



Parents of Nolan Burch speak out against hazing at documentary showing



WVU president Gordon Gee poses for photo with Instagram meme page



Welcome to the Big 12: A letter to the new schools

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WVU's Independent Student Newspaper

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

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# Inside the PRT control room

BY JULES OGDEN  
CORRESPONDENT

In a dark room with a myriad of control panels and monitors, a small box on one of the dozen screens turns red. Instantly the PRT operators whip into action.

They call downstairs and dispatch members of the maintenance team to PRT car #62 that's stranded at the Engineering station. The maintenance team piles into a modified Jeep from 1978. With their sturdy build and tight turning radius, these are the only vehicles that can rescue the broken PRT car.

A tweet goes out to notify riders that the PRT will be down for a few minutes. A minor inconvenience for students but inside PRT central control, it's a smooth operation they've done a thousand times.

The PRT, which has been running since 1975, functions out of the PRT Central Maintenance Facility on 8th Street. There, a team monitors runs and maintains operations. The staff of Central Control are the brains behind the PRT and its operations.

During a typical shift, they monitor the vehicles and riders on platforms via several large flat screen televisions, mimicking what you would imagine a spaceship control room to look like at NASA.

"These folks are here, they're doing their best. They're working hard. It's a very stressful environment and they feel a lot of responsibility for the students and for the public and their safety," said Jeremy Evans, WVU director of transportation.

During recovery missions, 1978 Jeep CJs are driven on the tracks to either fix or tow the PRT car back to the maintenance facility. These 1978 Jeep models are the only vehicles that are compatible with the PRT track system.

This semester, there's been more misbehaving on PRT platforms. The



PHOTO BY DUNCAN SLADE

PRT operators run the system at the PRT Maintenance Facility on Sept. 21, 2021.

most common misconducts include stepping on the painted yellow boxes and overcrowding the vehicles.

"It seems to them [the students] as a joke, to get somebody to come over the PA to tell me to stop, but in doing that you're taking the attention from other things that could be serious at the time," Evans said.

Some of these behaviors can contribute to the infamous breaking down of vehicles throughout the day. When overcrowded, the vehicles can become disconnected from the tracks, requiring the power to be shut off and the car to be recovered.

Students underestimate the dangers of not following the PRT guidelines and stepping on the tracks, Evans said.

The PRT is powered by 570 volts of

electricity that run through 3 rails on the open tracks. If a rider came into contact with said rails, the incident could be fatal.

"They don't understand how it operates, or they see the high voltage sign but it doesn't register," said Evans. "They don't realize it can be very hazardous."

Students that drop valuables or items on the tracks are asked to find a PRT staff member or use one of the station phones to get help retrieving them.

Vehicles are attached to the power rails by a collector arm that connects them to the electricity. When a problem occurs or the connection is disrupted, the electricity can be shut off from central control to send recovery Jeeps to fix the problem.

With a recent renovation, Central Control now operates with a modernized computer system where operations are completed with the click of a mouse. Before this implementation, operations required coding by the staff.

Other additions this semester include eight-line signs with vehicle arrival times on the platforms, a demand-mode system for riders, and a shared footage system with University Police to ensure quicker responses to conflicts.

Evans and the staff urge students to follow PRT guidelines for their own safety and wellbeing.

"That's the goal, to have people realize that it's just not a joke," Evans said. "We don't want someone to end up getting hurt trying to be funny."

# Unvaxxed students confused abt testing policy

BY TRENTON STRAIGHT  
NEWS EDITOR

This past week, Student Conduct sat down with 75 of the 300-plus unvaccinated students who did not complete the mandatory COVID-19 testing before the semester. These students were sent letters earlier this month, urging them to get tested.

For students who showed up for conferences, WVU's testing policies were a common source of confusion.

Some students got tested outside of the University system, while others said they weren't sure where to get a second shot, WVU Executive Director of Student Conduct Carrie Showalter said.

The University requires all positive test results, including results from outside clinics, to be reported to WVU Shared Services.

"I think it's given them the opportunity to ask questions and for us to clarify what the testing process is," she said. "And for many of those students, once they receive clarification, I believe we will see more compliance."

However, a number of the unvaccinated students who did not complete testing also skipped out on their Student Conduct meeting.

"I would say, unfortunately, only half of them have shown up," Showalter said. "Which means we found them responsible in their absence."

She added that these students will not be allowed to register for classes next semester until they resolve their Student Conduct case and will be re-

See **Testing** page 4

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## WEEKEND WEATHER FORECAST

**FRIDAY 09/24**

SUNNY  
HIGH 69° - LOW 49°



**SATURDAY 09/25**

PARTLY CLOUDY  
HIGH 71° - LOW 52°



**SUNDAY 09/26**

MOSTLY SUNNY  
HIGH 71° - LOW 51°



## CRIME REPORT

POLICE LINE • DO NOT CROSS • POLICE LINE • DO NOT CROSS • POLICE LINE • DO NOT CROSS • POLICE LINE

**Sept. 19**

**12:05 p.m. | Resolved**  
WVU Area 200  
Talk with an Officer.

**Sept. 20**

**9:15 a.m. | Impounded**  
WVU Area 29  
Back Ticket Tow.

**Sept. 20**

**9:52 a.m. | Closed**  
WVU Art Museum  
Alarm Condition.

**Sept. 20**

**3:00 p.m. | Investigation**  
Cary Gymnastic Center  
Larceny.

**Sept. 20**

**3:58 p.m. | Closed**

Beechurst PRT Station  
Assist Agency.

