really since 1979. Coming back, it was not coming back to the same

place, it's changed so much that I didn't recognize it. If I can help you do that, then that's what I'll do."

Q: What would you like to see happen within the athletics department to prevent sexual violence?

A: "I wish they would get on board with every other large university and see this as an issue that needs to be addressed. That's what I wish, and that's what I'm hoping for. ... I would do anything to help change that culture up there."

Q: Where are you at now?

A: "I'm retired, but I am a potter. I throw pottery and hand-build pottery. I have a shed in the back that my husband built during COVID for me, and I have a wheel and glazes and a mini slab roller. I'm there pretty much every day. I'm doing something. So,

that's what I do now and I love it. I still have pieces that I made in '78 during my ceramics class as part of my degree. ... I've been doing this for a very, very long time — consistently for the last 24, 25 years. I love it."

Q: It seems like your soul is very connected to art and creation.

A: "Always has been, always has. If I wasn't doing pottery, I was making jewelry. If I wasn't making jewelry, I was drawing. I always had to do something related to art, my whole life. I was fortunate enough to be able to do that through classes and people that I know. Art has been my salvation for a long time."

Adrienne graduated from the College of Education in 1979. She currently lives in Florida.

Navigating financial strain

Penn State students outline expected and unexpected costs

By Jadzia Santiago, Lulu Douglas and Avery McGurgan
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Quinn Taylor works three jobs to cover the cost of her housing and education at Penn State. Each month, she pays nearly \$1,300 for the two-bedroom apartment she shares with her brother in downtown State College. She spends another \$600, roughly, on groceries. And on top of these expenses, she must also navigate the rising cost of a Penn State degree.

The necessity of her work outside the classroom has had a tangible impact on her college experience. Taylor, a fourth-year studying broadcast journalism, said she works up to 40 hours a week. With so much to do outside the classroom, Taylor spends much of her downtime — whether it be a slow day at the law firm where she works or sitting idly at the dog park — working on her studies.

“My college experience is dramatically different from my peers,” Taylor said. “My schedule requires me to be so strict with my routine that it can be difficult to live a more loose and impulsive college lifestyle.”

Over the past decade, Penn State has become a front-runner in the surge of public university tuition hikes. The swells in cost have eclipsed affordability and made attending the university increasingly difficult for students and families to finance.

In the 2023-24 academic year, Penn State had an in-state sticker price of \$39,892 and is third nationally in overall in-state tuition, according to the U.S. Department



Sienna Pinney/Collegian

Old Main is home to Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi. One of her key tasks when taking over in 2022 was to help fix the budget problem at Penn State.

of Education. For out-of-state students, the overall cost to attend is \$59,846. The majority of students receive financial aid that lowers this sticker price, but the university is still one of the most expensive in the country for Pennsylvania families.

The rising costs add to the financial strain on some Penn State students. A survey conducted in 2022 by the university, published this fall, found that nearly 15% of participants from University Park said they “have trouble securing enough food each day.” Another 13% said they have trouble obtaining adequate housing.

Across all campuses, 14% of students reported going without food for 24 hours within the last month.

For Taylor, managing the cost of her education has been all about “intentionality and focus.” Accounting for extra costs, such as utilities, cleaning supplies, and in Taylor’s case, vet bills, has made budgeting a vital part of living.

It isn’t all work and no play, however. Taylor has learned to apply her budgeting skills to her time as well. Earning enough money at all three of her jobs to pay bills, Taylor makes a point of dedicating chunks of her weekend to spend time with friends before tackling a new week.

The Daily Collegian, along with other student media organizations at Penn State, has for months explored how students are navigating financial struggles amid rising college costs. Report-

ers attempted to find students experiencing diverse and deep forms of financial struggle, but many were hesitant to publicly share their experiences. The university survey itself showed that some students don’t recognize their circumstances as financial insecurity.

What’s behind rising costs?

The average family from Pennsylvania paid \$26,747 — after receiving financial aid — to attend Penn State’s main campus in the 2021-22 academic year, data from the federal education department shows. Compared to more than 100 of the country’s similarly prominent public research universities, Penn State

had the second-highest average cost of attendance for in-state families.

The state’s poorest families, who earn up to \$30,000 a year, had to pay \$20,469 on average. Families from the same income bracket paid a fraction of the cost elsewhere. At Michigan State University, they paid \$7,087. At Ohio State University, they paid \$6,956. At the University of Kentucky, they paid \$10,597.

Lisa Powers, a spokesperson for Penn State, said the increase in tuition has been to “fill the void” caused by lack of Pennsylvania state funding and to “meet the rising costs” of the university’s operations.

Pennsylvania ranks 48 out of 50 in state funding per full-time student, according to the Associated Press. The university relies on this funding to provide reduced tuition to Pennsylvania families. The state’s current funding per student is \$5,750, below the national average of \$10,200 per student and below other public Pennsylvania universities.

