



The GA-ZETTE

HOLIDAY 2020

The Campus Newspaper for Penn State Greater Allegheny

VOLUME 4



**2020:
Being Greater Together**
Page 2

Spring Semester to Start Remotely Page 5
Donuts & Vitamins in a Pandemic Page 6
The Crossing Bridges Summit Page 8
Opinions... From Where We Sit Page 14
Culture, Arts & Entertainment Page 18
Sports & Athletics Page 25

Happy Holidays!

TO: THE PENN STATE GREATER ALLEGHENY COMMUNITY

Welcome, the end of 2020. Are you as tired of this year as we are? Come on. We know you are. Just say so. The COVID-19 pandemic has taken away a portion of our lives this year and we can't get it back. It has been all encompassing in our lives since March. No matter where we go or who we speak to, it is always with us. From our own mixed modality classes to the little blank boxes on our ZOOM screens to where we live and to wherever we drive or shop, it has been there.

Hard to forget it when it was always in our face...or perhaps always in our "face" masks.

But we want to forget it, even though we have covered it extensively in the pages that are about to follow. Have we learned anything this year?

What has this year taught us, in between the frustration of rearranging our lives and the anger that we may have faced when friends and relatives came down with the virus or perhaps when someone close to us died from the virus?

It has taught us to instead look ahead and find the light of hope that we all so desperately need:

The hope of a new vaccine that will soon eradicate this virus...

The hope of the normalcy we all long for...

The hope of a renewed American democracy...

The hope for new leadership with a new president and vice president...

The hope for a new decade, free from racial and social inequality...

The hope that we find our old friend common sense is really alive and well somewhere and returning...

The hope we can return to our beloved Greater Allegheny campus, to walk down the sidewalk along University Drive and to meet our friends in the SCC over a slice of pizza and a cold soft drink... without masks.

Here's hoping that you and your families take care, stay safe and be well for the holidays and the new year.

As author and educator Parker Palmer wrote: "We must be willing to let go of the life we planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us."

Be well with change everyone, and focus on new hope for the new year.

THE GA-ZETTE, the official campus newspaper of Penn State Greater Allegheny, is published by students for students, faculty and staff of the campus.

The paper is also available via a digital platform at sites.psu.edu/gazette.

Address: 4000 University Drive, McKeesport, PA 15132

Phone: 412-675-9025

News Editor / Production Manager:

Nathan Rega, COMM

Culture / Arts / Entertainment Editor:

Troy Ferguson, COMM

Photography:

Katarina Shields, IST

Guest Columnist:

Shannon M. Reid, ENGL '20

Staff Writers:

Cheyenne Hennen, ISS

James Plez, COMM

Madason Porter-Gibson, COMM

Alisha Tarver, COMM

Contributing Writers:

Austin Mossellem, COMM

Riley Perciavalle, COMM

Aniya Robins, COMM

Graham Thompson, COMM

Production Support:

Nicholas Smerker, Media Commons

Administrative Support:

Hilary Homer

Faculty Advisor:

Rosemary Martinelli

*The thoughts and comments of **The GA-Zette** are those of the individual writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the administration and management of Penn State Greater Allegheny or The Pennsylvania State University, at-large. Editorial decisions rest with the staff and management of **The GA-Zette**.*



PSUGA PROFESSORS OVERWHELMED THROUGH COVID-19

JAMES PLEZ

Staff Writer

jzp5847@psu.edu

As the fall semester ends, professors at Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) describe their experiences with teaching in-person and/or virtual classrooms and working from home during COVID-19.

For some, working from home has been both beneficial and unfavorable. Division of Undergraduate Studies Coordinator and Manager of Academic Advising and Career Services, Dr. Erica Tachoir, states that working from home has its pros and cons, but the cons outweigh the pros.

“The pros are that I have been able to find a lot more time for personal balance – working out, doctor appointments, family time because I no longer have the commute or the evening event commitments that I had when I was working on campus.” Tachoir said.

“It is very hard to establish and maintain a connection to the students just through a screen. The success of our work in advising and career services is based on personal connection and being able to be where the students are at all times.” she added.

Because students are



The Fitness Center was utilized as a classroom throughout the semester to accommodate social distancing. Photo courtesy of Megan Nagel, Associate Professor of Chemistry.

on campus, local and out-of-state, Tachoir has difficulty trying to handle students and their needs. “Emails are also hard as there are so many messages – no one really knows what is ‘important’ anymore,” she said.

Associate Professor of Communications, Dr. Michael Vicaro, echoed some of Tachoir’s comments.

Vicaro, who teaches in-person classes, states teaching during COVID-19 has handed him challenges as he deals with reduced class sizes, little to no student interaction, and remote office hour meetings.

“This semester is nobody’s ideal– it is stressful and challenging and I’m also part-time homeschooling my own elementary-aged children, but we are all making the best of the situation and

getting through it together,” Vicaro added.

History Lecturer of U.S and African American Studies, Dr. Johnathan White, also admits teaching through the pandemic is challenging.

“I have to be innovative to keep students engaged. For instance, I created a podcast for my Living While Black class. It’s sometimes difficult to know if I’m really reaching students. It’s also harder to build a strong classroom culture online,” he said.

“I give them challenging material. I interact with them, so they know that I care. I encourage their intellectual growth. Finally, I offer compassion. Many students have lost family and friends during this pandemic. I have also, so I understand,” White added.

Adjunct Teaching

Professor of Spanish, Becky Klink, who is eight-months pregnant and teaches at several other universities, said she is struggling trying to keep up with her online and in-person classes.

Klink teaches a remote synchronous Spanish I course at Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC), where the course is four hours long.

“There’s a lot of extra work on my plate and I’ve been working twelve-hour days,” Klink said.

This semester, Klink’s students are struggling in her course.

“Generally, students seem to be struggling more with attendance, mental health and completing assignments. It seems that everyone has some extra weight on their plates these days and staring at a computer screen for hours on end is too much for all of us to handle. I think we all deserve more breaks!” she added.

Pregnant women face concerns because they are automatically “categorized as immuno-compromised,” Klink said, and she finds it “scary for me to be in the classroom because not everyone takes it seriously.”

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 3)

“My partner now works from home because there was an outbreak at the Allegheny County Courthouse where she works,” she said. “Her coworkers contracted the virus and one actually died after being on a ventilator for several weeks—

all of this because folks weren’t wearing masks in the courtroom.

“I always have that in the back of my mind when I see someone not wearing a mask properly,” Klink said. “I feel extra responsibility for myself, for my students, and most of all, for the new life that I’m carrying around.”

Klink said she had no hesitation telling students to wear their masks properly or to maintain their distance. “I’ve stopped class a few times to do just that. Like most though, I wish it’d all go away,” she said.

White has found spiritual support to get him through the semester.

“I’m teaching remotely so I’m pretty safe from COVID. Yet, there are days I want to go outside and move freely in society without restrictions. This season will pass though. I pray daily for the health and safety of my loved ones and for the Penn State community,” he said.

PA UNDER ADDITIONAL COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS THROUGH HOLIDAYS

NATHAN REGA

News Editor

nrr5191@psu.edu

Thursday, Dec. 10, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf announced additional, temporary COVID-19 restrictions on the state, effective Saturday, Dec. 12. These restrictions are set to expire Jan. 4.

“The problem we are facing is the virus has continued to rage in Pennsylvania over the past several weeks,” Wolf said in a virtual news conference. “It’s become clear that we need to take further mitigation actions to protect Pennsylvanians and stop the spread of COVID-19.”

Wolf claims that he hopes to accomplish three goals through these restrictions. “First, stop the devastating spread of COVID-19. Second, I want to keep our hospitals and our healthcare workers from becoming overwhelmed...the third thing

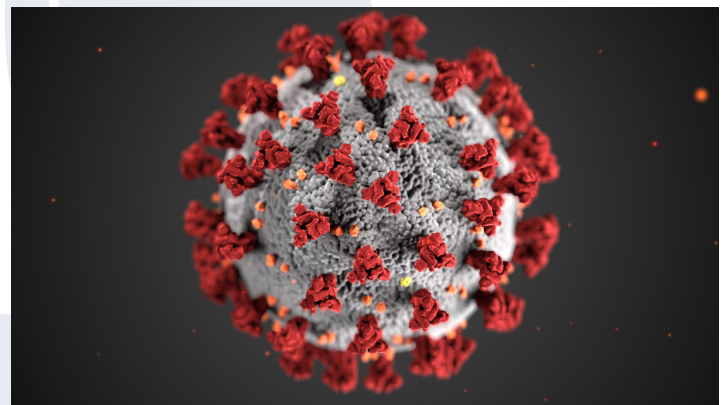
is to help Pennsylvanians get through the holiday season and closer to a widely-available vaccine.”

