

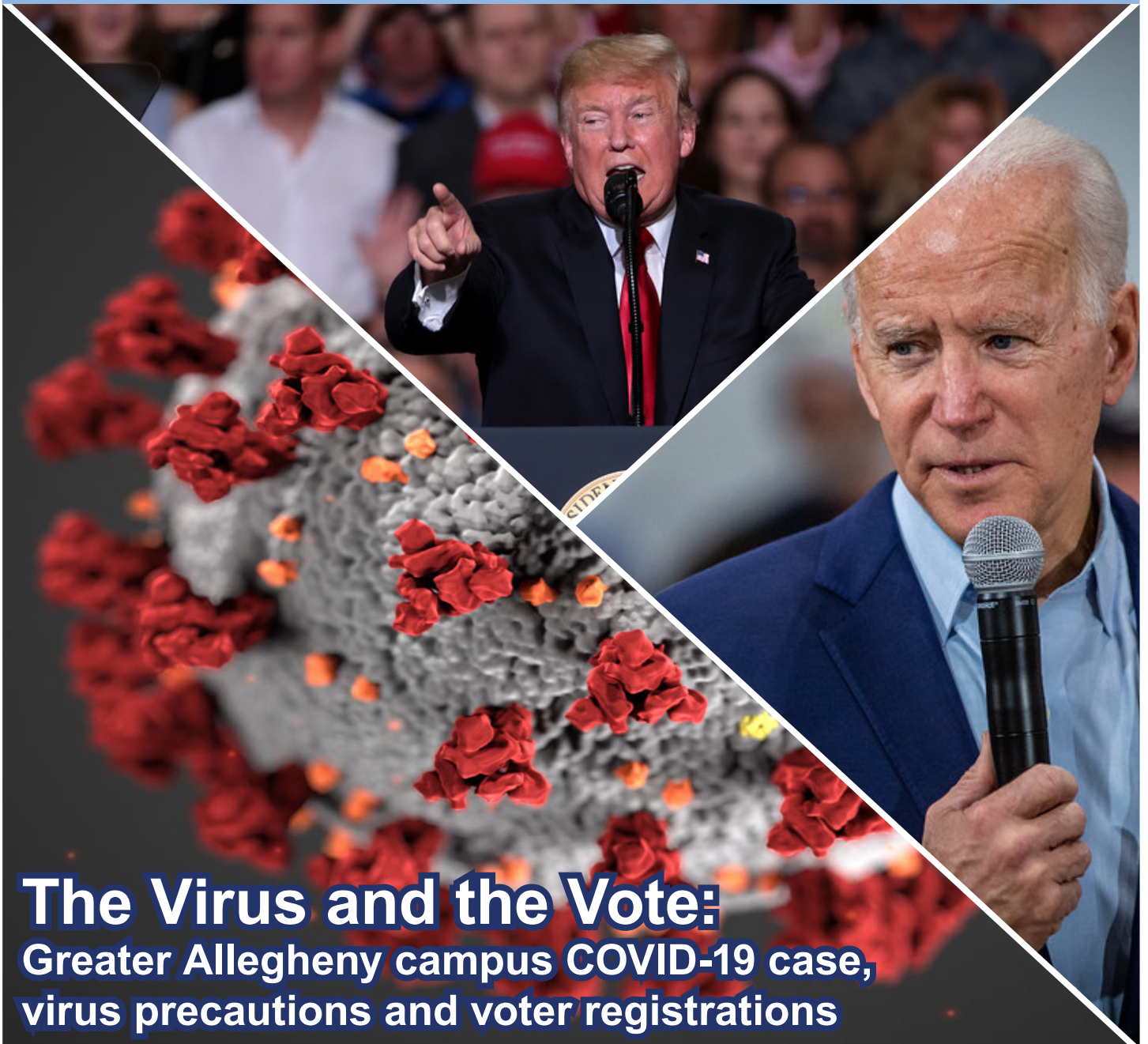


The GA-ZETTE

FALL 2020

The Campus Newspaper for Penn State Greater Allegheny

VOLUME 3



The Virus and the Vote: Greater Allegheny campus COVID-19 case, virus precautions and voter registrations

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PSUGA RESPONDS TO FIRST COVID-19 CASE

One student tests positive, two more in quarantine

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The Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) campus' first confirmed case of COVID-19 has been reported. A student tested positive and was immediately moved to isolation housing off campus in Monaca, Beaver County. The case was diagnosed outside of PSU's COVID-19 testing procedures.

In response, two close contacts were identified through the University's contact tracing process and they were moved to Monaca to quarantine. Additional students were selected by PSUGA to be tested for COVID-19 as a precaution.

The identities of those testing positive were not released due to health privacy regulations.

Students are reminded to stay home if they are feeling sick. Students must contact Campus Nurse, Jennifer Ross, at jur396@psu.edu if they are experiencing any COVID-19-like symptoms so appropriate actions can be taken.

The PSUGA community was notified of the COVID-19 diagnosis on the morning of Oct. 9 by email, sent by Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Edmondson.

"This situation highlights the crucial importance for each of us to remain vigilant and follow the guidelines provided by infectious diseases experts with regard to mask wearing, regular hand-washing, avoiding large gatherings, and social distancing," Edmondson cautioned.

Hotels in Monaca were chosen as the isolation



The at-home COVID-19 saliva test by Vault Health.

and quarantine sites for students as they were within three miles of Penn State Beaver. This allows the Housing and Food Services staff of the Beaver campus to prepare and deliver meals to the students.

According Director for Strategic Planning and Communications, Victoria Garwood, "The University made every attempt to find quarantine and isolation spaces close to each campus...there was no available hotel space close to Greater Allegheny."

"When students are contacted by Student Support Services about entering quarantine space they are asked if they would like to quarantine at their home address or with the spaces provided by the University," Loraine Craven, director of student services and engagement explained.

"Depending on where space is available, students may be in a quarantine or isolation space on campus, in the residence hall, or at the hotel in Monaca."

Any student that feels they need to quarantine or isolate should complete the [Student COVID-19 Self-Referral form](#).

The diagnosis notification came ahead of updates to the [University COVID-19 Dashboard](#). Last updated Oct. 15, the dashboard currently reports 160 tests administered with zero confirmed cases for the PSUGA campus. However, it does reflect one person in isolation and two in quarantine.

The Dashboard is updated every Tuesday and Friday with on-campus and off-campus testing from the prior week, but there may be a lag time for results to appear.

(Continued on next page)



Due to its proximity to the Beaver campus, students will isolate and quarantine in Monaca, PA.
Photo courtesy of Beaver County Tourism.

(Continued from page 2)

Garwood clarified that “this lag time does not affect the contact tracing process, as the University continually receives test results and responds accordingly to any positive cases.”

Despite this and the nearly 3,400 total confirmed cases reported at University Park throughout the semester, PSUGA’s current on-campus procedures are expected to continue throughout the remainder of the semester. In-person learning is scheduled to end Nov. 20 as originally planned. Students and faculty will complete their classes from home remotely after Thanksgiving break.

“We will continue to apply mitigation efforts to help limit the spread of COVID-19,” Garwood

stated. “These include following all the CDC required protocols for cleaning the campus and promoting our Stay Well guidelines.”

Since the start of the Fall 2020 semester, the campus has been following both the CDC and Pennsylvania Department of Health COVID-19 protocols. Students, faculty and staff have been wearing masks, social distancing and washing hands per campus guidelines.