**Sept. 20**

**4:00 p.m. | Report Only**  
WVU Police Department  
Lost Property.

**Sept. 20**

**4:33 p.m. | Investigation**  
Engineering Sciences  
Grand Larceny.

**Sept. 20**

**4:56 p.m. | Closed**  
Blue Lot  
Larceny.

**Sept. 20**

**11:13 p.m. | Closed**  
University Park Apartments  
Harrassment.

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## SOCIAL MEDIA MOMENTS

Honest question to frat mfs: How the hell do y'all get homework done? Between Taco Tuesday, Wine Wednesday, Thirsty Thursday, and weekends? I know you ain't bustin it all out on Mondays.

14m • <1mi 4 comments

Comment

Share

ayo bookstore STOP SENDING ME EMAILS

15m • <1mi 1 comments

we gotta wear masks in our dorms now?? lil too far eh?

Comment

Share

the tornado just told me it's gonna make sunnyside a dump again

2m • ~1mi 0 comments



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# Parents of Nolan Burch advocate for hazing prevention at campus documentary showing

BY CRYSTAL CHECK  
STAFF WRITER

KKim and TJ Burch, the parents of Nolan Burch, spoke at a showing of the documentary "Breathe, Nolan, Breathe" on Tuesday for the inaugural WVU Medical Amnesty Week and Hazing Prevention week.

Nolan Burch died in a fraternity-related pledge event in 2014. The documentary shows footage of Burch receiving CPR by one of his Kappa Sigma brothers, interrogations of others in the fraternity by the Morgantown Police Department and pleas from his parents and doctor to end hazing in schools.

"Some universities aren't changing. They're getting worse. I just want you to get home safe," Kim Burch said. "Be that person that stands up; you're better than that."

There were over 100 attendees for the showing, most of

them appearing to be from fraternities and sororities, such as Omega Phi Alpha, Phi Kappa Psi, Alpha Phi, Delta Gamma and Sigma Kappa.

The showing of the documentary was held in the Gluck Theater at 7p.m. on Tuesday, beginning with an introduction by Matthew Richardson, the director of the Center for Fraternal Values and Leadership at WVU.

"If you haven't seen the documentary, it is heavy. There is actual footage; it's a very emotional journey," said Richardson.

Also in attendance and answering questions was Steve Smith, assistant director for Student Conduct, and Akeya Carter-Bozman, prevention specialist for Title IX and Equity Assurance at WVU.

The documentary was created in 2019 by WVU the Burch family and an outside entertainment company.

Nolan's parents have also



PHOTO BY AVERY YEAROUT

TJ Burch, father of Nolan Burch

created a foundation to assist young adults to recognize and prevent the dangers associated with hazing, as well as addressing the hazing epi-

demic in schools and universities around the country.

Hazing is prohibited at WVU. There is a form on WVU's Safety and Wellness



PHOTO BY AVERY YEAROUT

Kim Burch, left, and Matthew Richardson, WVU Greek Life director, right.

site, and a phone number (304-292-8111) students can call to report hazing through the Office of Student Conduct.

After the showing, cups from the "Would You?" campaign were distributed. The cups list the requirements for a student to qualify for amnesty.

The Medical Amnesty pol-

icy on WVU's website states that anyone can call for emergency assistance if somebody is experiencing an overdose from alcohol or drugs without getting in trouble as long as they call for help, remain with the victim and cooperate with authorities.

# Board of Governors supports University decision to not mandate COVID vaccine

BY DUNCAN SLADE  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Amid calls from faculty and students to mandate the COVID-19 vaccine, the West Virginia University Board of Governors met on Friday and said they support the administration's decision to strongly encourage but not require vaccination.

Campus administrators shared data with the Board that showed around three-fourths of people on campus are vaccinated and the number of people currently in quarantine and isolation is relatively low.

"We recognize that there are no easy answers, and it is very much a balancing act," said BOG Chairman Thomas Jones. "There's many differences of opinion. And I think you follow the data, encourage the vaccination, and despite delta being much more contagious, the actual number of cases, number of students and faculty in quar-

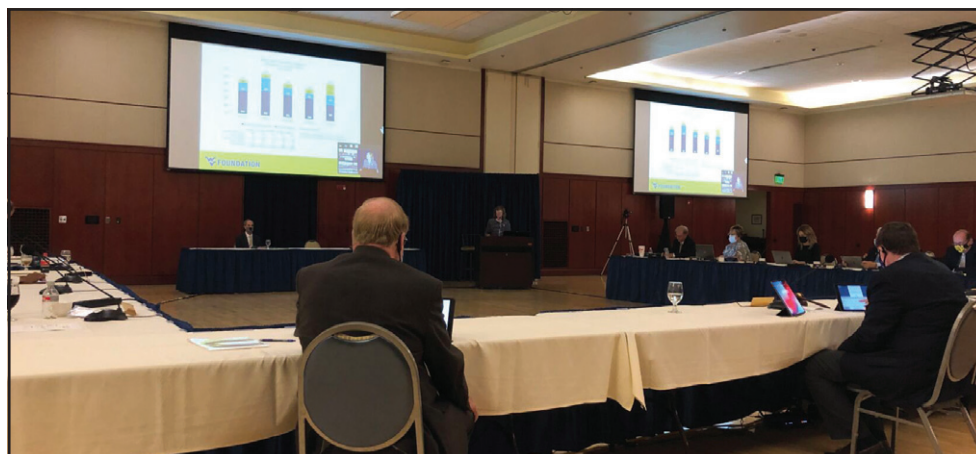
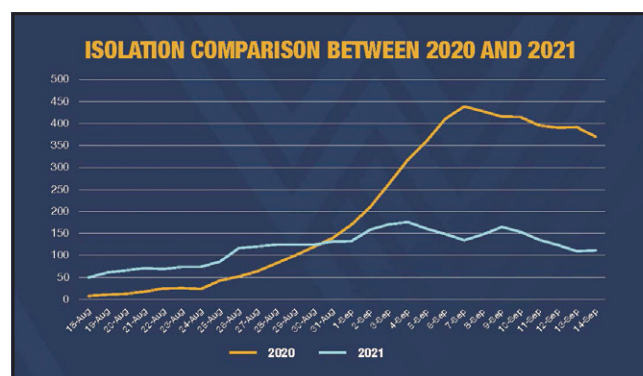