“In the past week, we have reported close to 1,100 new deaths from COVID-19 across Pennsylvania,” Secretary of Health, Dr. Rachel Levine said. “The virus continues to strain our health care systems and the dramatic rise in cases among all age groups, including among school-age children, is alarming.

“Since the start of the pandemic, there have been more than 37,500 cases among children age 5 to 18, yet 9,500 of those cases occurred in the past two weeks,” Levine added.

“This is so frustrating and so painful,” Wolf stated. “But we can get there and there is a light at the end of the tunnel.”

For additional information, visit www.governor.pa.gov.



“COVID-19” image provided by the United States Center for Disease Control

Limited-Time Mitigation Restrictions Include...

- Indoor dining at restaurants is prohibited.
- Indoor gatherings and events of more than 10 people are prohibited.
- Places of worship are encouraged to find alternative methods for worship.
- Outdoor gatherings and events of more than 50 people are prohibited.
- In-person businesses serving the public may only operate at up to 50% capacity.
- Gyms and fitness facilities are closed.
- K-12 sports are paused.
- Professional/collegiate sports activities may continue in accordance with guidance from the CDC and the Department of Health.
- Spectators may not attend professional/collegiate sports activities.

Source: Office of PA Governor Tom Wolf

SPRING 2021 TO START REMOTELY: Barron announces amid pandemic surge

NATHAN REGA

News Editor

nrr5191@psu.edu

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. – Dec. 18

Penn State (PSU) President Eric Barron today announced the University's decision to begin the Spring 2021 semester remotely across all campuses starting Jan. 19 due to current COVID-19 trends.

All PSU classes will be held virtually until Feb. 15, when classes will transition to their originally scheduled modalities.

"Given the worsening virus conditions nationally and across the state, and predictions of increased hospitalization rates in Pennsylvania in the coming weeks, we made this decision to best protect the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff," Barron stated via a mass email to the Penn State community today.

The decision was made by University leadership in consultation with Pennsylvania state health officials; faculty experts in epidemiology, infectious disease, medicine and public health; and the PSU Board of Trustees.

The decision is in alignment with health and safety recommendations for higher education insti-

tutions given by [Pennsylvania's departments of Health and Education](#).

Students are strongly discouraged from returning to campus during the four-week remote period, if possible. Off-campus students who must return to campus before Feb. 15 are required to be tested before their arrival.

PSU's COVID-19 detection and management measures for the spring will be shared early in the new year.

"Currently, Penn State is in the process of developing our pre-arrival plan for Spring 2021," stated Loraine Craven, Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) director of student services and engagement.

"Similar to what happened in the fall, students will be selected for pre-arrival testing, as well as other protocols and procedures that are being finalized by University Park that will be for all campuses," Craven said.

According to the University [press release](#), the plan will include: required testing for all students prior to arrival; post-arrival testing within the first two weeks of the semester; on-demand testing for students and on-campus employees;



*Snow falls on PSUGA's masked-up Nittany Lion.
Photo by Nathan Rega.*

random daily surveillance testing; strategic screening, data monitoring, contact tracing, and quarantine and isolation procedures.

Due to the late start for the upcoming semester, spring break has been eliminated but the University will institute three "wellness days" throughout the semester to give students, faculty and staff days off to break from regular classes.

With the end of finals week and the Fall 2020 semester, PSU is once again offering an alternative grading system for students to opt into after receiving their final letter grades. The decision was made largely due to student advocacy across the University in response to the ongoing hardships caused by the pandemic.

"[Students] took it to the University Faculty Senate and the Faculty

Senate supported it," PSUGA Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Edmondson, explained.

"They feel like these are extraordinary circumstances and they needed a little more flexibility in how their grades were being determined."

Students are strongly advised to consult with their advisor before deciding to use alternative grading to ensure they are making the best decision for their academic goals.

The Fall 2020 PSU Commencement will be held virtually on Dec. 19, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. EST. The event will be live streamed at: <https://fall2020.commencement.psu.edu/>



PennState
Greater Allegheny

LOCAL BUSINESS WEATHERS PANDEMIC

Garners loyal customer support amid challenges



**MADASON
PORTER-GIBSON**
Staff Writer

mnp5208@psu.edu

COVID-19 has caused massive unemployment and has forced some businesses to close their doors and some to shut down for good. That impact has been felt in the McKeesport area, where some are still surviving during the pandemic.

The Corner Donut Shop, owned by Shelly Demeri, just around the

“corner” from campus, is one such business. The recent state mitigation efforts now curtail her indoor dining as well.

“Being a new business owner, I was only open for a year-and-a-half, so when COVID-19 first hit trying to keep my business has been a lot of work and still is. It is still very tough for me, and sometimes I couldn’t even pay myself,” Demeri said.

In addition, she has had to rearrange her store and cut the number of

hours the shop is open, and she had no choice but to lay off some of her employees.

“When the pandemic first happened, the governor wanted us to close for two weeks, but I only closed for a week because I couldn’t afford to lose my business,” Demeri said. “The week that I had closed, I cleaned the entire store to ensure that my employee, customers and I would be safe. I even put up plexiglass in front of my counter. My customers and I were not in contact. I had to block off seating for a long time because we could only have takeout,” she added.

Demeri bought the business--formerly a Donut Connection that had closed its doors in 2016--in 2018, she renovated it and renamed it. She was not new to the business, as she worked at the Donut Connection as a young girl and later

became its store manager. She took on the challenge to bring back the community donut shop, renaming it and calling it her own. Then she was hit by the pandemic and she’s been fighting to maintain her business ever since.

“I had to cut my hours drastically. I was initially open from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., and now I’m only available from 6 a.m. to noon, Monday through Saturday. The baker and I were the only ones working at the time because I had to lay off some of my employees. I did bring back some of my part-time employees, but I can’t afford to have all of them back with my limited hours,” she said.

The Corner Donut Shop has also been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions on neighboring houses of worship. “I am no longer open on Sundays because the churches are not at full capacity,” she said. “So, I lost business. I didn’t even receive any of the small grants for business. That hurt me a lot because I am maintaining my business financially on my own,” she added.

Demeri also faced challenges because some customers were not compliant with masking rules
(Continued on next page)



(Continued from page 6)

and other people's safety for social distancing. She could lose her business if the health department finds out that customers are not wearing a mask.

"Some customers didn't want to wear a mask because they didn't believe in the pandemic. They think that it is all a hoax, and I have lost some customers because of that," she said. "One guy

came in to order donuts, and I told him that he needed a mask, and he said, 'well I'll just go to Dunkin Donuts.'"

The state and county have enacted regulations for operating a small business during the pandemic and Demeri must abide by them. "I get checkups from the health department to make sure everything is spaced appropriately, and people are wearing a mask. If I'm

not doing the right things, I can get shut down," she added.

Thanks to the use of social media and the support of her loyal customers, Demeri has been able to maintain her business and keep the doors open. She continues to make sure that her products are fresh every day, even during limited hours, to keep customers coming back for more.

"I have a really good

regular customer base, and I asked them to keep supporting me through the pandemic. I had an overwhelming response," Demeri said. "They shared all of my Facebook posts and continued to place orders. The community has helped me," she said.

Photos courtesy of The Corner Donut Shop on [Facebook](#).

IMMUNE SUPPORT POPULAR DURING COVID'S SECOND WAVE

ANIYA ROBINS

Contributing Writer

aar5544@psu.edu

Forget the toilet paper and paper towels. For staff at the Pleasant Hills Fresh Thyme Farmer's Market, customer traffic has increased this past month, but not everyone is buying paper goods. Vitamins and supplements to support a person's immune system have been popular sellers.

According to Delila Spahic, manager in the Natural Living (Vitamin and Body Care) section of the store, "Over these past few weeks, my employees and I have seen a lot of people coming in looking for things like Vitamin C, echinacea, and elderberry. Those types of supplements help protect and build the immune system," she said.



Photo courtesy of Fresh Thyme Farmer's Market.

While there is no specific medical research that confirms the use of supplements to combat disease, vitamins and other health supplements have been popular.

"With the current state of all the COVID cases, I don't blame customers trying to come in and get a head start protecting themselves. I think everyone is just trying to stay as healthy as they possibly can," Spahic said.