“I feel safe with the way the school is handling the positive COVID case,” said Sophomore Chemical Engineering Major, Fernando Hernandez, a student living in McKeesport Hall. “The person is being quarantined...so far I think [the campus] is being pretty good at trying to contain the cases.”

“I feel safe living in

the residence hall even though there’s a positive case of COVID because we take the necessary precautions to stay safe,” Sophomore Engineering Major, Erik Villegas, said. “I feel as though people are going to try and be more careful now that there is a positive case.”

Weekly events and programming organized by Student Services are currently expected to continue as scheduled.

“We ask that students continue to wear masks and follow social distance guidelines,” added Craven.

“Meetings and events have been taking place in classrooms that have been configured for social distancing,” Craven explained. “In addition, clubs and organizations are having meetings via ZOOM or through Teams. These safety modifications have allowed campus activity to continue and students to remain engaged.”

Any future decision to transition to fully remote distance learning in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 will be left to individual campuses.

“It will be more nuanced as we move forward,” Edmondson said. “[The University] will look at where the concentration of cases may be

and then make decisions based on where that is.”

According to a University [press release](#), students can expect current campus guidelines and learning modalities to continue throughout the spring 2021 semester.

Additionally, the University announced that the spring semester will be starting a week late on Jan. 18. This will come at the cost of spring break, but there are plans to schedule [non-instructional “wellness” days](#) throughout the semester.

Academically, students are asked to stay active and engaged when attending their remote and mixed-modality classes via ZOOM. Those struggling to be attentive from home for any reason are encouraged to come to campus and take advantage of the ZOOM rooms that have been made available.

“I know it’s difficult,” Edmondson commented regarding ZOOM. “It’s not the easiest way to learn, but we need to get through the semester and not let this virus interrupt plans to earn college degrees.”

James Plez (jzp5847@psu.edu) and Zachary Schmader (zjs5217@psu.edu.) also contributed to this story.



University “Stay Well” signs are posted around campus as a reminder to follow pandemic guidelines. Photo courtesy of Patrick Mansell.



Students dining in the Student Community Center. Photo by Graham Thompson.

CAFÉ METRO ADAPTS TO COVID PROTOCOLS; New APP makes food ordering faster, safer

GRAHAM THOMPSON

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The Café Metro staff at Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) has made swift adjustments in how food is prepared and served this semester during the COVID-19 pandemic

Anthony Orlando, the campus' manager of housing and food services, said pandemic protocols include prohibiting self-serve food in the kitchen. The only self-serve allowed is the self-serve pay and the pick-up of silverware at the registers and condiments in the dining area.

"PSUGA requires internal inspections that happen every couple months. Also, if a staff member were to contract the virus, the employee

would quarantine for two weeks, and the kitchen would be sterilized immediately," he said.

Sanitation protocols this year enforced that sections of the kitchen must be cleaned every hour or half-hour. In addition, high ranking chefs from University Park conduct an inspection per semester across all PSU campuses and that "due to tightening inspection protocols, the Café can tally up to four or five inspections a semester," Orlando added.

Orlando also said that "the kitchen and dining area are sterilized every morning before breakfast and after we close for the night." Café Metro also abides by Allegheny County Health Department guidelines, which calls for an inspection of the café semi-annually.

In addition to all the new adjustments and protocols, Penn State also launched a mobile ordering service called "Penn State Eats," an app that helps to support contactless transactions at checkout.

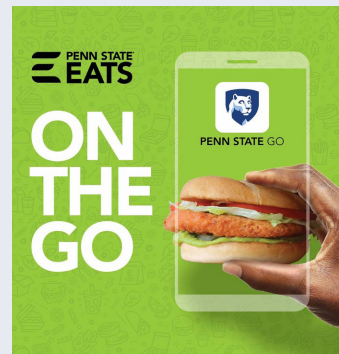


Image by Sandi Chung, Guruse

The app also has designated time slots for customers to receive their orders so they can continue to practice appropriate social-distancing. As for its use, Orlando said it has drawn slight activity from students at Greater Allegheny and other campuses.

He added that "administration hoped to have more activity and popularity among students from all campuses," but he acknowledges it has "made a slight difference in limiting total contact exposure."

"Penn State Eats" is a subdivision of Penn State Go and is available for download on Apple and Google Play. Students, faculty and staff can order three meals a day, and can use their meal plan or Lion Cash as acceptable payment.

The app was originally promoted in the fall of 2018 by University Park, and initially centered around main campus, but it eventually expanded to all campuses across the state this fall.

RADIO SILENCE AT WMKP

No date for return to air

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COVID-19, the inability to social distance in a broadcast studio, and the need for more student on-air hosts has forced the suspension of local broadcasting at WMKP, Penn State Greater Allegheny's (PSUGA) streaming radio station.

According to Associate Professor of Communications and WMKP General Manager, Zack Furness, "Radio broadcasting requires a lot of hands-on work and training and due to the lack of space in the radio station, it would be impossible to keep a six-foot distance.

"In addition, broadcasting microphones would need to be sterilized and due to their

technicality, there would be no way to keep them at a safe use for students," he added.

Furness also said that there is a lack of returning staff and a need for help at the radio station.

"Steven Carter was the student manager of WMKP and he was in charge of training students and putting together his DJ shows," Furness said.

Because Carter graduated and no longer works at WMKP, the issue lies with Furness for having to take the responsibility for training students and producing content.

Furness will be consulting with a few people in the spring to find out some possibilities as far



WMKP Radio remains closed for Fall 2020.

as getting content on the air.

WMKP is a streaming platform that is used by students as a way to entertain and inform the PSUGA campus and its local surroundings.

Students can have the opportunity to record and edit their content that could be featured on the WMKP website at wmkpradio.org.

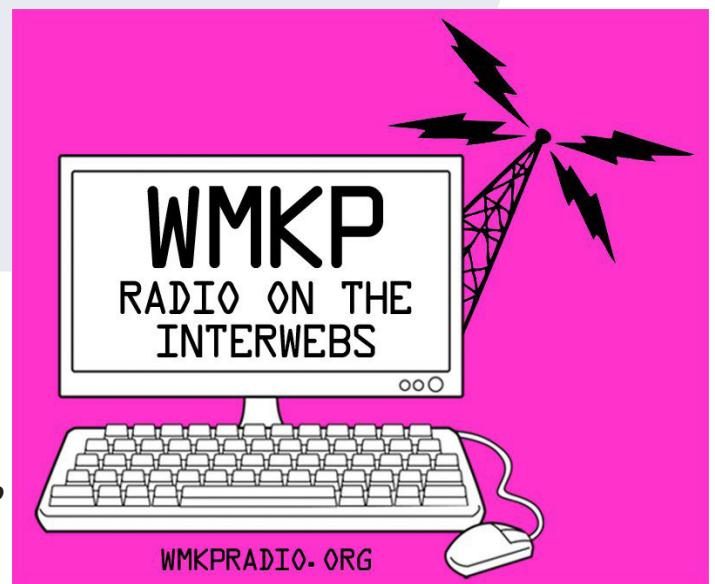
Furness would be more than happy to assist students. In addition, students can have the ability to put together their talk shows or podcasts.

Students interested in learning more about WMKP and how to get involved in the future can contact Furness at zackfurness@psu.edu.



**Steven Carter
AKA
"DJ Stevie Static"
graduated from
PSUGA in the Fall
2019 semester.**

**Photo and image
courtesy of WMKP
on Twitter
[@WMKP_Radio](https://twitter.com/WMKP_Radio)**



STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES

Construction restrictions end, campus renovations resume

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Following Pennsylvania's lifting of COVID-19 restrictions on construction this past summer, Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) began in earnest to continue several campus renovations to improve the look of the campus so students can have state-of-the-art quality facilities while learning.