PHOTO BY DUNCAN SLADE

Members of the WVU Board of Governors listen to a presentation during their regular meeting on Friday, Sept. 17.



Testing

Continued from page 1  
quired to write an “educational essay.”

Just under a month ago, WVU began its first round of random sample testing for unvaccinated students.

Now roughly 114 of those students have yet to get tested and received letters from Student Conduct. This is in addition to the several hundred students who didn’t show up for return-to-campus testing.

Student Conduct had previously estimated that over 400 unvaccinated students had not been tested after returning to campus but soon discovered a number of these students had either dropped out or were fully online.

Showalter said her office confirms students are actually enrolled and on campus before sending out charge notices to unvaccinated students.

COVID module confusion

Despite the University’s push to have all students complete a COVID educational module over the summer, the failure to do so is no longer grounds for punishment on its own.

Showalter said this was a decision made outside of Student Conduct by University administrators.

“We only have so much manpower,” Showalter said. “And I think that the focus has been on keeping cam-



WVU students on the Evansdale campus on Friday Sept. 3rd 2021.

PHOTO BY MALIA RICHARDSON

pus safe, which is through the testing and the enforcement of the mask and the quarantine policy.”

April Kaull, university spokesperson, said penalizing students for not completing the module wasn’t a top priority.

“We decided early on that the testing requirement should be the highest priority as students returned to campus along with strongly encouraging vaccinations,” Kaull said. “We felt also that failure to complete the education module could be a useful tool

in handling student conduct cases as they moved through the process, and that’s exactly what we’ve found to be the case thus far.”

Mask enforcement

Despite the most recent update to WVU’s indoor mask policy, there hasn’t been a rise in PPE reports to Student Conduct. Only 10 specific incidents of students not wearing masks were reported this week.

But this may have to do with a lack of specificity in reporting.

“I’ve not seen a lot of reports, surprisingly,” Showalter said.

In many cases, the Student Conduct office can do little to enforce mask-wearing indoors unless names and photos are given.

“We do try to investigate and try to get all the information we can with those reports, but if they’re vague or they’re too general, it’s very difficult for us to take that second step in an investigation,” Showalter said.

“The more detail we have, the better chance we have of

succeeding in terms of enforcing the policy.”

Rob Alsop, vice president of Strategic Initiatives, said there’s a limit to what the University can enforce.

“I will say though that there is a practicality limit on resources, to have someone go around and police mask-wearing at all times,” Alsop said in a WVU Board of Governors meeting last week.

He added that masks aren’t required in gatherings of fewer than 10 people on campus.

Residence halls, on the other hand, have seen a rise



PHOTO COURTESY WVU

Carrie Showalter, Executive Director for the Office of Student Conduct.

in students not wearing masks indoors, according to Patricia Cendana, executive director of Student Services and Residence Life.

“I think that was the biggest complication we had — educating our students of the change in policy and then letting them know that we’re planning to enforce it,” Cendana said.

Masking incidents are typically handled by Residence Life, and depending on the severity of the situation, they can be referred to Student Conduct. But in many cases, resident assistants are the first to address the issue.

“So I think our students are now realizing that this is what’s needed to keep the community safe. Students really do want to be in class, and they still want to be on campus,” Cendana said.

THURSDAY  
SEPT. 23

FRESH CHECK DAY



MOUNTAINLAIR BALLROOMS



Learn more about the mental health resources available on campus, how to intervene if you see a friend in distress, and engage in activities that help build resiliency. You’ll gain valuable skills and learn about what’s available to you as a WVU student. **You are not alone!**

3 PM -  
6 PM

# WVU president Gordon Gee poses for photo with Instagram meme page

**BY LARA BONATESTA**  
CULTURE EDITOR

For most WVU students, taking photos around campus is nothing new, but freshman exercise physiology student, Josh Goddard, is putting a new spin on his campus photoshoots.

Instead of posing and smiling in all the typical spots, Goddard has been laying on the ground, pretending to be dead and posting them on his Instagram account @deadguy\_wvu.

"People often take tourist pictures, and they're standing or doing something like smiling. I don't want to do that," he said. "If I go somewhere, I want to just lay down on the ground like I'm dead."

Goddard has been photographed dead around Lincoln

Hall, on the Evansdale basketball courts and even on the PRT.

"It's a huge collaboration," Goddard explained. "A bunch of people in Lincoln Hall are really invested in it. Different people like to take photos."

But the joke that started in a common room at Lincoln Hall began to gain traction after Goddard scored a unique photo lying dead under the foot of University President E. Gordon Gee. This photo had been a goal of Goddard's from the beginning.

As of publication, Goddard's Instagram account had 666 followers and the most like photo was Goddard's photo with Gee at 378 likes. Goddard's photo with Gee was also posted on the well-known account @wvuafterdark.

Goddard said that he was surprised at how willing Gee

was to participate in the photo.