In anticipation of increased state funding, the university implemented several tuition freezes over the past decade. The Pennsylvania House of Representatives recently announced it would provide Penn State \$259 million in funding and force the university to freeze tuition for University Park in the next academic year.

Continue reading here:



Prepping for Earth Day

By Chet Irvin
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Penn State EcoReps, a group of student environmental ambassadors on campus, is currently preparing for its Earth Day celebration on Friday. The organization hosts a variety of events throughout the semester — from an ice cream social in August to a clothing swap in January.

Some EcoReps events are geared toward first-year students in particular while others involve the entire State College community. No matter the audience, the purpose is the same:



Aabha Vora/Collegian file photo

An EcoReps member informs students about sustainability during 2019’s America Recycles Day.

to educate others about the best sustainability practices.

Even though Macy Miskiewicz didn’t come from a town that was particularly conservation-minded, she joined EcoReps in the spring semester of her first year.

Miskiewicz, a fourth-year studying biobehavioral health, serves as one of two senior program coordinators for EcoReps.

“I was always big about consuming mindfully,” she said, “but it wasn’t until I came to Penn State that I got to join a community that reflected my passion.”

Miskiewicz said she’s “proud to be a part of something bigger than (herself).”

In her third year, Miskiewicz served as an assistant programming coordinator. In this role, she said she was involved in planning “Single-Use Scaries” and “Earth Hour” events for EcoReps.

During Earth Hour, Miskiewicz helped arrange to turn off the lights of Old Main for one hour with the goal of spreading awareness about energy conservation.

Earth Hour was first organized by the World Wildlife Fund and is internationally recognized every year on the third Saturday in March.

EcoReps has also visited more than 48 different first-year seminar classes to present information about sustainability and how students can get involved. The goal is to “gauge the interest” of someone who wasn’t interested before.

Miskiewicz said she wants to reach majors that are “not traditionally” associated with a sustainable focus — like business and engineering. Sustainability is multifaceted.

Professors and advisers want to help students bring their passion to sustainability, Miskiewicz said.

“They want to meet students where they are at,” she said.

One way EcoReps has tried to meet students where they are at is with “Critters by the Creamery” to bring in animals that have been rescued through Centre Wildlife Care.

Kurt McAuliffe, an assistant programming coordinator for EcoReps, said he considered this “the most impactful event.”

McAuliffe, a fourth-year studying earth science and policy, helps EcoReps collaborate with other organizations, like Centre Wildlife Care, to host events throughout the year.

One of his biggest goals, McAuliffe said, is to educate a “larger volume and diversity” of people about sustainability. EcoReps targets first-year students in the dorms, for example, to educate them about recycling because “it is a small, but important act.”

Continue reading here:



Avery Hill/Collegian

Penn State faculty go to Old Main to protest the university’s lack of racial progress.

Black faculty protests lack of racial progress

By Avery Hill
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

It was nearly 70 degrees outside, but Jennifer Black opted to read an excerpt from “Freedom Is A Constant Struggle,” by Angela Davis alongside eight other Penn State Black faculty members within the walls of Old Main at noon Tuesday.

“Out of all places to be, we’re here,” Black, an assistant professor of English, added in her opening statement at the third and final read-in of the spring 2024 semester to protest President Neeli Bendapudi and the university’s “lack of substantive progress” toward racial justice.

With signs that read “Educate to Liberate,” and “Where Is Our Center For Racial Justice,” faculty members read select excerpts to a crowd of about 20 spectators.

Among spectators was Rhone Fraser, a visiting associate professor of African Studies. Fraser was invited by fellow professors and said the message from the read-in was clear to him.

“This is not to trash her legacy. This is not to disparage her or castigate her leadership,” Fraser said. “This is simply to hold her accountable to what she said.”

Fraser was referencing Bendapudi’s cancellation of the Center for Racial Justice in Oct. 2022.

For Gary King, a professor of biobehavioral health, this

demand for change is “very important” as proven by previous readings held by the group.

“They have been very influential,” King said. “The administration clearly knows that we are not going to go away.”

Among the readings was Langston Hughes’ “Mother to Son,” read by Mildred Boveda, an associate professor of education.

Boveda, who read the poem in memory of her mother who died in October, said poems that spread similar messages are “under attack” in schools across the country.

All of the excerpts and poems read send a message that Penn State “should be concerned with issues of transparency,” she said.

At the conclusion of the read-in, Christopher Dancy, Harold and Inge Marcus industrial and manufacturing career development associate professor, read an open letter written by the group requesting “tangible change.”

“We protest. We are sick. We are tired,” the letter reads. “Still, we protest.”

The group ascended the Old Main lobby steps and hand-delivered the letter to Bendapudi.

“We came to their house to let them know very directly,” King said. “That we will not stand idly by as these issues continue.”