PSUGA's science lab, The Ostermayer Building, originally built in 1973, is a \$14.7-million renovation project.

According to Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Edmondson, "All of the labs are going to be state-of-the-art and classrooms will be new. There will be spaces for students to sit and lounge. I think it's going to be a good addition to our campus."

The building is targeted for completion in the spring of 2021, with use by students and faculty in the summer. With the Ostermayer Building shut down for the time being, students and faculty utilize a temporary science lab, located on the Frable Building lawn, for their classes.



Campus construction site at The Ostermayer Building. Photo by Madason Porter-Gibson.

The Frable Building also had major renovations with more scheduled for the future. Edmondson said the work done in Frable is part of a phased renovation that started two summers ago.

"First, we worked on the offices and classes on one side of the building, last summer we worked on the faculty offices and classrooms on the other side of the building, and this past summer we worked on the hallway. This coming spring, we will begin to renovate classrooms on the second floor," she said.

"These were parts of the building that really needed attention. We

needed to have them updated and we want students to have the best workspaces possible. That's what we have been working on one step at a time," Edmondson said.

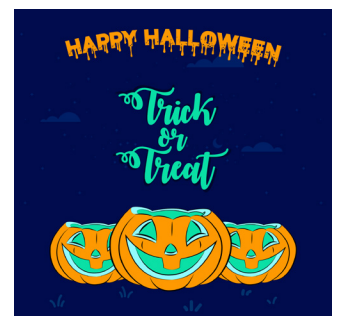
In Wunderley Gym, a new basketball court flooring was installed because it was old. "We just needed to update the condition of the floor," Edmondson said.

"Longer term, we would like to get air conditioning in the gym and complete other renovations, but nothing is set in stone yet because that depends on other resources," she added.

"I think the new gym improvement will also help with recruiting. That's the goal."

Edmondson has other plans for the gym in the long run, and ideas for other part of campus, as well, including a sports court to be installed by McKeesport Hall.

Students completed a survey to vote on the type of things they would like to see in the sports complex.



WEIGHTS AND COVID-19 "MEASURES"



Photo by James Plez

The Greater Allegheny campus fitness center re-opened in early September, after a six-month hiatus.

It meets all Pennsylvania and Allegheny County rules and regulations on pandemic safety protocols.

Anyone using the center must wear a mask, sanitize the equipment before and after use, and sign in and out. An occupancy limit of 10 people at a time is being strictly enforced.

To ensure that the space and equipment are kept clean, the hours of use are reduced for this semester to 10:30AM to 2:00PM and 5:00 to 11:00PM, 7 days a week."

Before the pandemic, the fitness center was open 12 hours a day.

SGA "GETS OUT" THE GA VOTE

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Nov. 3 is the 2020 Presidential Election, and the Greater Allegheny Student Government Association (SGA) is staging "Get Out the Vote" efforts to make certain that everyone who can vote is eligible to vote.

According to a study by the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, only 50% of voting-eligible college students participated in the 2016 presidential election. However, there are initiatives at Penn State helping students become more engaged.

This semester, student government is a part of that effort to improve these numbers for 2020. According to SGA

President, Joseph Froetschel, a series of events are designed to help students with voter registration, while still adhering to university-wide social distancing guidelines.

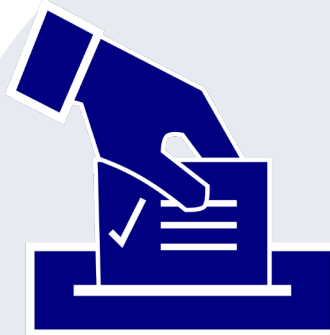


Image courtesy of Creative Commons, License CC0 1.0 University Public Domain

"Our age range doesn't vote in high numbers. We're trying to get more students engaged and to the polls," Froetschel said. "Student government officials will be at the information desk [in the Student Community Center] asking passersby

if they're already registered and if they're not, giving them the proper information that they need to be registered."

After students are registered by Oct. 19, they can participate in the Nov. 3 election by voting absentee or at an in-person polling location.

College students may have unique circumstances when it comes to both registering and making it to the polls on election day, especially when it comes to finding the motivation to vote.

SGA is targeting enthusiasm as a goal to increase student turnout at the polls and sharing that students can use university resources to help them get engaged in the election.

"Some students believe their vote is just one

in a million," Froetschel said.

The University's Center for Character, Conscience and Public Purpose spearheaded PSUVotes, a project to educate students on the importance of voting. According to a press release from the Center, student voter turnout increased to 36% in 2018.

Froetschel and the SGA team are making contingency plans to help reach the voting engagement goals despite the challenges with COVID-19.

"We want to maintain that six-foot distance, and the protocols laid down by the University. We also want to make sure anything we use [for registration] is sanitized and safe for handling," Froetschel explained.

EXAMINING BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH

2020-2021 Crossing Bridges Summit goes virtual



Panelists, clockwise from top left to right: Jonathan White (moderator), Jamila Pleas, Demia Horsley, Jessica Brooks, Liz Miller.

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Following a spoken word honoring the power of Black women by Senior Biobehavioral Health Major, Ke'ira Williams, and a welcome from Lecturer in History, Johnathan White, Penn State Greater Allegheny's fourth annual Crossing Bridges Summit (CBS) was underway on Oct. 15.

Presented virtually and livestreamed online by WPSU, Penn State's public media station, the Summit is part of the campus' mission to bridge the racial divide in Pittsburgh and the region by engaging the campus with local, regional and national experts on initiatives that engage the broader community in

eliminating racism and promoting racial equity.

Dr. Jaqueline Edmondson, chancellor and chief academic officer at Greater Allegheny, explained that the Summit committee read the 2019 University of Pittsburgh's *Inequality Across Gender and Race Report* on health and found that it was something that aligned with the campus' mission.

"When members of our Summit committee read and discussed the report, we decided that our theme this academic year would be to examine Black women's health, an area of considerable concern in the report. Our panelists today will discuss the medical concerns identified by the researchers and the impact of those concerns on those

living in the region," Edmondson said in her opening remarks.

Panelists included: Jessica Brooks, CEO and founding director of Pittsburgh Business Group on Health; Dr. Liz Miller, University of Pittsburgh professor of public health and clinical and translational science and one of the authors of the report; Jamila Pleas, founder of Her Birth Right, a maternal health equity initiative and; Demia Horsley, director of strategic initiatives of Healthy Start, Inc.

The report found that Black maternal mortality rates in Pittsburgh are higher than 97% of other cities. The panel discussed some of the factors contributing to this and that even a year after the initial release of the

report, the message still needs to be discussed and action needs to be taken.

"I could not be a Black woman leader of a health-care-influencing organization and not speak up," Brooks said. "The first thing I had done after being aware of that report was go to my board of directors and say I can't be leading this organization if we do not take up this work of health equity. What's critical out of that and why that's a big point is that employers haven't traditionally been in that space. This is seen as public health or a health-care delivery system issue, but we pay for that care," she added.

Brooks leads the effort to redefine and advance the discussion around health care value, access, **(Continued next page)**

(Continued from page 8)

and quality on behalf of employers. Miller, as one of the authors of the report, concurred.

“The policy piece here for healthcare delivery systems is recognizing that social influences on health matter, and even more importantly communities’ matter, and most importantly Black women matter.” Miller said. “Part of our healthcare delivery system’s failure has been not acknowledging and supporting doula programs, and not supporting the community partnerships as part of what I call a community health home,” she added.