Echinacea is supposed to help fight infection, like the common cold.

Elderberry is typically used to boost one's immune system because it contains antioxidants and vitamins. It can also be used to tame inflammation, lessen stress, and protect the heart. Vitamin C acts as an antioxidant by protecting cells from damage.

"It is definitely helpful to take supplements like the ones I mentioned before. But it is still best to follow CDC guidelines to give further help to prevent sicknesses during this pandemic," she added.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) "COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths across the United States are rising." The CDC encourages the public to stay indoors as much as they can and keep wearing masks when they venture outside of their homes.

Social distancing, wearing a mask, and washing hands are very important when trying to stay healthy during the pandemic. Wear a mask with two or more layers. Keep at least six feet away from others. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

It is also helpful to keep hand sanitizer on your person, just in case you are unable to wash your hands.

THE CROSSING BRIDGES SUMMIT

PSUGA presents second 2020 virtual installment, examining black women's health

ALISHA TARVER

Staff Writer

ait5274@psu.edu

Penn State Greater Allegheny presented its second virtual installment of its campus signature community project--the Crossing Brides Summit's (CBS) speaker series--entitled "Socioeconomic and Environmental Perspectives on Black Women's Health" on Dec. 10.

The panelists included Dannai Wilson, program director for Maternal and Child Health, Allegheny County Health Department; Jim Kelly, deputy director, Bureau of Environmental Health, Allegheny County Health Department; Tammy

Thompson, poverty expert and executive director, Circles of Greater Pittsburgh; and Germaine Gooden Patterson, community health worker, Women for a Healthy Environment.

The Summit discussion was focused on the University of Pittsburgh report, [Pittsburgh's Inequality Across Gender and Race](#), and was led by Dr. Johnathan White, moderator and lecturer of history at Penn State Greater Allegheny.

After his formal introduction of the panelists, White began the 75-minute program by asking Wilson—who oversees several health department initiatives designed to

improve health, wellbeing, and eliminate racial disparities in mortality for women and infants—her analysis of the report.

"The same communities in the early 90s, late 80s are the same communities that are having these challenges in 2020, and the pandemic didn't change that, it only worsened those circumstances for those communities," Wilson said.

"I think we also need to understand that the report didn't highlight those things because it's important when you're doing this and you're releasing reports that you have to account for the historical injustices that happened, right? Because if you

don't, we tend to place the blame on the people instead of on the problem or the institutions or policies that created the problems, right?" Wilson said.

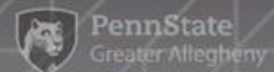
Thompson served as executive producer of "We Wear the Mask: The Hidden Face of Women In Poverty," a documentary released in 2017 which highlighted the stigma associated with women in poverty.

"You know, the longer people are exposed to the type of trauma that you must endure to survive in poverty, the longer people are in that space of not having their most basic needs met, the deeper the trauma and the pain and

(Continued on next page)



Clockwise from top left: Ms. Dannai Wilson, Ms. Germaine Gooden-Patterson, Dr. Johnathan White, Ms. Tammy Thompson and Mr. Jim Kelly.



Panelists, clockwise from top left to right: Dannai Wilson, Germaine Gooden-Patterson, Johnathan White (moderator), Tammy Thompson, Jim Kelly. Photo courtesy of PSUGA on Twitter [@PennStateGA](#).

(Continued from page 8)

the long-term agony that will impact their ability to see themselves in opportunity,” Thompson said.

Gooden-Patterson is a part of the nonprofit Women for a Healthy Environment which works to educate community members about the environmental risks they face.

“So, as it pertains to black women’s health, women start out as little girls, right? You know, they start out as little girls, so it starts when they’re young. It’s even before that, starts in utero. If you’re exposed to these pollutants on a daily basis, it’s going to affect your health, it’s going to affect the health of the child that you’re carrying,” Gooden-Patterson said.

Kelly advised on the health department’s environmental justice

initiatives, including a revision to the county’s civil penalty policy and training the department’s staff on equality issues and race equity.

“Now we’re revising with a completely different lens looking at it from environmental justice communities. So, what we can do is we can adjust those penalties based on disproportionate pollution in areas where people don’t have a voice,” Kelly said.

He said that there is a lack of representation of the voices of the people who live in these communities with these disparities.

“Here’s an opportunity for your local people to have a voice and they’re being drowned out by all these other entities,” Kelly said, “This is another place where we went out there for public hearings

for the local people to give their voice, and their voice is being drowned out by people who don’t even live there,” Kelly said.

The 75-minute discussion 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 began with an introduction and welcome from Greater Allegheny Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Edmondson, and was followed by Ebonie Slade, senior and behavioral health major, reading a poem entitled, “Oh, Snap.”

Slade highlighted the original purpose for the creation of food stamps and presented her poem with photos illustrating the lack of adequate food sources in the Mon Valley,

where she lives.

The program can be viewed online at watch.psu.edu/crossing-bridges and was produced by WPSU, Penn State’s public media station.

In keeping with its focus on next steps and how to engage with the community on this topic, the campus followed up the event on Saturday, Dec. 12 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 Penn State and the neighboring Mon Valley.

For more information on the next two installments of the campus’ Crossing Bridges Summit events in 2021 and on how to schedule, including the Saturday Unity Talks, visit greaterallegheny.psu.edu/cbsummit.

DORM LIFE IN A PANDEMIC

GRAHAM THOMPSON

Contributing Writer

gth5034@psu.edu

A lot of anxiety and questions were building up at Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA), as well as other schools across the country, regarding returning to campus in the fall, with staff and students alike, of what to expect with this type of an unexplored college experience.



Photo courtesy of PSUGA on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/psuga).

Michael Jones, dorm life coordinator at PSUGA, said “My expectations were that the university might have

a reduced semester with in-person teaching, as COVID-19 cases were rising.” But Jones was reassured that the school

had a plan to make sure that everyone was safe, especially those in McKeesport Hall, the dorms.

The initial concern was with students and families traveling across the country amongst a pandemic to help move their children into school and potentially carrying a fatal virus with them to campus.

Jones explained that with all the new protocols in place to keep people
(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 9)

safe on campus, the mask policy was the hardest to enforce, acknowledging that masks can be frustrating because they can muffle speech.

“It’s hard to keep eyes on hundreds of students at a time from one spot,” he said.

However, he emphasized how important it is to wear one and that he was very happy with the efforts of students across campus to follow the guidelines.

“My biggest fear was the dorm was going to close if cases were high, but thankfully they weren’t.”

As tedious as the task was, it helped PSUGA post some of the lowest COVID numbers across all campuses, he added.

He credits the University’s solid planning from the beginning as well as the execution on all sides throughout the semester.

Anything missing this

semester? “I miss being able to do large scale programming,” Jones said, such as hosting watch parties or another social event in the lobby, with catered food.

“I miss being able to interact and getting to know the students over special events like those,” Jones said.

EX-PENN STATE PRESIDENT’S SANDUSKY-RELATED CONVICTION RESTORED

MARK SCOLFORO

Associated Press

The following article was obtained via [APNews](#) on Dec. 1.

HARRISBURG, Pa.

(AP) — A federal appeals court reinstated former Penn State President Graham Spanier’s conviction for child endangerment over his handling of a report that former assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky had sexually abused a boy in a team shower.

The 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled a lower-court judge had improperly vacated Spanier’s misdemeanor jury conviction for the 2001 incident.

Spanier’s defense attorney declined comment.

Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro said in a release that Spanier “turned a blind eye to child abuse by not reporting his knowledge of Jerry Sandusky’s assaults to law enforcement.”



Former Penn State President, Graham Spanier, March 2017. (AP Photo/Matt Rourke, File)

A federal magistrate judge in April 2019 threw out Spanier’s conviction a day before he was to turn himself in to begin serving a jail sentence of two months, followed by two months of house arrest. The judge gave prosecutors three months to retry Spanier, but that has been on hold during the appeal.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Karoline Mehalchick in Scranton, Pennsylvania, had agreed with Spanier that he had been improperly charged under a 2007 law for allegations that dated to 2001.

Prosecutors had argued the 1995 and 2007 versions of the law encompassed and criminalized

the same conduct.

U.S. Circuit Judge Mike Fisher, joined by two others, wrote in the opinion released Tuesday that Spanier’s due process rights would only be violated if the state Superior Court’s ruling against him that upheld his conviction had been an “‘unexpected and indefensible’ interpretation of the child endangerment statute in light of prior law.”