Local township sues Aspen State College

By Leonardo Frepoli
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

In a lawsuit filed April 5, College Township is asking that Aspen State College be required to pay for violating land development approvals.

According to the complaint, Aspen State College allegedly requested approval in 2021 of a land development plan in College Township to construct “multiple apartments, retail space, roads, paths, walkways, park areas” and other developments in the area.

In April 2021, this request was

granted by College Township on a set of conditions which included posting surety bonds for improvements and payments for various construction projects.

According to the criminal complaint, Aspen State College has since failed to complete land developmental projects that would “maintain health, safety and welfare” of College Township residents.

Aspen State College was required to pay for a future right turn lane on Squirrel Drive, multi-use pathway connecting

Aspen Heights to campus, and grading work at the intersection on College Avenue and Squirrel Avenue, among other improvements, according to the invoices, which totaled \$273,731.66.

“College Township requests judgment versus (Aspen State College) in the amount of \$271,371.66 plus attorneys fees of \$13,668.59 plus penalties of \$500 per day beginning on Jan. 1, 2024,” the complaint said.

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Alumna creates nonprofit ‘Illuminate’

By Rachael Keller
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Jona Hall graduated from Penn State with a bachelor’s in broadcast journalism in 2021. During Hall’s time at Penn State, she and her friends developed a nonprofit to give back to the community.

The group made and sold candles every November, targeting Penn State organizations and the community for support as they jumped from cause to cause.

“We figured everyone likes candles,” Hall said.

The nonprofit raised \$1,200 in 2020, and it began to grow from there. In the beginning, the money raised by the organization went toward Thorn, a nonprofit dedicated to combating child sex abuse, for which it became a top donor.

“We said we really want to help local shelters,” Hall said. “We thought we could be making more of a difference instead of donating blindly to a national charity. We wanted to do something hands-on.”

This prompted Jona and her board to name their nonprofit: “Illuminate”

Every year, Illuminate focuses on the needs of one shelter and fundraises for it throughout the year.

In 2023, Illuminate adopted its first shelter, the Center for Prevention of Abuse in Peoria, Illinois. Hall chose this shelter because it helped her after experiencing domestic abuse.

“We kicked it off with the center that helped me get through everything,” Hall said. “Giving back to the center was very emotional.”

Through candle sales and donations, the nonprofit raised over \$8,000. \$6,200 went toward the shelter’s wish list and holiday gifts for the children, while \$2,000 was donated to Thorn.

“It’s very hands-on because we could physically go there and drop off everything,” Hall said. “When we were at Walmart, we had about nine carts.”

Hall makes every candle by



Courtesy of Jona Hall

Jona Hall, a Penn State graduate, co-founded “Illuminate: Lighting the Way Against Trafficking and Abuse,” a nonprofit targeted toward supporting domestic abuse and trafficking survivors.

hand in her kitchen leading up to the organization’s primary fundraiser in November.

“We do it all by hand,” Hall said. “We do our marketing for free. We do our website for free. We do our candles for free.”

Celeste Smith, Illuminate’s co-founder and chief operating officer, said she meets with Hall monthly to comb through what scents work, the demands of their target audience and the budget.

Smith became a part of Illuminate through her sorority, Zeta Mu Phi, which Hall founded at Penn State. The sorority emphasizes philanthropy and is online, making it accessible to anyone around the country.

Similarly, Sydney Hufford was also a part of Zeta Mu Phi and was on the board when the nonprofit started.

Hufford’s primary focus within the nonprofit is the organization’s expenses.

“We really look for a budget

of how we can spend the money we’ve gained and be able to spend all of it and make sure (people at the shelter) get everything and then some on their Christmas list,” Smith said.

Through Smith and Hall’s meetings, they found a market for car diffusers, which prompted them to begin selling diffusers along with candles to reach an even larger audience.

Hall is based in Illinois, but Illuminate has about 300 members and five board positions across the country. This makes it possible to choose a shelter from anywhere in the country.

Although the largest fundraiser takes place in November, the organization is busy throughout the year.

When a shelter is chosen in February, Hall and her team take a tour of the facility to introduce themselves and their mission. From there, the shelter can say yes or no to the offer.

With an emphasis on domestic abuse and trafficking survivors, the organization chooses a shelter to sponsor each year based on who the shelter helps and how it helps. Aftercare, therapy, safety and supplies are among the factors on Hall’s radar.

The group also takes nominations, so anyone who has a shelter that has helped them or someone they know could also be in the running for that year.

After choosing a shelter, the organization plans its kick-off event for June to announce the shelter it adopted for 2024.

This year, Hall rented out a rooftop for the night in Las Vegas and will offer custom merchandise like cups, shirts and wristbands, along with a raffle.

Hufford said during the time between adopting a shelter and the kick-off event, Illuminate hosts a “baby fundraiser,” which ensures the organization’s goals are being met without all of the

pressure being put on the candle sales.

Smith said much of the funds to create the candles come from the board and Hall’s own pockets.