The rights of Black women is not just a healthcare issue, the panel noted, but it is a human rights issue.

“The Black maternal mortality rate in this country is completely unacceptable. It is a violation of our human rights,” Pleas said. “When we think back on the history of gynecology, we think to the father of gynecology, Dr. James Marion Sims, and his unethical practices of procedures on enslaved Black women. There was a failure to consent, one because they were women who were enslaved. Two, to practice procedures without any anesthesia to test their pain thresholds has carried over today to the Black maternal morbidity rate,” Pleas added.

“There’s well documented studies that show you have practicing providers in 2020 who still believe that Black women’s skin and nerve endings are more sensi-

tive than white women,” she said.

Horsley is also a doula and advocate for addressing racial inequalities and the role they play in health disparities. She talked about an unaddressed issue, called the weathering effect.

“We reference it as a contributor to the disproportionately poor health outcomes experienced by Black women,” she said. “To provide a little more context or to revisit what weathering is, it’s used to describe how constant stress of racism specifically may lead to premature biological aging. Increased exposures to stressors during sensitive periods in development impact your future birth outcomes and that of your unborn children,” Horsley added.

The 75-minute dis-

ussion concluded with a detailed question and answer period, where faculty, students, staff, and members of the community continued the discussion and explored next steps. The program can be viewed online at watch.psu.edu/crossing-bridges.

The campus followed up the event on Saturday, Oct. 17 at 10 a.m. with a unity talk where campus and community members gathered virtually to discuss the panelists’ perspectives and to identify actionable items.

For more information on the next three installments of the campus’ Crossing Bridges Summit, including the Saturday Unity Talks, visit greaterallegHENY.psu.edu/cbsummit.



FROM WVU...

Roberts named campus registrar

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After a summertime search, the Greater Allegheny campus welcomed Charles “Chip” Roberts as the campus’ new registrar.

His first day on campus was Sept. 22 at the meet and greet held outside on the patio of the Student Community Center. His office is on the first floor of Frable, Room 114.

Originally from Philadelphia, Roberts has experience in higher education, having spent the last four years as an associate registrar at



West Virginia University. Roberts will now fulfill the next step in his career, starting the fall semester during the changeover to remote learning.

“It’s very strange,” Roberts said, “but it’s a time for opportunity, too.”

Roberts admits that the transition to virtual learning is something he will have to get used to as

he completes his training in the next few weeks, but he is “enjoying the process.”

Roberts said he mostly looks forward to being a part of the Greater Allegheny community.

Students scheduling fall classes or asking course questions this summer spoke to a woman serving another campus of Penn State. Rachel Zughaib is the registrar at Beaver. She was in an interim registrar role at Greater Allegheny while the search for Roberts was underway.

Zughaib helped students remotely to make

schedules and help them “feel confident in navigating their options” for the fall semester.



Rachel Zughaib. Photo courtesy of Penn State Beaver

“The only drawback was not getting to meet students face-to-face. That’s something I really enjoy about my job,” Zughaib said.

...TO PERU AND PITTSBURGH

Chueca joins admissions team

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People come to Pittsburgh for many reasons. Add Penn State Greater Allegheny’s (PSUGA) new Admissions and Financial Aid Counselor, Carlos Chueca, to that group.

“I am a firm believer in the education system, particularly the state education system” Chueca said. His goal at Greater Allegheny is to provide support and resources for

all students, no matter their background or financial situation.

Chueca is originally from Peru, but spent most of his life in south Florida, moving there when he was just 10 years old.

He comes to Greater Allegheny after working two years as an admissions counselor at Nova Southeastern University in Florida, where he also translated admissions materials into Spanish.

From here at Greater Allegheny, he is currently

working towards giving virtual presentations to schools in Puerto Rico.

Chueca hopes that over time students will reach out to him as a resource, as he is here to support and guide future PSUGA students along their path to academic success and beyond.

“I want to be able to help students that feel out of place or lost,” Chueca said.

Chueca is most excited to explore the Pittsburgh culture and to experience the change of seasons. He



also plans on pursuing his graduate degree from Penn State.

His email is cmc7698@psu.edu and his office is in the Admissions and Strategic Communications Suite, 123 Frable Building.

Photos courtesy of Zack Rosen, Strategic Planning and Communications

HECHT FINDS SYMBIOSIS WITH PARKS, NATURE, PEOPLE



Photo courtesy of Marijke Hecht

A new degree program and a new faculty member have arrived at Penn State Greater Allegheny. Marijke Hecht is the new assistant professor in the just-launched Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management (RPTM) degree program. Hecht is eager to teach students the im-

portance of their environment and how leisure and recreation relate to personal health and wellness.

“I want people to come out with a better appreciation on what is the role of parks as a public place, what is the role of recreation and leisure, and supporting our overall health that include mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and community health,” Hecht said.

She would like to guide students who love the outdoors, engaging with young people, sports and recreations to find a successful career in RPTM. In launching the degree program this fall, Hecht is teaching Leisure and Human Behavior (RPTM 120), a course

designed to give students insight on how humans can benefit from recreational areas and leisure activities.

“Our careers are a part of our identity and we want to ideally match our careers with what we are passionate about,” Hecht said.

According to Penn State’s bulletin of degree programs, RPTM is designed to “provide students a fundamental skill set that will prepare them to manage and or organize businesses that provide recreation and leisure services.”

Hecht comes to Greater Allegheny from the University of Pittsburgh where she earned her doctorate in

learning sciences.

Before joining academia, Hecht worked for 14 years in the Pittsburgh parks system, advocating for the Nine Mile Run ecosystem restoration and managing the design and construction of the Frick Environmental Center.

As director of education for the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, she led the organization’s efforts to expand and diversify community involvement in the city parks through environmental and educational programs.

Hecht’s office is in Frable 201C

Madason Porter-Gibson (mnp5208@psu.edu) also contributed to this story.

SGA MEETING BRIEF

Keeping students engaged in learning this semester is a key component of academic success and the Student Government Association (SGA) is taking up the charge to help students in remote learning. How to make that happen was a major topic of conversation at the last SGA meeting on Oct. 8.

According to Sophomore Science Major and SGA President, Joe Froetschel, many students fail to stay present or

active during class, so those present brainstormed ideas on how to change that.

One suggestion: that professors give points for students participating with their cameras turned on.

Froetschel encouraged students to turn on their cameras when attending their classes.

“As long as there’s an incentive, people will be more awake and participate more” he said.

Several students shared their experiences, suggesting how easy it is to attend a class through ZOOM without being fully present. They added that it makes it harder for teachers, as there is a lack of visual communication.

The next SGA meeting is scheduled through ZOOM for Thursday, Oct. 29, during Common Hour.

Meetings are open to the entire campus community.



Join at:

psu.zoom.us/j/98626689870

THE "KIDS" ON CAMPUS

Goats of PSUGA ready for their senior year

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This past August, while students were busy moving in on campus and preparing for the fall semester, the goats of Greater Allegheny were already hard at work for the third straight year.

The goats are contracted to the campus from Allegheny Goatscape, a nonprofit organization that rents out goat herds—along with a donkey that protects the goats from dangerous wildlife—“to improve community ecology by clearing overgrown land.”

According to Adam Homer, manager of the campus’ physical plant, “Greater Allegheny’s goal in bringing the goats to campus is to clear



Allegheny Goatscape "employees" hard at work clearing campus vegetation.

out the vegetation that’s dying and to stop the overgrowth of the woods. Using the goats is a very cost-effective, environmentally friendly way to doing ground clearing.”