"I did not tell him to step on my back. He actually did that himself," Goddard said. "The exact scenario that I had envisioned for weeks up to this point, right because dead guy had been going on for a few weeks. He stands over me decides to put his foot on my back and just has the time of his life."

Goddard's new challenge, however, is topping the incredibly successful post with Gee.

"I've hit the Gee benchmark. How do I keep those people interested? And how do I keep engagement a thing?" Goddard said.

Goddard has continued to post photos in different areas of campus and asking his friends and followers where they'd like to see him go next.

"The thing that's kept it go-

ing is their interest. And the fact that people have ideas for other photos they want to see," he said.

Since the creation of @deadguy\_wvu, similar Instagram accounts have been started at The University of Kentucky, Virginia Tech and West Virginia State University.

Goddard hopes the trend will continue to spread to other colleges and eventually become the next Barstool.

"If we can get other people at other colleges to do dead guy posts in places that are notable on their campuses, like their campus presidents or in their version of the Mountain-lair, right, little landmarks, if we can get that it has the possibility to be another barstool or something like that. Like, it's a far-fetched dream but we have four years to make it happen."



PHOTO COURTESY JOSH GODDARD  
WVU President E. Gordon Gee poses for a photo with Josh Goddard.

## New gospel choir brings unique opportunities to WVU

**BY AUBREY BURKHARDT**  
CORRESPONDENT

There is a new gospel choir coming to WVU with opportunities for students to learn about African American music and fellowship.

Alton Merrell and Shirley Robinson are co-directors of the new Paul Roberson Mahalla Jackson Gospel Choir.

Merrell is the professor of jazz piano at WVU, a composer and a current member of the Pittsburgh Jazz Orchestra. Robinson is a representative of the Advisory Council of Classified Employees or ACCE at WVU. She has been performing in gospel choirs around Morgantown since the 1970s.

The inspiration to start the student gospel choir came from the idea to start a collaboration between the School of Music and the Center for Black Culture and Research.

After College of Creative Arts Dean Keith Jackson, Director of the Center for Black Culture and Research Marjorie Fuller and Director of the School of Music Michael Ibrahim spoke with Merrell and Robinson, the new gospel choir was born.

The Paul Roberson Mahalla Jackson Gospel Choir is open



Alton Merrell, professor of jazz piano at WVU, a composer and a current member of the Pittsburgh Jazz Orchestra.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF WVU  
Robinson is a representative of the Advisory Council of Classified Employees or ACCE at WVU. She has been performing in gospel choirs around Morgantown since the 1970s.

Merrell and Robinson hope to spread love and unity on the WVU campus and surrounding communities. Rehearsals for the new gospel choir take place on Wednesdays from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in room 2070 at the Creative Arts Center.

**For more information, interested students can contact Merrell at [alton.merrell@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:alton.merrell@mail.wvu.edu), or Robinson at [shirley.robinson@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:shirley.robinson@mail.wvu.edu).**

## 123 Pleasant St. to require vaccination or negative test

**BY TRENTON STRAIGHT**  
NEWS EDITOR

123 Pleasant St. will require all guests and performers to be fully vaccinated or show proof of a negative COVID test upon entry, starting Thursday.

"The decision comes on the heels of the dramatic surge in COVID-19 cases as the Delta variant spreads throughout the United States," 123 said in an Instagram post.

If guests choose to show proof of vaccination, 123 said it will require them to present a vaccination card and photo ID. Otherwise, they must submit a negative test result within 72 hours of an event.

Vaccinated guests must be fully vaccinated for at least two weeks before an event.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention considers someone fully vaccinated two weeks after the second dose of a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or 2 weeks after the single-dose J&J vaccine.

Guests can email test results to 123 at [PleasantStBook-ing@gmail.com](mailto:PleasantStBook-ing@gmail.com).

The music venue added that it would reconsider its vaccination policy based on emerging information, such

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  - PICTURE/COPY OF VACCINATION CARD
- OR - NEGATIVE COVID-19 TEST + PHOTO ID**
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  - PICTURE/COPY OF NEGATIVE RESULTS W/ DATE OF TEST

\* MUST HAVE RECEIVED SECOND DOSE (OR SINGLE DOSE FOR J&J RECIPIENTS) AT LEAST 14 DAYS BEFORE THE EVENT

\* NEGATIVE RESULTS MUST BE WITHIN 72 HOURS OF THE EVENT

\* AT-HOME TEST RESULTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

- RELIGIOUS/MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS STILL REQUIRE A NEGATIVE TEST

PHOTO COURTESY 123 PLEASANT ST. INSTAGRAM  
An Instagram post from 123 Pleasant St. on Monday, Sept. 20.

as infection rates, transmission data and state and federal regulations.

On Thursday at 8 p.m., 123 Pleasant St. will host "Groovin with the Grove All Star Jam," featuring musicians from Fletcher's Grove, The Hill-billy Gypsies, Stewed Mulligan, Electric Orange Peel, Tom Batchelor Band, Lord of Lester, The Greens, Aristotle Jones Ex-

perience and Spike Yee.

"We encourage everyone who is able to get vaccinated today in order to ensure that you and your loved ones remain safe, that we are keeping our community as safe as we can, and lastly to keep live music alive for years and years to come!" 123 said.

Editor:  
Katherine Lovelidge  
kl00033@mix.wvu.edu

# OPINION

## COVID policies just feel-good regulation

BY KATHERINE LOVELIDGE  
OPINION EDITOR

It doesn't take Sherlock Holmes to notice the vast array of students with stuffy noses and sore throats roaming campus. In my own classes, it is rare that a silence on behalf of the professor is not met with a cough.