“We conclude that it was not,” wrote Fisher, a former Pennsylvania attorney general and state senator.

Spanier was forced out as university president shortly after Sandusky was arrested in 2011 on child molestation charges. A year later, Spanier was himself accused of a criminal cover-up, although many of those counts were later thrown out. A jury acquitted him of what remained, except for the single count of child endangerment.

Spanier remains a tenured faculty member on administrative leave and is not teaching, a university spokesperson said.

Graduate assistant Mike McQueary told Spanier’s lieutenants he had seen Sandusky abusing a boy late on a Friday night in a team shower.

Spanier, 72, has said the abuse of the boy, who has not been conclusively identified by authorities, was characterized to him as horseplay.

Spanier did not testify at his trial and told the judge at sentencing that he regretted not intervening more forcefully.

Sandusky has lost a string of appeals and is serving a lengthy state prison sentence.

AP

“LITTLE MONSTERS” RALLY FOR BIDEN

Biden hosts Lady Gaga concert at Heinz Field



Due to COVID-19 precautions, rally attendees watched Gaga's performance from the safety of their personal vehicles.

Photo by Troy Ferguson

TROY FERGUSON

Culture/Arts Editor

tdf5134@psu.edu

The long and winding presidential political road ended--where else but in Pittsburgh--in the midst of a contentious campaign. It was announced on Nov. 1, that then Democratic Presidential nominee, Joe Biden, was concluding his campaign here, and to tie in sports...at Heinz Field.

It was also announced that pop singer and Oscar-award-winning artist, Lady Gaga, was joining him. Gaga fans are affectionately known as “little

monsters,” so being a huge Lady Gaga fan, I, a “nice monster,” was so excited I had to find a way to go and see her...and Biden, too!

Because of the current state of the pandemic, this rally was drive-up-and-in-vite only. Our newspaper, *The GA-Zette*, tried to get press credentials, but it was all last-minute and even local news outlets did not have the details, from what they said, until the day of.

However, since it was in the parking lot of Heinz Field, anyone who

could was able to stand around and look at the big screens that were erected everywhere. You could also hear what was going on. The police and Heinz Field security were flexible and we were masked up and distanced from each other.

Gaga gave a moving speech to the crowd. She was encouraging everyone in Pennsylvania to vote. Pennsylvania is considered a swing state. If a nominee wins Pennsylvania, the nominee wins 20 electoral college votes. That can really help in the final vote count. Gaga urged everyone there to “go vote Trump out of office.”

It was no secret that Gaga was performing at this campaign stop, too. She sang two of her hit songs: her Grammy-nominated song “You & I” and “Shallow,” her award-winning hit from her big-screen debut in “A Star is Born.”

This was so exciting for me, as it was the closest event to a concert I have been able to attend in a year! I just loved hearing her perform live. Gaga brought the house down.

After her performance and speech, Biden came to the stage. What I loved about his speech was he wanted to bring everyone

together. It was evident that he does not want our country to be divided anymore. He doesn't want to be known as a Democratic President; he “wants to be an American President” which I thought was very powerful.

He also gave hope with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. He said, “Let's fire Trump, and I'll hire Fauci.” He told the crowd that he will listen to whatever scientists told him to do to get the pandemic under control.



The writer shows his support at Heinz Field

I was really excited to see one of my favorite singers and idols in person again. Concert aside, this was the first political rally that I ever attended. Though it was a different type of rally because of COVID-19, I was moved and made even more excited to go use my voice at the polls.

PSUGA'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSORS LAUNCH COMMUNITY FOCUSED RESEARCH: McLean surveys campus about firearms...

CHEYENNE HENNEN

Staff Writer

csh5384@psu.edu

A survey regarding relationships between an individual's knowledge and attitude towards firearms and firearm policy and how that affects one's confidence in the police is being conducted across the Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) campus, in addition to the campuses at Altoona and Dubois.

Dr. Katherine McLean, associate professor of criminal justice, along with her fellow Penn State colleagues, received a grant from the Student Engagement Network (SEN), allowing her to conduct a study within the CRIMJ 100 (Intro to Criminal Justice) courses that will be held



in the upcoming spring semester.

"We're curious about student experiences and attitudes towards guns, towards the police, and how those two things interact. There is a lot of space for students to express their opinions on matters that are close to their lives," she said.

"Our students are contributing to and collecting data with what we call, a validated survey instrument, something that has been used before," McLean said.

This survey instrument will be looking specifically at college students at PSUGA, Altoona and Dubois. Question sections on the survey will be written primarily by students, allowing them to feel more connected to the project and to give a diverse perspective.

"People have a lot more interesting questions than we do," McLean said.

McLean and her colleagues hope to get 450 responses which will allow them to collect necessary data. They will also be looking at students' experiences conducting primary research within their classes and "if it increases their interest in research, general discipline curiosity, and their sense of connection with their peers," McLean added.

With everything going

on in the world right now, "we are approaching period highs of gun relatedness," McLean said.

It is hard to prioritize the various crises that are happening in the country, however, she suggests "there are more effective ways of policing, which rely more on community consent and less on violence, and the public health crisis that is COVID-19."

McLean encourages students to participate in the survey. Data will be reported to campuses and could be influential to campus policies in the future.

McLean has stopped collecting data for now, but will resume the survey again in the spring.

In the meantime, interested students can contact her at kjm47@psu.edu.

...and Trappen promotes veteran support

Students who have an interest in working with veterans and who want to participate in field research, while earning service-learning credits, can take part in a unique experience, thanks to Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice, Sandra Trappen, and her CRIMJ 221, (Issues in the Criminal Justice System)

course.

Trappen received a grant from the donors at the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence that will allow her to conduct in-person research throughout the next two semesters. This research aims to provide undergraduate students with opportunities for experiential learning on and off



campus, as well as generate an ongoing enrollment of veteran students at Penn State Greater

Allegheny (PSUGA).

The course, which will first be instructed in-person during Spring 2021, will also provide students with service learning-course credit.

"The program is designed so that even Penn State students who are not veterans can take this class and engage in
(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 12)

field research and they can design intake questionnaires that would be administered to veterans,” Trappen said.

Additionally, there is a mentorship component which will be reserved exclusively for veterans at PSUGA.

“The entire course will

focus on veterans’ issues, the history of recruitment, and what it means to be a veteran” Trappen said.

Trappen herself is a veteran, having served as a captain in the Army on active duty for four years in Vicenza, Italy. She was also a former intelligence and logistics field officer with the Southern European Task Force.

“Students who take the course will be learning about how other research has been done on veteran populations and they will be encouraged to engage with their communities and conduct one-on-one interviews (via ZOOM) in order to collect data,” Trappen said.

The idea of in-person seminars with probation

officers and veterans were discussed, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions, that is yet to be determined. Come spring, Trappen hopes to be able to conduct the field exercises inside the court systems.

For more information on CRIMJ 221 or Trappen’s research, her email is: slt62@psu.edu.

SGA STRIVING TO INCREASE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT DURING PANDEMIC



CHEYENNE HENNEN

Staff Writer

csh5384@psu.edu

As the semester continued to wind down, Penn State Greater Allegheny’s (PSUGA) Student Government Association (SGA) met twice to regroup and review 2020 and plan for the new year, including working to help students become more engaged in campus activities and in their classes.

President Joe Froeschel reflected on the previous goals made at the start of the semester and why he was satisfied with the process of trying to take care of students’

online learning, he still believed that student engagement was down.

He said that SGA “will work continuously to improve student engagement through the pandemic” and to also help students improve quality of life by helping with such things as food insecurity, ride-share to navigate campus, and expanding the campus Free Store 15132.



“I very much appreciate you guys giving your time...to this organization, to our students and working your butts off to keep us organized, active and

effective,” Froetschel said.

SGA hopes to expand its digital presence via Snapchat, Instagram and other social media platforms which will help improve communication of SGA meetings, campus clubs and other events.

Froetschel believes student engagement will increase with in-person meetings, while still providing ZOOM as an option.

Froetschel suggested that students reach out to GA’s mental health and awareness counselor if they are feeling overwhelmed throughout these times of uncertainty, especially after last month’s contentious presidential election.

“If you know anyone who is struggling...point them towards Ann McCurdy.” Froetschel said.

Voter registration for the election was successful across the Greater

Allegheny (GA) community. Froetschel said he was very pleased to announce that nearly two dozen students registered to vote.