In 2018, Homer noticed that the woods on campus were overgrown, attacking the surrounding green space. He

contacted Allegheny Goatscape and within the span of just two summers, “Team Hobo” and “Team Sunshine” were able to clear the entire spaces.

Then again this year, the goats returned to be able to attack a wide area of land behind the red and brown parking lots. The goats are able to manage

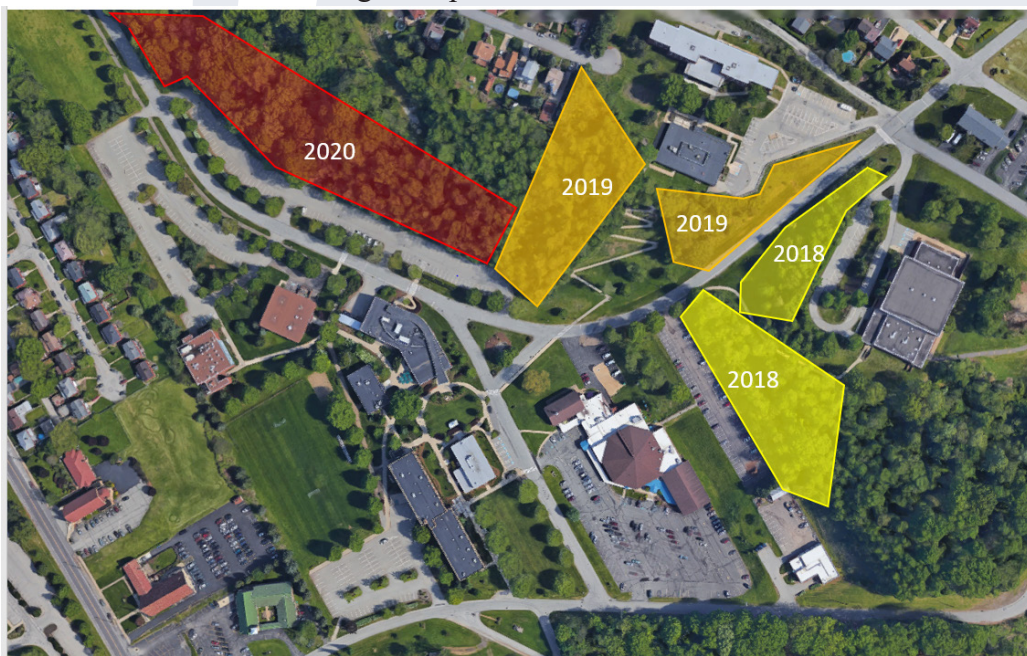
steep hills and grassy slopes, more than any human or machinery could.

The goats have been at other college campuses in the Pittsburgh area, in addition to other private and public places like Frick Park and the Greater Allegheny Passage Trail. They are placed on campus in the late spring and usually work until October, where they are eventually relocated to different barns in the area for the winter.

Come spring, Homer said the goats will return—“no kidding.”

Campus map shows goats progress clearing brush in past three years.

Image courtesy of Adam Homer





48 YEARS OF THON

Dance-a-thon to go virtual in 2021

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The floor of the Penn State University Park's Bryce Jordan Center will be very quiet the weekend of Feb. 19-21, 2021. There will be at least 1,400 dancing feet missing for the first time in the 48-year history of the University's most recognized event.

That's because Penn State's 2021 IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon—known as THON-- is being held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. How this will occur is uncertain, and the event is still in the planning stages, but a theme has been established: "Rise and Unify."

Organizers of the

world's largest student-run philanthropy decided to move the 46-hour dance-a-thon to a virtual platform "in an effort to promote the safety of students, volunteers, supporters, and families during the pandemic."

With many of the organization's signature fundraising efforts leading up to THON also being held virtually, the THON Executive Committee at University Park said, in a news release, that it "is working to continue to provide the best experience...while guaranteeing participants' safety and adhering to CDC guidelines."

Each year, Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) student volunteers raise thousands of dollars to support pedi-



2020 THON total. Photo courtesy of THON Facebook.

atric cancer funding and research via THON.

Since its inception, THON has raised over \$180 million through its network of more than 16-thousand student volunteers and partners.

Students at PSUGA can become involved with THON by writing to campus THON Co-Chair and Social Media Direc-

tor, Riley McCallister, at rsm5515@psu.edu.



The writer at a previous THON event.

GREATER READS RETURNS WITH JOHN LEWIS' MARCH

ALISHA TARVER

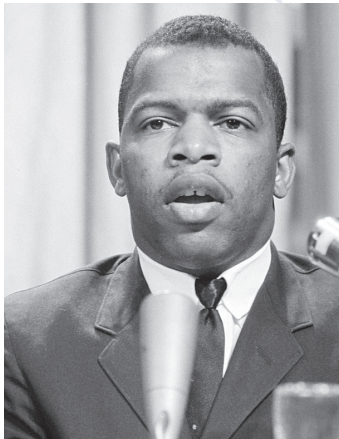
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Penn State Greater Allegheny's Greater Reads program debuts its fourth year with late Georgia Congressman John Lewis' novel *March*, the first book in a three-part graphic novel series, about his beginnings as a young civil rights activist growing up in the South.

Greater Reads was brought to Greater Allegheny by Chancellor Dr. Jaqueline Edmondson, after co-chairing the program at University Park. She stated that the Greater Reads program common book provides a mutual starting point for students to meet on.

"The goal of the common book really is that every student who's new to the campus has something in common because they're coming from all over the world, and all



John Lewis in 1964



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different parts of the state and country. So, if they all read the same book, they at least have that one thing in common when they get here," Edmondson said.

"I hope they will consider different points of view, different perspectives, and different ways of thinking about the world than maybe they already have so their consciousness can be raised, and they can engage in education in some thoughtful ways," she added.

"I thought it was really good...it depicts his real story without adding anything or subtracting

anything from it. I liked how it shifted from today and the past," said Bobur Rakhmatullaev, a psychology major who is a new freshman to campus. He read the book in preparation for his English 15 course.

"I believe that this book was written to introduce John Lewis to a younger generation of Americans," said Associate Teaching Professor of African American Studies and Co-Director of the Stewart and Jones Scholar Leadership Program, Dr. Anthony Mitchell.

"Since I teach courses on civil rights history, I am very familiar with his

life and legacy.

"Nonetheless, I enjoyed his recounting of his early family life, experiences on the farm, and the story about preaching sermons to chickens," he added.

The common book is chosen by a committee of volunteers made up of students, staff and faculty, led by Assistant Chief Academic Officer and Teaching Professor of English, Dr. James Jaap. The intent of the book is that it can be incorporated into class curriculum, and campus life.

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Jaap is currently teaching the common book in his English 15 and First-Year Seminar courses.

“I want my students to know history and this is a part of history,” Jaap said.

“I want my students to understand the systemic racism that is built

into our system. I want them to understand and see that, but how there is hope and opportunity. I want them to be advocates for themselves.

“I want my students to be strong and I think that book shows John Lewis standing up being strong and doing something he believes in. Whatever that

might be, that’s what I want my students to get, to be like. That’s aspirational, I think,” he added.

The book was proposed before Lewis’ death, and before the recent wave of Black Lives Matters protests that have occurred across the country. The book’s timeliness is coincidental, but appro-

priate because of today’s social movements.

The committee is currently preparing for next year.

Any members of the Greater Allegheny community who would like to be a part of the planning committee should contact Jaap, at jaj15@psu.edu.