“Since we are a nonprofit, everything that comes in goes out,” Hufford said. “Everyone on the board is a volunteer.”

The candles then go on sale from Nov. 1 to the end of the month. On Giving Tuesday, the organization announces the amount raised. Then, Hall and her team purchase the shelter’s wishlist.

“It’s not everyday you see something local being done, or as hands-on as we’re being. Most of the time it’s just blind donation,” Hall said. “Now, they can actually see what their money is going towards. ... This is what we’re doing, this is what you’re supporting.”

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Kites to support Palestine

By Vida Lashgari
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Holding a Palestinian flag while wearing a traditional scarf known as a keffiyeh, students and faculty gathered at the HUB-Robeson Center lawn for the “Kites for Gaza” event Tuesday.

At the event, hosted by Penn State Students for Justice in Palestine, the Faculty for Justice in Palestine Network and Penn State Writers Organized to Represent Diverse Stories, attendees were encouraged to make a kite, which symbolizes hope and resilience in the Palestinian liberation movement.

There were several speakers who shared speeches and poems about Palestinian lives and experiences.

Alex Lubin, a member of FJP and a professor of African American studies and history, spoke at the event.

“I felt it was imperative as a faculty member for me to stand in solidarity for higher education for students and faculty who teach in Palestine,” Lubin said.

Lubin said the kites served as a symbol and acknowledgement to Refaat Alareer, a Palestinian professor of comparative literature at the Islamic University of Gaza and poet, who was killed in an airstrike in northern Gaza in December.

“Since Refaat Alareer was killed, the kites have become a symbol of peace and freedom for Palestinians,” Lubin said.

He advocates for events such as Kites for Gaza and said they’re important because of the “dehu-

manization and erasure of Palestinians.”

“Anything we can do to talk about Palestinian life and (the) Palestinian vision for freedom is important,” Lubin said. “It’s important as American professors and students to show that we care about what is happening in Palestine.”

Zoe Feinberg was walking by the HUB lawn when she noticed the event and said she joined because she wanted to hear “what they had to say.”

“It’s such beautiful symbolism that they have the kites out,” Feinberg, a second-year studying criminology, said.

Feinberg referenced a poem that was presented by a speaker and said it resonated with her.

“(The speaker) said something about looking away because it affects your mental health,” Feinberg said. “That’s something that I struggle with so much, because I feel bombarded (on social media) by such awful things. But there are people that are actually being bombarded.”

Feinberg said she wants to do more for the people of Gaza.

“(This is) a great community space because it allows people to grieve and process together,” Feinberg said. “Physically, we are so far removed from (Palestine) but we all know we are all playing a role.”

She said it’s important to hold public events like these to clear up the “rhetoric” displayed online.

“There are so many people that hear Palestine, and they just hear Hamas, because that’s what we’ve learned in the media,” Fein-

berg said. “Just how (the media) describe people that have died in Palestine is so different than Israelis that have died.”

Feinberg said that this is a method of “villainizing” Palestinian people, whom she said are “beautiful” alongside their culture.

One of the poems presented was “If I Must Die” by Alareer.

Ayah Rub, a Palestinian student who presented the poem during the event, said the poem was originally written one day before Alareer’s death.

“Israel, as we know, targets professors, intelligent people (and) educational infrastructures in Gaza,” Rub, a third-year graduate student studying architectural engineering, said.

Rub said she chose the poem due to its relevance to the current state of Palestine and its symbolic message of the kites.

“It just resembles the meaning of (Alareer’s) murder and the hope he gave us after his murder,” Rub said.

She said there’s a certain “duty” students hold to significantly influence government decisions, and it’s important for students to recognize where their taxes are going and the possible “killings” those taxes can impose.

“As students, we do have an obligation to talk about scholasticism to pressure the government to reject all of the killing that Israel is imposing on the education system in Gaza,” Rub said.

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Tyler Mantz/Collegian

Art supplies will be provided at the Hintz Family Alumni Center for seniors to decorate their graduation caps.

Alumni Association to host Senior Week

By Cady Barcak
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The Penn State Alumni Association invites graduating seniors to several events during its Senior Week from April 22-26.

Monday, April 22

9 a.m.-4 p.m. — Art supplies will be provided at the Hintz Family Alumni Center until Thursday for seniors to decorate their graduation caps.

10 a.m.-12 p.m. — Complimentary photos will be taken for graduates in their caps and gowns at the Hintz Family Alumni Center.

Tuesday, April 23

12-2 p.m. — Complimentary photos will be taken for graduates in their caps and gowns at the Nittany Lion Shrine.

5-7 p.m. — Graduating students can receive information about staying connected to the THON community as alumni at the Hintz Family Alumni Center.

Wednesday, April 24

2-4 p.m. — Complimentary photos will be taken for graduates in their caps and gowns at at Old Main.