According to Louise Whyte-Aravich, student leadership coordinator, residence life and advisor to SGA, “Hearing so many of these amazing, wonderful students like yourselves, who care about the world and are going out there and voting, doing your part for democracy and being excited about it, is the most exciting thing for me.”

The next SGA meeting is scheduled for Jan. 21 during Common Hour at the following ZOOM link: <https://psu.zoom.us/j/98626689870>.

Everyone on campus is invited to attend.



OPINIONS... FROM WHERE WE SIT



Copyright 2020, Davian Chester

WE ARE... ~~PENNSYLVANIA~~ NOT OKAY!

ALISHA TARVER

Staff Writer

ait5274@psu.edu

When the pandemic started, I remember being ecstatic that we had an extra week off for spring break. Now, the year is almost over, and I don't know where this first semester of a being a senior went.

I'm supposed to survive racism, a pandemic, and senioritis. I've spent the past six months in my apartment, binging more television than I ever have and consuming more social media than my psyche needs. I usually lose steam at the end of the semester, but I didn't even start out with the momentum I usually do.

I've found comfort in books and my kitten Mavis honestly saved my life. Still, this isn't enough. I probably have the most understanding instructors in the world, but it's hard to find any motivation to get through the day.

Assignments are now just assignments. I've never been a fan of homework, but I managed to find some joy in it. I know my classmates and I are having trouble doing our homework and crossing things off our to do lists. We're all doing the bare minimum just to survive, let alone graduate from college.

There is something about this pandemic that has made me feel vulnerable. I want to spill my

deepest darkest secrets in settings I normally wouldn't. I don't know if this a cry for help or I've developed an I-don't-give-a- f***-attitude.

My social interactions are no longer the same. I feel as if I lack confidence in my interactions, and I can never get my words together. I should be grateful, which I truly am. I get to work from home. Unlike my coworkers at my second job I didn't have to worry about my bills when The Yard was shut down and forced to do take out only.

I have no fears of a second shutdown either. I live alone. I don't have to worry about endangering anyone or someone else's choices harming me. I

try to find the little joys, but despite me being the fortunate one and everybody telling me this will make me stronger, I'm still struggling.

When people ask me "How I'm doing?" I'm tired of responding with "I'm okay," because I'm not.

I have no solutions for you. I'm not complaining. I just need to be honest. I'm going to get through this like I have everything else I've been through, but for some reason I can't help but think I'm not going to be the same when it's all said and done.

I feel like this pandemic has taken something out of all of us, and I just hope we can get it back.

THE UNUSUAL SEMESTER

JAMES PLEZ

Staff Writer

jzp5847@psu.edu

What an unusual semester this is: living in the dorms, taking classes online and playing a sport... all during COVID-19.

Being back in the dorms since the reopening of Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) is not what I was expecting. I was expecting being back in the dorms to resume as normal, like before COVID-19. Not so. I can feel the still atmosphere.

Before COVID-19, living in the dorms was fun. I would see people in the lobby doing their homework and conversing or there would be some type social gathering or activity.

Now I hardly see anyone because most people stay to themselves.

Maybe they are frightened by the pandemic. But when I do see people around the dorms they are wearing a mask.

I feel like a prisoner being in the dorms with all the different regulation I have to follow to avoid the spread of COVID-19.

With most of my classes being remote, this semester has been a struggle trying to keep up with work and studies. School work feels to be a choice and not a priority because everything is done online, and I feel like I have so much free time when I do not. I'm not a fan of classes being held through ZOOM.

I'm more of a hands-on learner and I would rather have in-person classes. The schoolwork is piling up on me and I feel so overwhelmed. Thankfully, because the professors



McKeesport Hall

here at PSUGA care about their students' success, they reach out to me to try to get me back on the right path.

Sports is one of the biggest excitements here at PSUGA. With fall sports being postponed to the spring, there are no teams to really bring in that excitement that sports bring to campus. Being an athlete, myself running track, I am thankful we are still having a season this spring.

Wearing a mask during practice isn't ideal but we have to because of COVID-19. I really hate it because it makes it difficult to breathe. I barely can breathe without a mask during practice!

I hope that things can go back to normal soon. This by far has been such an unusual semester. However, I hope everyone is staying safe and coping well during this pandemic.



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.

FIRST-TIME VOTER, FOREVER AMERICAN

ANIYA ROBINS

Contributing Writer

aar5544@psu.edu

This past election has been crazy, to say the least. We the people had to make a very important decision: voting for our president to serve the next four years.

This year was my first time voting. I was excited for the experience to vote at the polls. Initially, I applied for a mail-in ballot, but after I thought it through, I decided to go to my local polling location.

I brought a number of things with me: my ID, voters' registration, mail-in ballot (unopened), and my mask (to still follow COVID-19 regulations).

My family and I went to vote together at a local fire station in Elizabeth, Pa., near my home.

When I arrived, there was a short line, which I was not really expecting. Nonetheless, I was happy about it. Everyone wore a mask and social distanced, and I was initially surprised because usually in Elizabeth, the people do not like wearing their masks.

It was finally time to walk inside. When I entered the building, the smell of hand sanitizer overwhelmed me, even through my mask. This was actually ironic to me, because I did not see



"I Voted!" by Vox Efx is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)

anyone sanitizing voting stations at all or even swapping out the pens that everyone was using.

I had to speak to four people who were poll workers. The first was a woman who asked me my name, and as I was answering her question, I was simultaneously surrendering my unopened mail-in ballot to her. She then gave me a look of annoyance and told the poll worker next to her "Oh my, we have another one of these."

With this being my first-time voting, I was already anxious I was doing something wrong and the poll workers seemed to not want to help that much. The next poll worker I encountered asked me, "Why did not fill out your mail-in ballot?" After I told him my reasoning, he told me, in an annoyed tone, I should have just sent my ballot back in the mail.

The next worker I

spoke with was a lady who was just writing down everyone's names and political party. What I did not like about this experience is that we had to ultimately shout our political party while others were within earshot. I felt like it is no one's business but my own.

Finally, it was time to cast my vote. Although, my process was slightly different due to me surrendering my mail-in ballot, I filled out my ballot and turned it in accordingly.

My first experience at the polls was not what I thought it would be, but we are under strange circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, I felt very excited and helpful. It made feel a part of something greater than me.

My ancestors fought for me to vote, so I was very proud to do so. Our votes count and I genuinely felt and still feel this way.



CLUB ADVERTISING

Does your organization want to promote its event or program in this newspaper?

The GA-ZETTE offers complimentary, no-cost display ads to any university sanctioned club or organization.

Space is limited!
Contact the campus newspaper at ga-zette@PennStateOffice365.onmicrosoft.com



"Nittany Lion Christmas Tree 3" by pennstatenews is licensed under [CC BY-NC 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/)

MICHIGAN COUP D'ÉTAT VERIFIES OBAMA'S "OUR DEMOCRACY IS AT STAKE"

SHANNON M. REID

Guest Columnist

smr96@psu.edu

Former U.S President Barack Obama's warning to Americans during the Democratic National Convention this past summer—on the basis of current U.S President Donald Trump's premeditated tactic at voter manipulation and that democracy is on the line—could most likely have foretold the planned kidnapping of Democratic Michigan Governor, Gretchen Whitmer, in an attempt to overthrow Michigan's government.

Obama may not have been entirely coherent with his statement, even when addressing Trump's deployment of the National Guard upon protestors, but I will tell you, the thwarted overthrow is likely a national wake-up call. Our president, along with others, impugned Whitmer on Twitter for her issuing an emergency shutdown in Michigan due to the COVID-19 pandemic, writing such attacks like "LIBERATE MICHIGAN" in all caps.

Here we have a president who was going on and on about law and order when the riots were happening, yet he refused to condemn white suprem-

acy, almost condoning it in fact, like calling the Confederate flag a freedom of speech.

While the planned kidnapping was specifically conceived after the shutdown was issued, the six men arrested in the plot were a part of a militia composed of two far-right organizations that were relatively unknown before—the Wolverine Watchmen and the Boogaloo Movement.

These men have been planning it all year-long and wanted to pull it off before the election. Thankfully, the efforts of the FBI exposed this before it could be put into action.

Though our president is indirectly responsible for what almost happened to this lady who was one of President-elect Joe Biden's options for a running mate, my thoughts are if people would use violence for power, then they would clearly do anything for power, given enough encouragement from someone who already has power.