CAMPUS NEWSPAPER CAPTURES "GOLD" IN REGIONAL JOURNALISM COMPETITION



Senior Communications Major, Troy Ferguson, is shown with his Golden Quill Award from the Press Club of Western Pennsylvania, following a Sept. 3 virtual ceremony in Pittsburgh for the 55th Annual Golden Quill Awards.

Ferguson was recognized in the student division for his column, “Self-Care, We Care,” a call to young adult men to not be afraid to reach out and seek mental health support services.

This was the first time Greater Allegheny’s newspaper, *The GA-Zette*, had entered a student journalism competition. It competed with more than a dozen other colleges and universities in a 27-county area of western Pennsylvania.

“I hope that this piece helps rid the stigma of mental illness,” Ferguson said of his award-winning column.

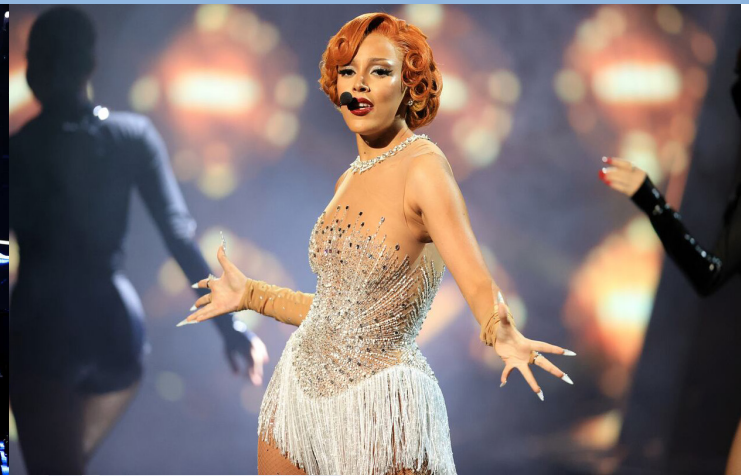
“I loved writing about this topic because this is something very near and dear to my heart. I hope that anyone who reads it knows that they’re not alone and there are resources and help to get if you’re struggling,” he said.

Senior IST Major, Katarina Shields, was also recognized for her technical support in the layout of the article.

Another communications major, Riley Perciavalle, was nominated for his work in writing about the meshing of the seasons in a column entitled, “My Holiday Apocalypse.”

The GA-Zette just virtually celebrated its first anniversary with a rebranded look and digital platform re-launch.





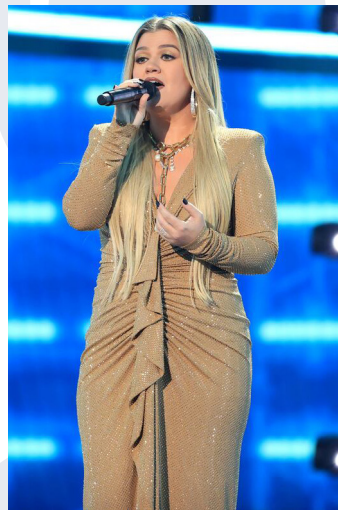
BILLBOARD SHOW GOES ON AMID PANDEMIC

TROY FERGUSON
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After six months on hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, *The 2020 Billboard Music Awards* finally kicked off live from the Dolby Theater in Los Angeles on Oct. 14.

This year's awards show was different than years prior because no one was in the theater audience, but millions tuned in to the live NBC broadcast.

The always effervescent *American Idol* alum, Kelly Clarkson, was back for her third year as host. I do have to say it was strange not hearing



a crowd reaction, but we must do what we can do to stay safe.

The big winner of the night was Post Malone. He took home nine awards, including Top Artist, Top Male Artist, Top Rap Tour, and Top 100 Artist.

Another artist who had a great night was Billie Eilish as Top New Artist.

The Jonas Brothers won three awards, including Top Duo/Group.

Another big award was given to hip-hop star Killer Mike, as the inaugural Change Maker Award for his social justice advocacy work.

Garth Brooks was a big winner again, as he accepted the Billboard Icon Award. Brooks also performed a medley of his greatest hits.

On top of all the awards, there were quite a few showstopping performances. Doja Cat's performance was spectacular. It was as if she was portraying Roxie Hart from the Broadway musical, *Chicago*. She performed a medley of all her famous songs.



Her costume and her choreography were very captivating.

Another pop star with a very moving performance was Demi Lovato, who debuted her new song titled, "Commander in Chief." It emphasized the importance of using your voice in the 2020 election.

Music and art are really the best medicines for the very hard times that we are all going through. Nights like this really distract you from all the chaos in the world.



Photo credit Chris Polk, NBC Universal

OPINIONS... FROM WHERE WE SIT

THE PAIN IS REAL

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The stories of Sarah “The Hotentot Venus” Baartman, and Megan The Stallion, a rapper whose legal name is Megan Pete, exemplify society’s apathy for the traumas of Black women. Baartman’s story of her life placed on displayed in traveling freak shows in the 1800s sets a precedent for how society views and treats black women. Baartman’s legacy provides some background on where these ideologies come from, and Pete’s story provides a modern-day example on how these ideologies are still present.

The University of Pittsburgh’s *Inequality Across Gender and Race Report* stated that Black maternal mortality rates in Pittsburgh are higher than 97% of other cities. Society has a disregard for Black bodies in general, but it’s frightening to think of the disregard for them in their most vulnerable moments. The precedent that Black women are deserving of mistreatment is present in everyday life, as well as in the medical industry, which often results in a lack of adequate medical care.



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The bodies of African American women are often oversexualized, sensationalized, and commodified. We are constantly treated as if we are disposable and are only here for society’s pleasure.

Baartman was brought to England from the village of Khoikhoi, located on the Eastern Cape of South Africa, after the murder of her husband by Dutch colonists. Baartman’s body was featured in freak shows in life and death beside animals due to her unusual skin coloring and abnormally large buttocks caused by steatopygia, a condition that causes excess fat around the hips and buttocks.

Baartman’s oppressors oversexualizing and ex-

ploiting her body created the narrative that these features deemed her ferine, and sexually insatiable. Baartman’s portrayal in these freak shows was so popular it created the collective idea that Black women were deserving of mistreatment and abuse.

Pete is known for her rap lyrics and motivational platform that promotes confidence, female sexuality, and empowerment in women. She has often been criticized for this, I believe, because we live in a patriarchal society that frowns upon women embracing their sexuality in other ways besides to please men or to entertain.

Pete recently had an encounter with gun violence where she later

revealed that Rapper Tory Lanez, legal name Daystar Peterson, allegedly shot her. Pete was accused of lying by her peers, critics, and other celebrities. In order to disprove allegations that she lied about being shot, she went as far as posting her injuries to social media and hosting an Instagram live session where she stated how she felt mistreated by the police who responded to the incident. She explained that was why she remained silent on what happened.

Baartman’s suffering was also denied by the men who oppressed her and her audiences. She was allegedly coerced into signing a contract that stated she wasn’t being abused after the way she was being treated came into question. Baartman had to die for society to recognize the mistreatment she went through, and this still took some time.

I wonder if we as spectators to Pete’s art and life would have spoken differently about her trauma if Peterson would have killed her. Why do black women have to die for their pain to be real or at least acknowledged?

TRUMP'S VOLATILE YEARS: Taxes, COVID Death Toll, Recession, Re-Election

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Prior to taking office in 2017, Donald J. Trump was a prolific businessman, a cunning one in fact. When the country made the discovery that President Donald J. Trump paid no taxes in the last 10 of 15 years, with the exception of the \$1,500 he paid between 2016 and 2017--and managed to keep this fact hidden for the entirety of his first term--the country learned just how cunning he was.