Last week, WVU beefed up the indoor mask mandate. Now, we have to wear them everywhere and not just in the classroom.

On my walk through the Mountainlair this past week, it was clear that nothing had changed. Students masked and unmasked still roamed about as they pleased.

From the beginning of the school year, the University has been confused and contradictory with their mandated precautions.

Then, students were to wear masks in class, but only in class. Now, masks everywhere, but with little to no enforcement.

Blaring inconsistencies lie with the logic, or lack thereof, of current policy. Wearing masks in classrooms is progress, until you take into account that those same masks are removed in the hallways outside. By extension, wearing masks inside is cautionary, until you take into account that those same students are gathering in an unmasked crowd of 60,000 at football games on the weekends.

WVU's COVID policies have been nothing more than feel-good regulations to make the University look good on paper.

Take, for example, the conclusion of the freshman Welcome Week: Monday Night Lights. Masks were handed to each student as they walked into Milan Puskar Stadium for the class photo. The rest of the night went unregulated, but the visual record was pristine.

Meanwhile, WVU Medicine's flagship Ruby Memorial Hospital is bustling with

COVID-related cases and, as of Saturday, Sept. 18, had a waitlist of 10 people to be admitted to the Intensive Care Unit. Additionally, West Virginia remains the state ranked second in the country for the recent transmission of the disease.

The University's lackluster nods to the global pandemic may be easing the minds of parents, but they are of no assistance to the already inundated local healthcare system.

Despite being the largest hospital in the state, Ruby Memorial is now keeping patients in pre-op and post-op rooms because there is simply nowhere else to put them. Albert Wright, CEO of the WVU Health System, said it himself: "I just don't think people realize how bad it is."

And yet, the University still doesn't seem to understand the severity of the crisis at hand.

At the moment, students who have failed to complete the "mandatory" COVID-ed-



PHOTO BY MALIA RICHARDSON

WVU students on the Evansdale campus on Friday Sept. 3rd 2021.

ucation module, which was due at the end of August 2021, and haven't committed other COVID-related infractions face no repercussions. In addition, 430 students have refused to get

tested after a formal request from the University and at least 25 have dodged or violated quarantine and isolation protocols.

And most simply, unmasked students inside of

university buildings walk unchallenged and uncontested.

The bottom line: COVID cases across the state are quickly adding up, but the way that WVU is handling the situation is not.

## Lil Nas X defies lofty expectations from viral success in 'Montero' with sexy, graceful songs

BY ZACH DELUCA  
STREAMING CRITIC

Since 2018 when Lil Nas X set fire to the scene with his smash hit "Old Town Road" (which just made history by being the first song to go 15x-platinum), eyes have been on the viral star, waiting to see if he would be a one-hit wonder or pop's newest wave-making sensation.

Thankfully, "Montero" is exciting for how it defies those expectations and plays by its own rules.

The title track is an inescapable earworm, kicking off the album with the kind of pop power many critics doubted he could replicate. It's a sexy, graceful pulse that carries through many of the opening records.

"Dead Right Now" is one of the best produced tracks, utilizing a trap, pop, rap combination reminiscent of Travis Scott. Bright horns and deep drums back Lil Nas X's confessional lyrics foreshadow-

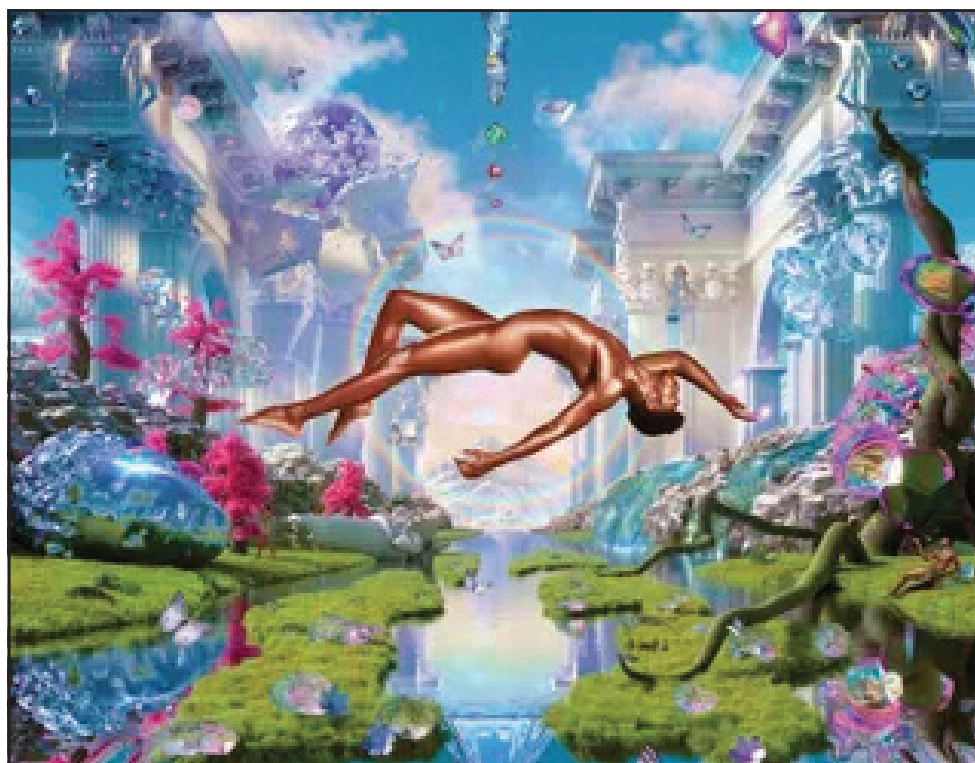


PHOTO COURTESY COLUMBIA, 2021

ing the album's more vulnerable second half.