Thursday, April 25

12-4 p.m. — A senior sendoff will be held at the Hintz Family Alumni Center to celebrate the class of 2024. The event will include free food, giveaways, entertainment and networking opportunities.

Friday, April 26

3:30 p.m. — Movin’ On, one of the largest student-run music festivals, annually provides a free celebration for graduating seniors.

Anyone can attend the free event, which will take place at the IM fields and feature Dayglow, Sexy Red, The 502s and Freddie Gibbs.

All graduating seniors can register for one free year of membership to the Penn State Alumni Association, according to a press release. This membership gives graduates access to a global alumni network, career resources and various events.

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Sienna Pinney/Collegian

A kite lays on the ground at the Kites for Gaza on the HUB lawn on April 16, 2024, in University Park, Pa. The kites symbolize hope and resilience in the Palestinian liberation movement.

Themed nights for State College bars

By Cearra O’Hern
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Gaffeoke. Dollar Vodka Soda. Bingo Night.

The possibilities of State College bars’ themed nights are endless. The bars strung along downtown hosts themed nights for crawlers, complete with decorated drinks, discs and dresses.

Downtown bars have hosted several successful themed evenings, but some themes have grown old. The bustling bars should brainstorm new topics for its thirsty travelers.

This round is on me. Here are five fresh ideas for State College bars’ themed nights.

Lions and Lambs

“In like a lion, out like a lamb.” The famed folklore expression is often used to describe the month of March, but the expression stands true for all of spring in State College. March was mixed with winter flurries and some flowers, while April has only brought cold rain showers.

The spring-themed evening would encourage colorful clothes and cocktails, with soft and sweet sounds pouring over the speakers. Glasses filled with citrus bubbly and fruity fizz would topple the tongues of all tab-openers.

“April showers bring May flowers” is another famed poem



Tyler Mantz/Collegian

Champs Downtown, located in downtown State College, is known for its themed nights such as Dollar Vodka Soda and Taylor Swift nights.

of the season. But inside these bars, April showers only bring May sours.

Senior Sock Hop

Calling all Penn State seniors. Senior Sock Hop would travel back to chocolate milkshakes and slick leather jackets. I can hear John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John serenading those inside any bar now.

Customers would strictly consume delectable dessert cocktails and cups crammed with maraschino cherries. All

scholarly seniors would receive specials on the drinks for this themed evening.

Seniors would simply point to one drink and say, “You’re the One That I Want.”

Franchise Frenzy

May the force be with you. And a bucket, if you’ve had too much to drink.

Franchise Frenzy would welcome all franchises inside the bars, from movies to sports to restaurants. Crawlers would come from the Avengers Tower,

Lincoln Financial Field or even the beloved home of Ronald McDonald.

If one franchise dominates all others in the sea of State College students, those dressed in the most dominant franchise would receive a voucher for one free drink. Or one free Butterbeer.

I’ll leave that decision to the Sorting Hat (any student bartender).

Childhood Cocktails

Champs Downtown’s Booze Bags are just the rebellious

older siblings of Capri-Suns.

Beloved childhood beverages would emerge boozier and bottled during this themed evening. Fountains of Dirty Shirleys and spiked Roy Rogers would line the bar, greeted by faces that suddenly aren’t so baby.

A baby loves their bottle. But which bottle? Red? Sparkling? With a note of vanilla?

The famed phrase never specified which bottle. The choice of bottle is all yours.

Michael Jackson

A Michael Jackson-themed night inside Champs Downtown would be a total thriller. Tunes like “Billie Jean,” “Rock With You - Single Version” and “Beat It” would bring State College customers to the max like no other.

Glitter-clothed crawlers would ride the boogie into the sunlight. Tracks of The Jackson 5 would pair wonderfully with a childhood-inspired cocktail, especially for those who “Remember the Time.”

“PYT (Pretty Young Thing)” now stands for “Pour Yummy Tipple.”

Cheers, State College.

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LION'S LIST

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Seeking justice for abuse

Once, soccer was my heart-beat, my breath, my everything. From the moment my tiny feet touched the grass, to the glory days of high school — it was my passion, my dream.



Seelig

I poured my soul into the sport, chasing the elusive promise of a future where I would be in a collegiate stadium with the stands echoing my name.

Every blister, every drop of sweat, every extra hour of training I put into the game was a step closer to those dreams.

And for a while, it seemed like those dreams were coming true.

I traveled along the east coast, and even internationally, with my team. I eventually made the Virginia Youth Olympic Development Program.

Later, I made varsity for my high school as a freshman — an honor that every high schooler hopes for.

However, what I did not know then is that the high school team was the end to my dreams.

A darkness disguised as a mentor, a predator of innocence crept into my world.

His words were like venom, poisoning my spirit, crushing my



Maddie Seelig/Collegian

Maddie Seelig shares her story from playing youth soccer. “I was only 14, and an adult man made me believe I was an object, a doll for him to play with,” Seelig said.

confidence and stealing the joy of being a teenage girl.