I wouldn't understand why an ordinary person would have to pay more taxes for the fender on the front of his car than a billionaire would for his precious golf courses, compound hotel-casino and hairdresser put together either. But I estimate that the nation is under fire most likely because our current president lost more money than he made and the legitimacy of his wealth is quite questionable.

This tax news came recently but much late in the middle of a pandemic that already claimed nearly 210,000 lives and created one of the greatest economic recessions in American history, in



an election year which Trump is in for reelection. As everybody knows well by now, the president saw the pandemic coming and deliberately downplayed its severity not wanting, as he claimed, to create a scare.

Since the virus hit, Trump's proposed solutions for the disease--prophylactic pills and convalescent plasma--were not only surprisingly cheap but yielded dubious chances of effectiveness. This paints an ironic picture of someone who would attempt to do away with the Affordable Health Care at a time when it is needed the most, while a plan for an alternative is still quite tied up in the White House.

It is just so obvious the President has no plan, as former Vice President and Democratic Presidential nominee, Joe Biden, said.

Before the virus hit, Trump knew he was in over his head. A vaccine can be variably expensive, and he might have been worried that everybody would learn of his income taxes before the IRS had finished auditing him, notwithstanding being his excuse for not revealing them in the first place. Trump knew his income taxes had been at the center of many federal investigations concerning his campaign since before the advent of his presidency.

Indeed, not paying taxes is never legal or clever and if you have had a habit of it, you will only

have to face the disadvantages of it if you are not smart enough to find ways to defer them. If anyone knew what Trump was up to for the past decades, it would have certainly tarnished his edge for a second term. With reelection looming over his head, Trump kept almost completely silent, thereby allowing millions of Americans to suffer and be killed by the virus, allowing businesses to close down, watching schools and colleges to operate online, all while families struggle with more than they bargained for.

Trump appropriated it that by downplaying the virus, he could keep his taxes hidden until the next election. Now the
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president, his aides and a few GOP senators have recklessly infected themselves with COVID-19 and have been hospitalized. But we do not want him incapacitated. We just want him out of office.

And it turns out that was not enough to open his eyes to the severity of the crisis the nation is in. After spending just two days at the hospital, Trump was seen taking a Sunday expedition around Bethesda in an SUV full of passengers he is placing at risk of infection just so he could take yet another photo op like that one he took in front of the St. John Episcopal Church while he brandished a bible. A confirmed case

of COVID several weeks ago and he does a photo op. Now there is a man who does not learn. Trump did not cause the virus, but he certainly could not protect America from it.

I am not excusing our president; I am explaining how he is wrong for America, financially. Everybody has learned too late that this president himself is in debt to god knows who from his years as a tax dodger and we are paying the price for it. He cannot afford a plan, he could not this year, he certainly will not next year, should he be reelected.

Shannon M. Reid is a Spring 2020 English graduate of Penn State Greater Allegheny

ATTENTION ARTISTS!



... And photographers too! **THE GA-ZETTE** wants to showcase your talent! We are seeking student artists and photographers to add to our team. Your skills can help to improve Greater Allegheny's campus newspaper while adding to your personal portfolio.

Those interested should contact **THE GA-ZETTE** at ga-zette@PennStateOffice365.onmicrosoft.com or Professor Rosemary Martinelli at rum31@psu.edu.

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***To Our Readers:** The GA-Zette welcome your letters, poems and guest opinion columns. All submissions are subject to editing and may appear in both our print and digital editions. Submission does not guarantee publication. To be considered, please include e-mail and phone number for verification.*

Send to:

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A DAY TO RECOGNIZE EVERY DAY

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Oct. 10 marked World Mental Health Day.

World Mental Health Day was first recognized in 1992, initiated by The World Federation for Mental Health.

This day is to bring awareness to rid the stigma of mental illness. Special days like this should always be noticed not just one day a year, but every single day. Days like this give a voice to everyone who is struggling.

What is so fantastic about this day is that individuals who are struggling are reassured they're not alone. Thanks to social media, people



Image courtesy of Creative Commons, License CCo 1.0 University Public Domain

post on their Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts their experiences with mental illness. It brings everyone together.

Not only does this day bring everyone together, there are many resources advertised online. You can always find someone to talk to even if you feel alone. On many social media outlets, mental health organizations advertise resources to get help if you're struggling.

Greater Allegheny students have a friend close at hand on campus by reaching out to Ann McCurdy, our campus mental health and wellness counselor, at amm8809@psu.edu for more information and confidential help and resources.

It is easy to feel anxious during these very uncertain times. The most important thing to keep telling yourself is that you're not alone. No one has ever experienced a pandemic or a lock down like this before. It is so important to talk about this because some people who have never experienced a mental illness may be experiencing some symptoms.

I think it is very important to do things for yourself, also known as self-care. I am going to celebrate this day by doing something that brings me joy, such as listening to one of my favorite albums, *Born This Way*, by Lady Gaga. There are many things you can do such as reading a book, watching your favorite movie, and journaling.

Doing things like this distracts your mind from all the uncertainty in the world.

I hope everyone at Penn State Greater Allegheny is taking care of themselves. There is always someone to listen to you.

Please stay strong.

GO PINK THIS OCTOBER

Every October, the world turns "pink" for National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness of the disease and to raise funds for research into its cause, diagnosis, prevention, treatment, and cure.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in American women, except for skin cancers. The American Cancer Society estimates that one in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.

Early diagnosis of breast cancer is key. At a time in this pandemic year when people are hesitant in going to the doctor's office for fear of COVID-19, the American Cancer Society and other organizations are mounting extended community campaigns to remind women to continue their annual mammogram screenings and to not be afraid to go to the doctor—a yearly mammogram is key to early detection and cure.

A variety of fundraising events around the world are organized in October, but the third week in October has now been targeted as "Male Breast Cancer Awareness Week."

While rare—roughly 2600 new cases of male breast cancer will be diagnosed each year and a man's lifetime risk for getting breast cancer is 1 in 833--the American Cancer Society encourages the ongoing education of women—and men.

For more information on breast cancer detection and early interventions, visit the American Cancer Society's breast cancer awareness site at cancer.org/cancer/breast-cancer



90 SECONDS UNDER THE BLUE UMBRELLA

TIMELY TOPICS FROM AROUND CAMPUS

NATHAN REGA | News Editor | nrr5191@psu.edu

“We’ve just come off of midterms with grades for academic performance. As we are near the end of Donald Trump’s first 4-year term as President, what grade would you assign his performance and why?”



Dylan Bradshaw, *Freshman, IST Major*

I’d probably give him like a C at most. He’s done good but he’s also done horrible. But I still don’t agree with him as president still.

Nicole Covelli, *Accounting Major*

I don’t know. I think some of the things he’s done are really, really great, but he needs to think better about what he’s going to say before he says it. I can’t say I’d give him a grade, but I stand behind him. He’s passed. Give him a pass. He’s not a fail.



Severn Squibb, *Junior, Business Major*

I’d say like a B or a C maybe. He had record low unemployment. He created one of the greatest economies that the world has ever seen. He donated money to historically black colleges. He created prison reforms. There’s at least three more reasons but that’s about all I got right now.