Those horns return on "Industry Baby," a boisterous vic-

tory lap that finds Lil Nas X recounting his successes and relishing in proving his haters wrong. It's infectious from top

to bottom with another flawless chorus and wonderful Jack Harlow feature that keeps the energy high.

Once we reach "Tales of Dominica," the loud brass is traded out for acoustic melodies and unobtrusive drums. It's a nice change of pace and leaves ample room for Lil Nas X to vocally and lyrically command these tracks with striking honesty.

"Sun Goes Down" is a gorgeous examination of the depression and loneliness that Lil Nas X felt during his youth. "Don't wanna lie, I don't want a life/Send a gun and I'll see the sun," he sings on the chorus as his past self before addressing those thoughts in the verses with an optimistic sense of hope.

"Void" confirms that these mantras of hope are not entirely optimistic, and stardom isn't protection from the hardships of life. The vocals are emotionally rich, like a verbal diary, and sound like an extra off of Frank Ocean's "Blonde."

It's a true showcase of the heart that drives Lil Nas X's music, and how his emotional lyricism and singing can tie

together party anthems and sincere ballads on the same tapestry. However, that also means it's easy to see when the threads are loose.

"Lost in the Citadel" is a slight pop punk track that's easy to forget in its vagueness. Many of the experiments in genre throughout the album blend seamlessly with Lil Nas X's style, but this one still feels unfinished.

Following "Void" is "Don't Want It," an attempt at a pick-me-up which feels both out of place and insubstantial. It's the only track that feels like a true filler and dampens the impact of the dark, dingy "Life After Death."

However, the culmination of these tracks is much larger than their individual missteps and Lil Nas X seems to have already found himself within the chaos of the expectations placed upon him. It's a debut that seems to show us only a peek of what he has to offer and promises only great things to come.

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- Across**

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  - 10 Wedding promise
  - 13 Ancient Indian
  - 15 Scent
  - 16 Copy
  - 17 Grader
  - 18 Mold
  - 19 "To the right!"
  - 20 Hear
  - 21 Dueling sword
  - 23 Completion of nine or eighteen holes
  - 25 Tigers
  - 26 Chaos
  - 28 Respiratory disorder
  - 31 Rover
  - 32 Actress Day
  - 33 Navy's rival
  - 34 Auf Wiedersehen
  - 37 Leaky faucet noise
  - 38 \_\_graph machine
  - 40 Natural fiber
  - 41 Gender
  - 42 Feel concern
  - 43 Puts up a picture
  - 44 Capital of Nigeria
  - 45 One stroke under par
  - 46 Early pain relieving drug
  - 49 Hogtie
- Down**

  - 1 Depart
  - 2 Tyrant
  - 3 Lawyer (abbr.)
  - 4 Behold
  - 5 Fireproof storage areas
  - 6 Right
  - 7 Cation
  - 8 Madagascar franc (abbr.)
  - 9 From the tee to the green
  - 10 General
  - 11 Starts
  - 12 Gardner's nemesis
  - 14 What women put on their faces
  - 22 School group
  - 24 Elderly
- 25 Short, low shot to green
  - 26 Belief
  - 27 Bullets
  - 28 Totals
  - 29 Painful
  - 30 Kid's cereal brand
  - 31 Nominates
  - 34 Adhere
  - 35 Jellystone's bear
  - 36 Otherwise
  - 38 Wise Man
  - 39 Metal club with blade shaped head
  - 40 Stave off
  - 42 Traveling group
  - 43 Moveable, like a door
  - 44 Liberal (abbr.)
  - 45 Container
  - 46 Cravat
  - 47 Balancer
  - 48 Mush up
  - 49 One stroke over par
  - 51 Make a sweater
  - 52 Charge
  - 53 Crazyed
  - 54 Moderate
  - 57 Affirmative
  - 58 Internal Revenue Service
  - 60 Does

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# Welcome to the Big 12 conference

## *A letter to the new schools*

BY CHARLES MONTGOMERY  
SPORTS EDITOR

Dear new Big 12 schools,  
Welcome to the Big 12! Thanks to a few of you (UCF and Cincinnati) we are no longer the only school east of the Mississippi river.

We're very happy that all four of you will be joining the conference in the near future, but we have one small problem. BYU, would you consider moving a little closer to West Virginia? That flight to Provo, Utah, is not one that looks like the most joyous occasion with the distance. So, to help out your new neighbors, let's see about finding the fastest travel options, because head men's basketball coach Bob Huggins isn't keen on traveling very far.

Cincinnati, we know who you are. There was a time when we had something of a "rivalry" when both schools were in that grand old Big East. However, while your football

team has been making strides, so has our basketball program. Remember Huggins? Yeah, we still have him here at the Coliseum and we're very excited to welcome you all to a "friendly" environment in the winter.

Houston, we have just one request. Even though he might not be the best football coach in the United States, would you consider hanging on to Dana Holgorsen for a few more years? Just let him get his feet on the ground, and I promise he will win you a maximum of eight games. Now, I can't promise any bowl wins, but don't worry, to build a team in Houston, he doesn't have to recruit in West Virginia. We all know that you "can't" build a championship-caliber football program with West Virginia recruits. Yeah, right.

Even though we have more of a connection with your football coach, that Houston basketball program is still really good. Honestly, that was one of the best additions out of this realignment to the Big 12.