In that case, arguably, what Obama had warned us about, did not just revolve around the election, but the social and bipartisan upheaval and not so much as a result of any isolated incident but

DEMOCRACY



Photo image courtesy of AlphaStock, licensed under a Creative Commons 3 - CC BY-SA 3.0 license.

everything the president sows and never reaps.

There are dangers lurking inside and outside the nation and instead of suppressing them, each day our president neglects to condemn violence—if it protects citizens—is another day he gives them the prod they need to enact dastardly deeds. Like how the president declined to hold the 17-year-old rifleman accountable for shooting two peaceful protesters dead during the protest in Kenosha, Wisconsin over the incident with Jacob Blake.

This proved a big blow for Trump, since Michigan was one of the few battleground states alongside Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Florida and Arizona, four of which Biden won.

It does not matter if someone is far-right or far-left, all sorts of extremism are terrorism, domestic terrorism, terrorism on

our principles. But it is not in their blood. Rather, this behavior is one that is taught and Trump has certainly taught them well.

The bias thing about Trump is that he is going to allow the far-right to have its way while he blames the far-left for the damage done.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The staff and management of **The GA-ZETTE** welcome Letters to the Editor by writing to nrr5191@psu.edu.

Please include your full name, PSU email, address and phone number to, to verify.

Missing contact information will result in non-consideration of your article.

CULTURE, ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

VANESSA WILLIAMS BRINGS TALENT, VISION, ADVOCACY TO VIRTUAL PGH CONCERT

ALISHA TARVER

Staff Writer

ait5274@psu.edu

In the midst of a pandemic came a bright and musical light when Dallas Summer Musicals presented its third national installation of the “Live from the West Side: Women of Broadway” livestream series, this time starring the multi-talented and critically-acclaimed actress/singer, Vanessa Williams.

The Dec. 5 concert was hosted locally by the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, with proceeds supporting nonprofit organizations nationwide which were impacted by the pandemic, including the Trust.

From the virtual studios of The Shubert Theater on Manhattan’s West Side in New York, Williams sang a medley of her own hits and Broadway and holiday classics. Throughout the virtual concert, Williams shared personal stories about her past and how mileposts in her life continue to drive her in her ongoing work both on and off the stage and screen.

Williams opened the show with “Other Side of The Tracks,” originally from the musical, “Little Me.”



Photo courtesy of vanessawilliams.com

She stood alone in her shimmery and elegant jumpsuit next to a stool she used to rest and hold notecards with questions from audience members that she would answer in between songs.

Questions answered by Williams had to be emailed, but the platform provided a live chat feature for audience members to react to her performance. It was filled with clapping hands, heart eye emojis, and comments of admiration for Williams.

Behind her was her band: Carmen Ruby Floyd, singer; Al Caldwell, guitarist; J.T. Lewis, drummer; Keith

Robinson, bass; Rob Mathis, pianist.

Mathis composed Williams’ Christmas hit “Starbright”, and he accompanied her in a duet of “Love Is”, a song she originally performed with Grammy-nominated singer, Brian McKnight. It was featured on the 1993 television series, “Beverly Hills, 90210.”

Floyd is a newcomer to the band. After performing a mash up of Stephen Sondheim’s ballads together, Williams gave the stage to Floyd for a solo performance of the song “Creole Love” from Duke Ellington’s Broadway musical “After Midnight.”

Williams also performed “Dreaming”, from her Grammy-nominated album, “The Right Stuff.” She ended the show with her signature song “Save the Best for Last,” from her second studio album, “The Comfort Zone.”

Williams is one of the most respected and multi-faceted performers in the entertainment industry today. Having sold millions of records worldwide, she has also achieved numerous top hits on various Billboard Album and Singles charts, Pop, Dance, R&B, Adult Contemporary, Holiday, Latin, Gospel and Jazz.

Her critically acclaimed work in film, television, recordings and the Broadway stage has been recognized by every major industry award affiliate including four Emmy nominations, 11 Grammy nominations, a Tony nomination, three Screen Actors Guild nominations, seven NAACP Image Awards and three Satellite awards.

“I’m happy to be able to bring my artistry to people...maybe be a distraction from the mayhem that has been 2020,” Williams said.

Williams is professionally trained in singing,
(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 18)

dancing and acting. She grew up in West Chester County in New York with music educators as parents and she studied theatre at Syracuse University.

“My parents, particularly my mom was an avid theatre goer and she would take me to the matinee on Saturday. I knew it was a short ride to an audition and that would be a tangible goal for me to be on Broadway,”

Williams said.

As a little girl, Williams remembers “being called the N-word,” and how it motivated her to work harder. This resulted in a successful career in film, music, and theatre.

“I came home and asked my parents what that means. My mom said that means you’ll have to do better than everyone else just to be considered equal, and that was my reality. So, I did everything to prove that I had talent, intellect. Both my parents were educators, music teachers. I was exposed to the arts and travel. I made it a point to make sure that when I walked into a room that I was prepared, but I had to be better because of my skin color,” said Williams.

While living in New York, she won the Miss Syracuse title and later went on to become the first black Miss

America in 1983.

Williams spoke of the racism she encountered as a young black woman, and the first black Miss America.

“I was 20 years old, but then came the shock of being the first black Miss America and the death threats that would follow. It was one of the hardest periods of my life,” Williams said, “along with some major controversy that came 10 months into my reign that I couldn’t control,” she added, citing being forced to resign her reign.

“At 21 years old I was viewed as a beauty queen instead of all the training that I had as an actress, dancer and singer. So, I had to really start from zero. I was denied a lot of projects, but I worked my way up,” Williams said.

At one point in her career, she said she was considered for one of the high-profile roles of Nala in the 1994 film, *The Lion King* but, in the end, she was denied the role, being told that she “would never be Disney material.” But Williams noted that she pressed on.

“In 1995 I got a chance to sing an Alan Menken and Stephen Schwartz song for an Academy Award-winning movie, called *Pocahontas*,” Williams said, as an introduction into her fourth song, “Colors of the Wind.”

Williams eventually enjoyed success on both stage and screen, receiving an NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Actress in a Motion Picture for her portrayal of Teri Joseph in the film “Soul Food” (1997).

Her best-known television roles are that of Wilhelmina Slater on “Ugly Betty” (2006–10), for which she was nominated three times for the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series, and Renee Perry on “Desperate Housewives” (2010–12).



Vanessa Williams.
Photo by Rod Spicer.

During her pre-concert news conference the week before, Williams talked about how good things can come out of tragedy, saying that “one of the lucky things...is to be one of the founders of Black Theatre United.”

Black Theatre United is an organization she co-founded to bring light to discrimination people of color face in the arts community, developing actionable items to

address disparities in the arts community. The organization was created in June after the killing of George Floyd.

Billy Porter, the Emmy/Oscar/Tony-award winning actor and singer, who is also a Pittsburgh native, is a cofounder along with Williams and 19 other professionals in all roles in the theater.

“Since we have moved through such a tremendous time of change, action and awareness, a lot of people weren’t aware of the discrimination that people of color had to go through in every aspect, particularly in the arts. They realize that it’s not enough to have a black usher in a theatre. We want black people that are on staff, that are artistic directors, producers, and directors,” Williams said.

For more information about Williams and the theatrical community’s work to combat racism and inequality in the arts, visit www.blacktheatre-united.com.



For future performances and virtual events during the pandemic, visit Trustarts.org. Penn State Greater Allegheny students can receive ticket discounts.





PITTSBURGH ARTISTS REPRESENTED AT THE COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS

TROY FERGUSON

Culture/Arts Editor

tdf5134@psu.edu

Country music's biggest night took place earlier in November when the Country Music Awards (CMA) took the stage at the Music City Center in Nashville.

Just like every award show this year, it was a little different because of the pandemic. A live audience was not invited to the show, however, only nominees and their guests were present.

Many talented musicians won awards like

Marren Morris, Eric Church and Luke Combs.

Of all the winners and nominees, Pittsburgh's own Dan + Shay took home Vocal Duo of the Year for the second year in a row. The duo has been nominated for this award for the past six years.

They were also nominated for Single of the Year and Musical Event for the year for their single "10,000 Hours," featuring pop star Justin Bieber.

The duo also performed the nominated smash hit alongside Bieber

Dan + Shay were not

the only Pittsburgh artists nominated for awards.

American Idol finalist and Munhall native, Gabby Barrett, was nominated for New Artist of the Year and Single of the Year for her chart-topping single, "I Hope."