Ke’ira Williams, *Senior, Biobehavioral Health Major*

F, in my opinion, because I don’t feel like he really knew a lot coming into office. Also I feel like a president should be good for all people, not just one. Not really caring for low-class is a big thing for me. I’m middle-class but still, I feel like you should care about the bottom because how are we all going to get to the top if you’re just worried about the top people? I don’t like the certain things he said about people with mental disabilities, making jokes about them. Also, I don’t know if the media is reliable on this, but from what I’ve seen about him saying things about the gay community, I don’t like any of that either.



Zack Furness, *Associate Professor, Communications*

Unquestionably an F. By his own standards of what he said he was going to do, I think he’s been an abject failure. The government is more filled than ever with cronies, with corruption, with people running things in a shady way where there’s a lack of transparency, which is what he said he was going to get rid of. But then outside of his own prognosis, I think by any objective standards, the way that he has handled the COVID pandemic has been disastrous for the country. His rhetoric is sometimes described as divisive. I would describe it as

incendiary and extraordinarily painful and very damaging to the direction of the country and the tenor of conversations that people have about politics and culture. It’s caused an enormous amount of existing political and social tensions to be amplified in the worst kinds of ways. And as an individual and as a person, I find him to be loathsome. So yes, F. F minus if I could.

SPORTS AND ATHLETICS

PRACTICES CONTINUE DESPITE CANCELLED SEASON

**ZACHARY
SCHMADER**

Contributing Writer

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Although no sporting events will take place at Greater Allegheny this fall due to COVID-19, modified athletic practices and training are currently taking place in a limited capacity.

“I want to make sure we do all we can to protect the staff, coaches and players,” Director of Athletics, Korie Morton-Rozier, reports. “The safety of our student athletes is my main concern.”



Photo courtesy of
Korie Morton-Rozier

Morton-Rozier added that all teams are practicing while following the COVID-19 pre-participation protocol policies put in place by the University which includes: asking health screening questions, taking temperatures upon arrival, limiting



Penn State Greater Allegheny's Women's Volleyball Team

practices to no more than 10 participants at a time, and wearing a mask during practice.

Moving all the sports to the spring may make it more difficult to play multiple sports although not necessarily impossible with good time management. The biggest adjustment will be for fall sports like soccer, volleyball and golf.

Sports recruitment will continue and the campus is always looking for golf and track athletes.

When asked if players have been lost due to the changes, Morton-Rozier reports both yes and no. “Some athletes have decided to stay home and go remote and some recruits

changed their first semester to the spring.”

“I think the coaches did an amazing job recruiting new student athletes and retaining the ones that were here last year,” Morton-Rozier said. “This is a very difficult time and our coaches truly care about their athletes and want to see them succeed in the classroom and in

their sport. We have some of the most dedicated, knowledgeable, and hard-working coaches in the conference.”

Penn State has announced that it will advocate on behalf of waiver opportunities to extend eligibility for athletes who have lost their season.

Photos courtesy of PSUGA Athletics on Twitter
[@PSUGAATHLETICS](https://twitter.com/PSUGAATHLETICS)



UNDEFEATED STEELERS CRUSH BROWNS, 38-7



NATHAN REGA

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For the first time since 1978, the Pittsburgh Steelers remain undefeated at 5-0.

The team ended the visiting Cleveland Browns four-game winning streak with a blowout 38-7 victory on

Sunday, Oct. 18, going 5-0 in the process.

The Steelers took the lead early in the first quarter. After an opening drive field goal by the offense, Pittsburgh safety, Minkah Fitzpatrick, returned a Cleveland quarterback Baker Mayfield interception for the first touchdown of the game.

Things only got worse for the Browns in the second quarter with running back James Conner scoring another Pittsburgh touchdown and Mayfield throwing his second interception to Pittsburgh cornerback,

Cameron Sutton. Sutton's recovery set the Steelers up for their third touchdown: a deep pass by veteran quarterback Ben Roethlisberger to James Washington for 28-yards.

Cleveland finally scored at the end of the first half with a 13-yard touchdown to Rashard Higgin, but the Browns didn't see the endzone for the remainder of the game.

The Steelers defense continued to dominate in the second half. The offense scored two more touchdowns before the end of the game thanks

to rookie receiver Chase Claypool and running back, Benny Snell.

The Pittsburgh victory places the team on top of the AFC North Division.

The Steelers record will be put to the test as they face a three-week stretch on the road, starting with the rescheduled game against another undefeated team, the 5-0 Tennessee Titans.

Originally slated to compete in Week 4, the game was postponed after several Tennessee players and staff tested positive for COVID-19.

OPINION: DEAD PERIOD NEEDS TO END

ZACHARY SCHMADER

Contributing Writer

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College football recruitment all around the country has been shut down. Restrictions have been placed on organized visits to schools as well as face-to-face contact between potential players, families and coaches known as the Dead Period.

The Dead Period has always existed, but in several short periods throughout the year. This year, COVID-19 has forced an extension of the Dead Period from March 2020 to the proposed minimum January 2021,



which is making recruitment difficult for coaches and players.

With the Dead Period extended, high school football players can't have organized visits with the coaches and current players. This makes it very tough to make a college commitment decision.

The world has adapted to the virus with masks and social distancing, so should the NCAA. If colleges can have 40,000 students on campus why can't 15 recruits visit on a weekend?

Without official visits before players commit, college football will be a complete mess. We will see many decommitments and unhappy players with their landing spot. Also, the coaches could be getting a player that doesn't fit into their program.

So many teams will take kids' commitments without seeing them play in person. High school film can only tell coaches so much.

They need to open college camps. Taking official college visits and meeting face-to-face with coaches and players is a crucial part of the decision process for high school football recruits. Having the experience on campus and meeting coaches builds relationships while giving real experiences to recruits.

This is completely ridiculous and the NCAA needs to get it together! Florida State had 18,000 fans in its stadium last month.

It's time to end the Dead Period!

IMPORTANT VOTING INFO.. JUST IN CASE

The following message was compiled from University mass emails

Recently, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled in favor of extending the deadline for mail-in voting in Pennsylvania.

Completed mail-in ballots that are postmarked by 8pm on Election Day, Nov. 3, will be accepted provided they are received by the election office no later than 5 p.m. on Nov. 6.

Additionally, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that **mail-in**

ballots must be submitted in the security envelope provided with the ballot. Ballots received without the security envelope will not be accepted.

Voting in local, state and national elections is one of the most important duties of an engaged citizen. Penn State supports participation in local, state, and national elections and aims to support members of our community by sharing messages, such as this, with infor-



PennState

Voting in Pennsylvania?



Scan or visit:
www.pavoterservices.pa.gov
 "Voter Registration - NEW!"
 "Mail-in Ballot Application"
 Check registration and application status

YOUR VOTE.

mation and key resources.

Traditional college aged voters account for almost one-third of the eligible voting population.

That knowledge, combined with the University's obligation under the 1998 re-authorization of the Higher Education Act that requires colleges and universities to make voter registration forms available to students prior to general and special elections, makes our respon-

sibility to inform students even more important.

Comprehensive information on voting may be found at psuvotes.psu.edu also available via the Penn State Go app.

PA election websites:
www.pavoterservices.pa.gov
www.votespa.com

Vote411:
www.vote411.org

YOUR VOICE.



Scan or visit:
www.vote411.org
 to find information on registration, registration status, critical deadlines for each state, voter guides, and more.

Voting outside Pennsylvania?



KEY DATES 2020

10/19 Last day to Register to vote

10/27 Last day to request mail in ballot

Must be received by county elections office by 5 p.m. Postmarks do not count.

11/03 Election Day

Must be received by county elections office by 8 p.m. Postmarks do not count

Additional information and resources available at:
pavoterservices.pa.gov