For three years, I suffered.

I tried to speak up, but what do you do when the people you’re supposed to go to are the ones ripping you to shreds?

I cried myself to sleep,

haunted by his words, haunted by the silence of those who turned away.

It wasn’t just me who basked in his abuse. Others spoke up, too.

We stood together, believing that a united front would bring

justice to the man who hurt us.

Young girls, ages 13 to 17, pleading for something to change, and having our innocence taken from us once again as the piles of complaints stacked upon others, untouched and ignored.

I was never harmed physically, but he made me question my worth, my purpose and led me to believe that it was my fault, so I came crawling back seeking just a sliver of reassurance.

I was put in front of my teammates, publicly criticized not for anything to do with the sport, but for my looks, my character, my size.

I was only 14, and an adult man made me believe I was an object, a doll for him to play with.

I have made my peace, and for the past three years since being under his control, I’ve started to put together the pieces of me that he shattered.

However, he is still coaching vulnerable girls, he is breaking them down and leaving a mess for them to clean up.

I plead that someday justice will be served; however the adults at the institution have failed us — putting the nail in the coffin of who were once young, innocent girls seeking the good in the world.

Maddie Seelig is a third-year majoring in psychology and security and risk analysis and is a columnist for The Daily Collegian. Email her at mes6996@psu.edu or follow her on X at @madeline-seelig_.



Ella Hileman/Collegian

It’s important to learn the difference between necessity and luxury items in life, according to Hileman.

Learning to live with less

If there’s one thing I’ve learned while living abroad, it’s that I don’t need half the stuff I thought I did in my everyday life.

Packing was a challenge before leaving — I started condensing my items for a semester to make them fit in two suitcases.

Needless to say, I had to part with some items I used to believe were essentials: my specific Dove shampoo, numerous books and yes, I did unfortunately believe my Revlon hair dryer was that important as well.

However, the truth is, I forgot all about the stuff I had to leave behind within the first couple weeks. I’m only recalling them now as I write this.

In reality, I don’t even wear all the clothes I brought to Copenhagen, Denmark. There are shirts sitting in my closet that I haven’t touched since I unpacked them.

I was fortunate enough recently to have my parents come visit. Before they came, my mom FaceTimed me and asked if there was anything I needed from home.

She showed me my closet, and I couldn’t believe I had all of those clothes. One of my first plans after arriving home is to donate a lot of them.

I wish I could go back to myself packing about four months ago now and say, “Hey, maybe you don’t need to bring all eight of those sweatshirts. Just two or three would’ve been fine.”

I’ve also learned that I don’t

need to pack as much for trips.

So far, I’ve taken three week-long trips, with only a personal item to pack my stuff in.

The first time, my backpack was almost ripping at the seams. Whereas now, I’ve mastered the art of rewearing clothes and packing multiple things that can go together.

There’s even some room in my book bag for souvenirs now.

I’m currently writing this column on my phone from a boat in Barcelona. My friend and I have been staying here for two nights now.

There’s no bathroom and no running water. Before coming abroad, I probably would’ve chosen to stay in a hotel over a small sailboat, but then I wouldn’t be able to watch the sunset over the port.

Besides, the five-minute walk to the nearest bathroom gives me time to appreciate the bathroom at my apartment in Copenhagen.

It’s easy to not take things for granted when you’ve lived without them, and I’m constantly learning the difference between necessity and luxury.

I’ve found most things fit in the latter category, and therefore don’t need to take up space in my bag either.

Ella Hileman is a third-year majoring in digital and print journalism and is an abroad columnist for The Daily Collegian. Email her at eph5352@psu.edu or follow her on X at @ellaphileman.

Bidding farewell to Florence

Writing this column is really bittersweet for me. In just a little over three weeks, my time abroad will be over.

These past few months have been some of the hardest and most rewarding moments of my life. I wouldn’t trade my experiences and what I’ve learned about myself abroad for the world.

When else would I be given an opportunity to travel to so many different places and experience so many unique cultures in just under four months?

The beginning of this journey was terrifying, and I would be lying if I said I wasn’t completely overwhelmed when I first came to Florence. Nothing truly prepares someone to move across the world and immerse themselves in a brand new environment.

However, what I’ve learned most is to take it one day at a time. Change is not easy and it’s important to give yourself grace when adjusting.

Little by little, it will get better and being abroad will start to become more comfortable.

Another very important reminder is that everything is temporary, but memories last forever. There have been days where all I’ve wanted to do is go home and, although it may sound ridiculous, be back in the United States.

There will come a time where abroad will only be memories, pictures and postcards. It will not be my everyday reality.

Being anxious and feeling homesick is inevitable, however, you will only be studying abroad once and unfortunately it will come to an end.