Barrett performed the song alongside pop singer Charlie Puth and her husband, Cade Foehner, also from American Idol. Foehner and Barrett are expecting their first child in early 2021.

Their performances were spectacular. Barrett's vocals were legendary. She does know how to

perform and captivate an audience.

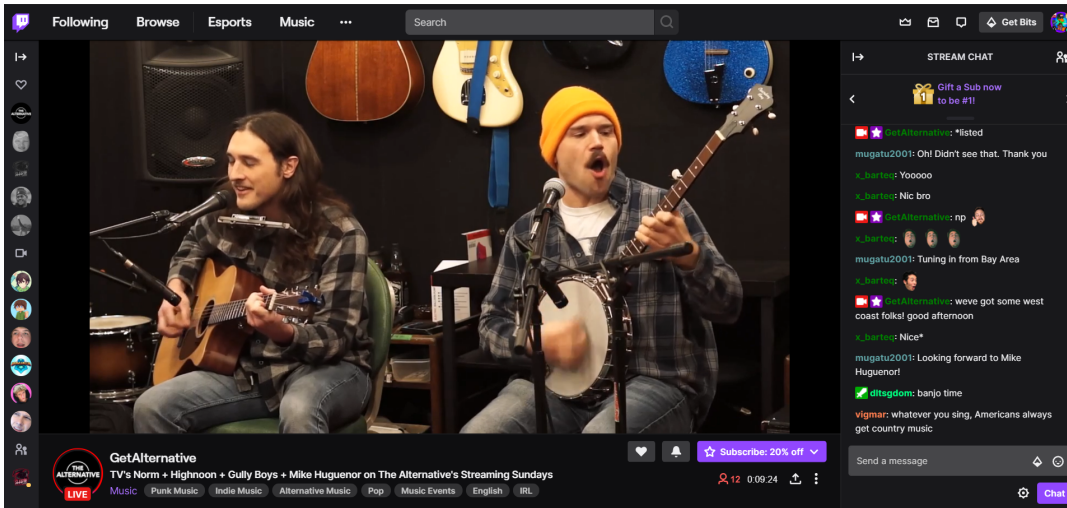
Dan + Shay and Bieber were fun performers. That is one of my favorite country songs. I like the country-pop crossover. I love when artists collaborate with other singers who sing other genres. It is so interesting and captivating to witness collabs like the ones at the CMAs.

It was evident that the awards ceremony brought country music fans together to celebrate their favorite artists and to take their minds off everything 2020 has brought to them.



Photos courtesy of The CMA Awards at cmaawards.com.

PA BANDS & MORE ROCK ON TWITCH



NATHAN REGA News Editor

nrr5191@psu.edu

Has the pandemic left you missing concerts and live music? Fortunately for music lovers, bands and musicians have transitioned to performing virtual concerts and shows.

Music site and blog [The Alternative](#), partnered with Pittsburgh booking collective [Don't Let the Scene Go Down On Me!](#), has been hosting Streaming Sundays via their Twitch channel.

On Nov. 22, The Alternative went live to showcase the bands TV's NORM, Highnoon and Gully Boys as well as solo guitarist, Mike Huguenor.

Evan Mulgrave and Tom Chorba of Pittsburgh indie rock band TV's NORM opened the stream, playing acoustic versions of songs from their debut album "[Wonder](#)." Although "acoustic is not [their] native language," accord-

ing to Mulgrave, the duo put on an energetic and entertaining show from the showroom of a Guitar Center.

TV's NORM took full advantage of the streaming broadcast, splicing brief, humorous video clips from bizarre television ads between songs. They ended their set with a previously recorded music video of the full band performing to leave first-time listeners with a taste of their typical sound.



Kennedy Freeman, singer and songwriter of the Philadelphia-based band Highnoon, performed solo, treating viewers with a calming, warm singing voice. Freeman played songs from the record "[Semi-Sweet](#)" as well as a new

song, teasing an upcoming extended play (EP).



Kathy Callahan, guitarist of [Gully Boys](#), was also the sole representative from her Minneapolis band. The talented Callahan played a hit acoustic set of Gully Boys music despite admitting the songs were "not meant to be acoustic."

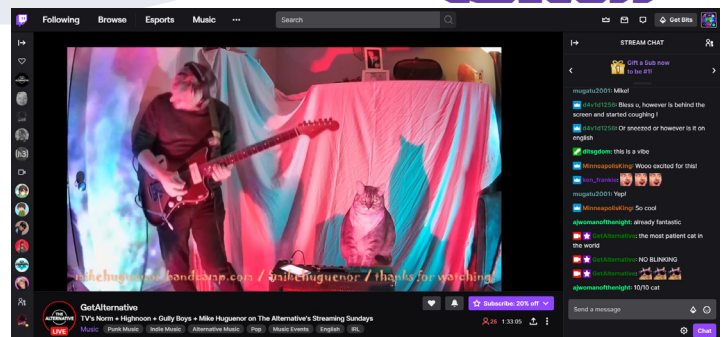
Huguenor ended the stream playing music from his solo album "[X'ed](#)." He entertained viewers with

his impressive skills on the electric guitar, playing a surf rock-esque set. Huguenor played in front of a makeshift stage all the way from San Jose and his "cat" was a big hit in the chat.

While Twitch is mostly recognized for livestreaming video games, The Alternative's use of the platform provides an easy access way for viewers to enjoy live performances and interact with artists and each other via a chatroom.

Streaming Sundays is also a way for bands and musicians to promote their work to a new audience during a time when live performances are just not possible.

Streaming Sundays will go live once again on Dec. 20, 7:00pm to 9:00pm EST, via The Alternative's Twitch channel, [GetAlternative](#).



“ANIMANIACS”

A REBOOT TO RULE THEM ALL



RILEY PERCIAVALLE

Contributing Writer

rup70@psu.edu

In this generation, we tend to be mad at Hollywood for its reboots to old shows or movies that had their run with decades past. The old saying goes “If it’s not broke, don’t fix it.” However, there is a new opinion with the new “Animaniacs” reboot, now streaming on Hulu.

“Animaniacs” was a hit children’s show in the 1990s, where three animated-looking puppies ran amuck with their wacky antics on the Warner Brother’s Studio Film Lot in Burbank. There was Yakko (Rob Paulsen) who yaks, Wakko (Jess Harnell) who packs away the snacks and the Warner sister Dot (Tress MacNeille) who was the cuteness of the group.

The show ran from 1993 till 1998 with 90’s references, innuendos and many references children at that time would not get until much later. This lured adults in as well,

with viewership catering to all ages. References were made from the Godfather movies, political mockery, other shows and characters, etc.

So, what does this new reboot offer? Well, the first song, known as “[The Catch Up Song](#),” explains it all. It has 22 years worth of material squashed into a two-minute song, the reality of our world joked about on a kid’s show.

Pop cultural references from the 90’s and up to now make their way into the show. They even mock television networks like Fox News. With 22 years’ worth of material built up, they came back and already are taking jabs at what has happened.

The rebooted “Animaniacs” has promise and potential in 2020 and beyond. Changing with the times, it removes the problematic innuendos and jokes of its past without losing what made it special nearly 30 years ago.

Give it a watch and see what made many a childhood very entertaining.

2020 HOLIDAY DONATION DRIVE



Penn State Greater Allegheny’s University Police & Public Safety Office stuffed their cruiser full of gifts Monday morning for the 2020 Holiday Donation Drive to benefit Allegheny County’s Department of Health and Human Services. Photos courtesy of Zack Rosen, Strategic Planning & Communications.



FROM THE COVER: Photo credits and courtesies, top to bottom
Row 1: left to right

“Dr. Verónica Montecinos chairs womens’ suffrage celebration” by Nathan Rega

“Students return for Fall 2020” courtesy Division of Student Affairs

“Dorm 2020 Halloween party” by Katarina Shields

“Masked-up Nittany Lion statue” by Nathan Rega

Row 2: left to right

“Dr. Jacqueline Edmondson and DJ Stevie Static” courtesy PSUGA on [Facebook](#).

“Lonely lion in the snow” by Nathan Rega

“Studying under the blue umbrella” by Riley Perciavalle

“Hoop it up for charity” courtesy Professor Galen Grimes

Row 3: left to right

“Dr. Johnathan White teaching” courtesy Zack Rosen

“Campus police pack holiday donations” courtesy Zack Rosen

“The stacks on lockdown at Kelly Library” by Nathan Rega

“Tyler Barry, Sydney Fedor, repping THON” by Nicholas Trunzo

Row 4: left to right

“At-home COVID-19 saliva test” courtesy Vault Health

“The kids on campus” by Professor Rosemary Martinelli

“Smoking the bees” courtesy Professor Galen Grimes

“PSUGA’s Women’s Volleyball Team 2020” courtesy Penn State Greater Allegheny Athletics on Twitter [@PSUGAATHLETICS](#).