Kelvin Sampson, we look forward to many tight contests between you and Huggins for years to come. Those are sure to be fantastic matchups.

Now UCF, we don't know a whole lot about you. You still claim you won a national championship in 2017, but clearly that wasn't the case. We appreciate your football program and with brand new head coach Gus Malzahn, it looks to be competitive for years. We sincerely welcome you and your trip up from Orlando, Florida, to the Big 12.

Now, before you get comfortable in this Power Five conference, be aware that some of your neighbors won't be around for long. Oklahoma and Texas are jumping ship, but we wouldn't be surprised if the Longhorns reconsider the move to the SEC after their trip to Fayetteville, Arkansas.

When you travel to Lawrence, Kansas, during football season, don't expect the largest crowds. To be honest, it's a basketball school and always



PHOTO BY DUNCAN SLADE

West Virginia fans cheer during the first half of the game between the West Virginia Mountaineers and the Maryland Terrapins at Capital One Field at Maryland Stadium in College Park, MD, on Sept. 4, 2021.

will be. When you have to play the Jayhawks in basketball, gear up, because that is one of the toughest places to play in college basketball.

You will quickly learn that

many schools in the Big 12 have their own hand signals like Texas, TCU and Baylor. If you can, avoid jumping on that train because we don't want new rules saying we can't use

those hand signals against you. Oops, sorry Texas (we're not sorry).

Welcome to the Big 12.

# Everything you need to know about the No. 4 Oklahoma Sooners

BY CHARLES MONTGOMERY  
SPORTS EDITOR

The No. 4 Oklahoma Sooners (3-0) have been top dog in the Big 12 for many years now. However, they are on their way out of the Big 12. So, this could be one of the last times that West Virginia has to travel to Norman, Oklahoma, where it hasn't fared well since joining the conference in 2012.

**Head coach:** Lincoln Riley has been head coach of the Sooners since Bob Stoops retired in 2017. In that tenure, Riley has led Oklahoma to three appearances in the College Football Playoff. With a 3-0 start to 2021, Oklahoma is 48-8 under Riley in his fifth season as head coach. Against West Virginia, Riley has handled the Mountaineers. The Sooners are 3-0 against WVU and won the last meeting in 2019, 52-14.

**Player to Watch:** Quarterback Spencer Rattler entered the season as one of the Heisman Trophy favor-



PHOTO BY TREY YOUNG/OU DAILY

Oklahoma quarterback Spencer Rattler (7) fakes the handoff to Marvin Mims (17) in a game against the Nebraska Cornhuskers at Gaylord Family-Oklahoma Memorial Stadium in Norman, Okla., on Sept. 18, 2021.

ites. Through three weeks, the chatter surrounding him as subsided, but he is still a contender. Rattler is second

in the Big 12 in passing with 761 passing yards and seven touchdowns. He has thrown just two interceptions and he

has a completion rate of 75%.

"The thing about Rattler is that his arm talent is so unique," WVU head coach

### West Virginia at No. 4 Oklahoma

**Watch:** 7:30 p.m. on ABC  
Sept. 25, 2021

**Where:** Gaylord Family-Oklahoma Memorial Stadium Norman, Oklahoma

Neal Brown said. "He can move and he extends plays. He has one of the strongest arms and one of the quickest releases that I've seen."

**Rest of the Team:** The Oklahoma defense currently ranks No. 7 in the Big 12 in total defense. The Sooners on average allow 319 total yards and 17 points per game. However, the Sooners lead the conference in total sacks with 13 and are second in opponent's third down conversion rate at 30%.

On offense, the Sooners are dominant once again. Along with having one of the best quarterbacks in the country, Oklahoma has a solid option at wide receiver in Marvin Mims. Through three games, Mims has eight catches for 168

yards. That ranks Mims No. 7 in the Big 12 in receiving yards.

Redshirt sophomore wide receiver Jadon Haselwood leads the team in receptions with 14 through three games. Haselwood is second on the squad and No. 17 in the conference in yards with 127 as he also has two touchdowns.

**Season so far:** Oklahoma hasn't dominated lackluster opponents this season. The Sooners are sporting wins against Tulane (40-35), Western Carolina (76-0) and Nebraska (23-16). None of those teams currently have a winning record with Nebraska being the best at 2-2.

**Game Outlook:** The Mountaineers have not had the best of luck when playing the Sooners. West Virginia heads into Saturday's game with a major win over No. 15 Virginia Tech despite a near collapse in the fourth quarter. The WVU defense has been tested already this season by solid opponents and it will face its toughest opponent against Oklahoma.

# Consistency is key for WVU women's soccer heading into Big 12 schedule

BY WESLEY SHOEMAKER

SPORTS WRITER

Consistency has always been what the West Virginia women's soccer team has chased, and as the Mountaineers enter conference play, they know that word will be the difference between hoisting another conference title trophy, or watching someone else do it.

This season marks the eighth season out of the last nine, in which the Mountaineers were picked to finish first in the conference before the season began. The Mountaineers are currently ranked as the No. 14 team in the country, and after finishing non-conference play, they feel as if they are ready to try and capture their fifth Big 12 title since 2013.

Every season, head women's soccer coach, Nikki Izzo-Brown tries to create the best possible non-conference schedule for her squad. This year's schedule included matchups against three teams ranked inside of the top-25 and two teams ranked inside the top-10.

With the tough competition came tough results. West Virginia lost to No. 4 Virginia and No. 7 Penn State, while settling for a draw against No. 24 Georgetown. Despite not getting wins, Izzo-Brown believes this type of schedule will help her team when getting into conference play.