There will be no more booking flights to destinations you have only seen in pictures, getting gelato with your friends after class, watching the sunset from a rooftop near your apartment or trying a new restaurant in a city you had always dreamed of visiting.

I’ve surpassed many of the exciting “firsts” of this experience and it’s nearing the end. The last trip. The last walk to class. The last sleep in your little Italian apartment. The last time waking up in a new country.

I think back to how I felt in January and how much I’ve grown since being here. Although I would say I’m ready to come back home, there is no doubt that I will miss the incredible life I lived studying in Italy for four months during college.

Emily Golden is a third-year majoring in 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.

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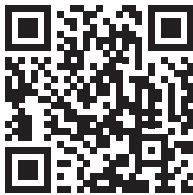
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Management ‘bridges the gap’

By Joe Tuman
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

During his time at Penn State, Taylor Nussbaum made the most of his opportunities on the court and in the classroom.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

The economics major was a walk-on member of the men's basketball team from 2017 to 2021 and has since paired his two passions as a co-founder of 20/20 Management, a business management firm specializing in professional athletes.

Nussbaum said the inspiration for 20/20 came after he saw several former teammates struggling to fully adjust to the responsibilities of being a pro.

“I always thought my niche could be bridging the gap and making a difference as far as financial literacy for athletes,” Nussbaum said. “I want to be the Rich Paul of what I’m doing here — I want to make a difference to the point that nobody’s going broke.”

Nussbaum’s ambition is already paying off. Though the business has only existed since 2022, it quickly found success.

By parlaying his knowledge and relationships formed at Penn State, Nussbaum has garnered several notable clients, and said it’s “honestly crazy how fast it’s grown.”

“If you looked at us a year ago, you would’ve seen basically nothing,” Nussbaum said. “Now we have four guys on NBA contracts, top guys in college, top guys in high school that we haven’t even announced yet.”

20/20’s first clients were some of Nussbaum’s former Nittany Lion teammates like Lamar Stevens, John Harrar and Izaiah Brockington. However, his most pivotal connection was formed long before his college days.

Zeke Rogen co-founded 20/20 with Nussbaum after two decades of friendship. Before graduating in 2020, Rogen studied sports management and business administration at Ithaca College. Nussbaum said partnering with him was a natural decision.

Besides serving as co-founders, Nussbaum and Rogen also operate as Head of Financial Advisory and Head of Business Management, respectively.

With the company’s focus ranging from advising on athletes’ taxes and investments to pursuing brand deals and marketing opportunities, there’s a lot of ground to cover. Despite the responsibilities on their plate, Rogen said he and Nussbaum don’t let stress come between their friendship.

“With us, we’ve known each other for so long. At this point, nothing else matters but achieving our goals,” Rogen said.

“We’re able to put aside our friendship when we’re talking about business — we’re very



Courtesy of Penn State Athletics

Former Penn State men's basketball player Taylor Nussbaum high-fives Seth Lundy before a game at the Bryce Jordan Center. Nussbaum played for the Nittany Lions from 2017-21.

good at separating that.”

With 20/20’s leadership on the same page, it becomes easier for the company to focus on its goals of having clients’ backs on multiple fronts. That starts with financial literacy and aiding them in managing their money — something the former Nittany Lion said he finds “fulfilling.”

“Helping them budget and helping them understand where their money’s going, how they’re saving it for the long term. Not only is it really helpful for them, but also really helpful for the families that are involved,” Nussbaum said.

20/20’s clients in the big leagues certainly stand to benefit from these resources, but Nussbaum said one of their strongest pitches actually comes by speaking with top high school athletes.

“If somebody’s a junior in high school, they don’t have a million dollars for us to manage yet, but we can do things to start helping them build credit,” Nussbaum said. “We can start teaching them how taxes work because, think about it, you give a kid a \$500 grand NIL check, a lot of these kids think they have \$500 grand.”

While fostering connections with younger athletes could be the next step in 20/20’s growth, Nussbaum and Rogen had to start somewhere.

The former blue and white guard reached out to former teammates like Brockington to offer 20/20’s services.

Now with the NBA G-League’s Birmingham Squadron, Brockington said the character and determination of Nussbaum and Rogen convinced him to sign on as a client.

“I’m big on having people

around you that you really know and trust,” Brockington said. “I felt like they were young and hungry and had a good support system behind them. I knew their work ethic even before 20/20.”

Brockington joined forces with 20/20 last May, and his familiarity with Nussbaum played a part in forming that connection.

Yet, Rogen said there are other reasons athletes like Brockington come aboard. He said the firm’s commitment to “complete transparency” also plays a key role.

“We don’t come in promising the world if we can’t get it for you,” Rogen said. “What we’ve found is just being there for them on a day-to-day basis and doing our best work kicking down every door we can for them has proven valuable, and these guys are really appreciative of it.”

For Rogen, his role in “kicking down doors” involves working with 20/20’s athletes to find opportunities and endorsements that benefit them. He said a place he always tries to start with clients is by getting them to think about what they use in their everyday lives.

Using New York Knicks center Jericho Sims as an example, Rogen said once he gets to know each player on a personal level, it becomes easier to find things that work for each individual.

“For Jericho, he loves beef jerky, so we got him stocked up on beef jerky every month,” Rogen said. “And then we can kind of build out what a paid deal would look like, figure out what would they want to be a part of.”

Whether it’s Sims’ beef jerky, or Brockington’s relationship with products like Alani Nu and PRIME, 20/20 has carved out

growing relationships for its clients. Crucially, Rogen said another selling point the company puts forward is that they’re “not exclusive.”

“The majority of companies that I know, if you sign with them, you can’t work with another marketing agency,” Rogen said. “Why on earth would we do that? We didn’t make you who you are, you put in the hard work. You should be able to benefit in any way possible from your name and what you’ve been able to do.”

This sense of flexibility, coupled with prior relationships, helped 20/20 attract its initial group of clients. But to add players outside his circle, Nussbaum needed some extra help. Ironically, it was another former Nittany Lion who helped the business expand outside of Happy Valley.

Patrick Kelly played on the men’s basketball team from 2019-21 and kept in touch with Nussbaum after transferring to Fordham to finish his playing career.

Kelly, who now works in business management and concierge services, said his playing experience has made him a valuable asset for 20/20.

“I built a lot of strong connections through my AAU days, high school days, college days,” Kelly said. “We had a little bit of a head start on growing this just because I already had the relationship with these athletes.”

Kelly helped the business expand, adding new clients such as Northwestern guard Boo Buie, who worked out with Kelly when they were high schoolers.

With word beginning to spread about what 20/20 is doing for athletes, the company has expanded beyond basketball. It has also

struck up a relationship with MLS club Inter Miami, having signed three of the team’s players, including forward Shanyder Borgelin.

Borgelin said it was not only the company’s preparation, but also its personalities that convinced him to come aboard.

“I can’t stress it enough, these are good people,” Borgelin said. “In the future, they’re going to be a very big company because of who they are as people — not only as businessmen. They’re very personable.”

Borgelin also highlighted how he’s in contact with 20/20 on a weekly basis. Nussbaum said this type of communication shows the connection he wants to forge with its players.

“We are not interested in the short term in any of our clients, the goal is to be with them for 20 to 40 years,” Nussbaum said. “They may never end up being an NBA player, but they may end up being a doctor or a lawyer. They’ll always be clients of ours.”

20/20’s ability to speak the language of both athletes and businesses has helped it find early success as it works toward its goal of improving the lives of more and more professionals.

No matter what the future holds, current clients like Brockington are already appreciative of the work 20/20 does.

“There’s just a lot of things I don’t have to think about anymore,” Brockington said. “It definitely frees up my time and allows me to be productive doing what I need to do.”

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Owusu drafted 3rd round to Dallas Wings

By Noah Aberegg
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

For the first time in over 10 years, a Penn State Lady Lion will hit the pros.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

With the 33rd pick in the 2024 WNBA draft, Penn State star Ashley Owusu was drafted to the Dallas Wings.

With the blue and white, Owusu dominated on offense, recording double digits in all but one game.

The former Maryland phenom joined the Lady Lions after multiple seasons with the Terrapins and Virginia Tech, aiding

in the team’s run to the WBIT semifinals.

At Maryland, Owusu earned the 2021 Ann Meyers Drysdale Award, averaging 14.6 points and five assists per game.

When coming to Penn State in 2023, the 6-foot guard joined phenom Makenna Marisa and rising star Shay Ciezki at guard, providing lots of depth.

The graduate guard will join Big Ten rival Jacy Sheldon from Ohio State in Dallas, which went 22-18 last season.

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EIVA award winners at Rec Hall

By Will Horstman
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Following a perfect 10-0 regular season in EIVA conference play, Penn State received two EIVA season-long honors.

First, head coach Mark Pavlik won the EIVA’s Bob Sweeney Memorial Coach of the Year award.

This is the 10th time Pavlik has received this award in his career.

Additionally, John Kerr won the Uvaldo Acosta Memorial EIVA Player of the Year award.

Kerr has been an offensive weapon for Penn State all season, as he ranks top-20 in the nation in kills, points per set and hitting percentage. This is the fifth year in a row a Penn State player has won this award, and Kerr is the 23rd Nittany Lion to win this award in program history.

The blue and white is coming off of a 21-6 overall regular season and heading into the EIVA conference tournament as the No. 1 seed. Penn State will play Havard in its semifinal match at 7 p.m. Thursday.

RECORD-SETTING CROWD AT DOLLAR DOG NIGHT



Esteban Marengo/Collegian

Fans sit in attendance for Dollar Dog Night at Medlar Field at Lubrano Park on April 16, 2024 in University Park. Penn State lost to Kent State 10-3.

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