"I could be scheduling opponents that aren't as good as Georgetown, Virginia, Penn State, and I just think that these opponents are really showing us areas we need to improve before we get into conference play," Izzo-Brown said before her team's match against Georgetown. "But when you're playing against bigger, stronger, faster Georgetown's Penn State's, Virginia's, you're really seeing where you have to make adjustments because the TCU's and the Iowa State's they are going to be a heck of a matchup."

Izzo-Brown then said her hope is that playing these teams in non-conference play should help her team be where they need to be as they enter conference play and try to make the postseason.

"We have preseason is one season, then you have non-conference season, then you go into conference play, then you have postseason," Izzo-



PHOTO BY GUS SCHLOMER

West Virginia head coach Nikki Izzo-Brown (left) coaches defender Jordan Brewster (right) against Georgetown at Dick Dlesk Soccer Stadium in Morgantown, W.Va., on Sept. 9, 2021.

zo-Brown said. "So it's really important that we're gaining a lot of ground with our non-conference schedule just because I think there's three opponents right now in the Big 12 that are ranked, so that we are ready for it."

Flash forward to over a month later, West Virginia enters conference play, with Izzo-Brown believing her team is capable of winning a very talented league.

"It's been a great non-conference schedule because I think every opponent has done something different, and has played differently," Izzo-Brown said.

Izzo-Brown also believes that playing the caliber of a schedule that West Virginia did will help with different situations in conference play. Izzo-Brown will be able to tell her team to recognize different things that Big 12 opponents do and be able to use their experiences from the non-conference to their advantage.

"I think we did a good non-conference to really recognize different styles that we will be up against in the Big 12," Izzo-Brown said. "So I think if anything we will be more prepared going into Big

12 play."

Big 12 play is exactly what the Mountaineers are going into. This Friday, West Virginia hosts Iowa State to begin conference play.

The Mountaineers then host Oklahoma (Oct. 1) before traveling to the Sunflower State to face Kansas State (Oct. 7) and Kansas (Oct. 10). The biggest matchup of conference play will come on Oct. 14, when the Mountaineers host No. 8 TCU.

After TCU, WVU has a quick turnaround, facing Texas Tech on Oct. 17. West Virginia then travels to the Lone Star State to face Texas (Oct. 21) and Baylor (Oct. 24), before returning home for its regular season finale against Oklahoma State (Oct. 28).

"The margin of error going into Friday's game and beyond, because of the parody of the Big 12, you know we are walking into some tough play," Izzo-Brown said. "So we have to make sure when you start stepping up into conference play we take care of mental errors, and we're taking care of things because the league is so good."



PHOTO BY GUS SCHLOMER

West Virginia celebrates after scoring a goal against Saint Francis at Dick Dlesk Soccer Stadium in Morgantown, W.Va., on Sept. 12, 2021.



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## WVU's Big 12 Schedule

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Oklahoma State	Oct. 28

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# Bartlett earns Big 12 honors after monster game

BY NICK KREMER  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

This past week, the West Virginia defense played some of its best football this season including a huge performance from bandit, Jared Bartlett. Due to his performance against Virginia Tech, Bartlett earned multiple awards including Big 12 Defensive Player of the Week.

The bandit position is not a well-known position, but it can be summarized as a linebacker who drops in coverage or plays like a normal linebacker in a 3-3 defense. The difference between a bandit and a traditional outside linebacker comes when the team lines up in a four man front. In a four man front, the bandit will shift down and become an edge rusher.

Against Virginia Tech on Saturday, Bartlett had his best game since joining the Mountaineers in 2019. The redshirt sophomore totaled five tackles, three sacks and a forced fumble which were all season highs for Bartlett.

Defensive coordinator



PHOTO BY GUS SCHLOMER

The West Virginia defense waits in the tunnel prior to a game against Virginia Tech on Sept. 18, 2021.

Jordan Lesley used Bartlett as a pass rusher more in this game than he had originally planned due to Bartlett's in-game diagnosis.

"He (Bartlett) came to the sideline late in the first quarter or early second quarter and said, 'Coach I'm mismatched with these guys on

the edge.' So I trust him and put him out there," Lesley said.

Bartlett has had a good rapport with Lesley and because of that, the coaching staff was willing to trust his decisions during the game.

"Me and coach Lesley have a pretty good relationship so

when I told him that I had an advantage, he just took a leap of faith and trusted me," Bartlett said.

At 232 pounds, Bartlett is undersized when lining up as an edge rusher and has to use his technique and speed to get past the much larger tackles.

"Leverage around the corner, if you attack them with speed, sometimes they will lunge and that makes it easier to turn the corner," Bartlett said. "Sometimes, when you are on the edge, I weigh 232 pounds, some tackles are like 350 (pounds), it can be difficult."

Prior to this season, Bartlett had amassed 28 total tackles and 3.5 sacks in 14 games. So far this season, Bartlett is on pace to shatter those marks and head coach Neal Brown attributes it to his offseason work.

"He had a great summer and a really good fall camp. Then he just did not play as well in the first two games," Brown said. "Last week he had great Tuesday and Wednesday practices, you could see he was getting better."

Along with being named the Big 12 Defensive Player of the Week, Bartlett was named the Bronko Nagurski National Defensive Player of the Week. The last two winners of the award were Georgia's Jordan Davis and Oregon's Verone McKinley III.

Bartlett and the West Virginia defense will have its hands full next week as the team takes on Oklahoma. The Sooners are loaded with offensive weapons including a Heisman candidate in Spencer Rattler at quarterback.

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