ROPER CLOSES BOOK, 35-YEARS AT PSUGA

AUSTIN MOSSELLEM

Contributing Writer

aam5867@psu.edu

A smiling face has left the campus bookstore one last time. Phyllis Roper, the assistant bookstore manager, has retired after 35 years of faithful service to the bookstore, its patrons, and the Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) campus community.

“I started in August of 1985,” Roper said. She added that she worked full-time until this year when she worked on and off until January to mid-March where she felt that she “wasn’t able to perform at full capacity for personal reasons.”

Roper has seen six chancellors and six bookstore managers come and go in her career at PSUGA. Not only was she assistant bookstore manager, but she was active in organizations across campus, as well.

“I was involved in a couple committees on campus through the years,” Roper said. These committees were The Women’s Commission, Campus Safety, the Green committee, and the Y2K committee. “I was involved with the Go 60s program, too,” she added.

The Go 60s program was for older adult students over the age of 60.



A 35-year career entails an abundance of life lessons and learning experiences, so Roper had some words of advice for current and future students. “Always be true to yourself and make yourself open to the possibilities out there for you. Don’t be afraid to ask for advice,” she added.

“I miss my chats,” Roper said when asked what she misses most from the GA campus. “Thank you to all my Penn State buddies that

were always so good to me over the years. Thank you for being so kind to me. That meant a lot.” Roper added, “I had a lot of fun over the years. I met so many people and made lifelong friends.”

As she officially departs from campus, the pandemic has not permitted people to gather and to say goodbye in person, and Roper was fearful she would forget someone if she noted them all by name, so she said her goodbyes this way:

“I’m thankful for the staff and faculty friends that I made over the past 35 years, and especially that some of those have become lifelong friends. I’m thankful for the numerous students that shared their stories with me, confided in me, and in many ways educated me,” she said.

Like anyone on the cusp of retirement, family is critically important.

“I’m thankful to my husband and daughters for their help and support over the years during the good times at the bookstore, but also through some of the rough times, as well,” Roper said.

Then she paused to say that there was “one special little guy” that she did want to thank by name, “and that’s Nittany, a service dog of one of our former students, Jerry.”

Roper said that every time Nittany and Jerry came into the bookstore, she had to resist the urge to pet the dog, as there is a special protocol a person needs to follow when approaching a service animal.

“Finally,” Roper said, “when Jerry was about to graduate, he let Nittany off his lead and Nittany came right over to me as if to say give me a hug, and I hugged him. I was in heaven.”



Campus bookstore photo courtesy of PSUGA on [Facebook](#).



90 SECONDS UNDER THE BLUE UMBRELLA

TIMELY TOPICS FROM AROUND CAMPUS

MADASON PORTER-GIBSON | Staff Writer | mnp5208@psu.edu

“As a first-semester student, what were your expectations and how has COVID-19 changed them?”

Ryder Bigler, *Biobehavioral Health*

“Before COVID I thought that I would have more freedom compared to high school, but because of COVID I kind of felt that the only difference between high school and college is that we stay on campus. As students we don’t get to do our own thing and act like adults. We are still told what to do.”

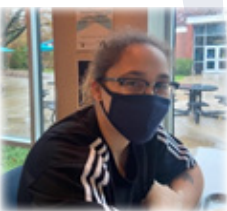
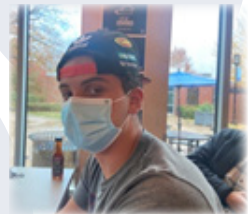


Cainan Dasily, *Business Administration*

“Before coming to college, I thought college would have more freedom and more leniency on what we could do. COVID-19 has caused a lot of restrictions in the dorms and we have less freedom due to the restrictions.”

Zachary Wilson, *Mechanical Engineering*

“When baseball season would come around, I would normally have an idea or a picture of everyone running around, doing their own drills, going in and out of the field, and moving around. Since COVID-19 we can only have a ten person limit so, because of that my expectations were let down.”



Camryn Deveraux, *Computer Science*

“I expected college to be a little more active and more interactive with students. I expected to be able to go out and do more activities besides going to the dorms. I expected to do more activities together but because of COVID-19 it has made everything more secluded. Some of the stuff that we have together is pretty cool but it’s not what it would be if it wasn’t for COVID-19.”

Mya Swain, *Secondary Education*

“I thought that when we had events and activities that more people would participate and that we would be around each other more, but COVID-19 has made that hard. COVID-19 has made it hard for me to get to know people and to feel more as a community because we all feel really secluded. I never really thought that I would have to take online classes. I preferred all of my classes in person so, COVID-19 has made that really hard for me.”



SPORTS & ATHLETICS



BASKETBALL SEASON PLANS CONTINUE AMID PANDEMIC SURGE

ANIYA ROBINS

Contributing Writer

aar5544@psu.edu

October came and went, with no sports teams and no games on the Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) campus. Behind the scenes, however, Penn State is carefully planning how to move forward with a basketball season. Some things will be different.

PSUGA Athletic Director, Korie Morton-Rozier, said "It is not going to look exactly the same. We are going to be playing a lot of Penn State campuses...but we are still planning on having playoffs and go to the national playoffs if we win."

The PSUAC (Penn State University Athletic Conference) made an announcement in September to postpone the basketball season until the spring semester, but now COVID-19 cases are spiking so the future of the season is again uncertain.

The conference office continues to monitor the University, federal, state, and national governing body guidelines to determine how and when it will be secure to return to their competitions.

Morton-Rozier added that there are regular meetings via ZOOM between the coaching staff and athletic directors to relay information on their season, but everything seems to come down to

the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Pennsylvania's governor. There is still a chance that the basketball season could be cancelled or even just fan attendance at games curtailed.

"We are trying to figure out the testing, how we can do the transportation... there are a lot of committees trying to figure these things out," she said.

Players, however, are currently practicing, preparing to play.

Kevin Kirby, a junior guard on the team, said, "We do wear masks [during practice] and everything else happens as usual."

Although there still may be some confusion about their games, Kirby said, "There is a meeting about what we will be doing in the spring, but other conferences near us have cancelled their seasons."

But Kirby was hopeful. "As long as we can still get in the gym and play basketball, I will be fine."



Photo of PSUGA's Men's Basketball Team during its 2019-2020 season courtesy Penn State Greater Allegheny Athletics at athleticsga.com.

TRACK SEASON OFF-TRACK AGAIN

**MADASON
PORTER-GIBSON**

Staff Writer

mnp5208@psu.edu

Cross country was cancelled this fall due to COVID-19 and safety reasons. Gregory Schmitt, the head coach of cross country and track and field, is hoping that track will start sometime in January or February.

“There are still a lot of universities that we didn’t meet with last year. I don’t know if we are going to meet those universities for the upcoming track season. Right now, we are looking at the end of January to the second week of February,” he said.

However, Director of Athletics, Korie Morton-Rozier, said the recent mitigation efforts by Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf that suspended or limited sports due to the virus surge, have now made things uncertain.

“No, we are not sure what’s going on in the spring regarding sports. I know this is frustrating but it is an ever-changing situation,” she added.

COVID-19 changed how student athletes practice and Schmitt said preparing his athletes has been a little complicated. He said that some teams “got their area pods that they have to stay in until the event is about to start.”



PSUGA’s Cross Country Team competing during the 2019 season.
Photo courtesy of Penn State Greater Allegheny Athletics at athleticsga.com.

“We always have to wipe down our equipment and maintain a six-foot distance while wearing our masks. We are now training in smaller groups so only five to seven people in a group...and only ten people in the weight room,” he said.

Namy Paul Makiese, a junior IST major, is a PSUGA record holder for the 60-and 200-meter races, and he took home a silver medal at nationals for the four-by-four race last year. He is excited about track season and has been preparing.

“I started with an injury, but I am coming back better and healthier for the upcoming season. I started preparing physically and mentally because of my knee injury and I

have been putting in work every day,” he said.

Senior Criminal Justice major, Eladia Kennedy, is also excited about track season and possibly going on to nationals. Last year, Kennedy became the first PSUGA United States Collegiate Athletic Association National Champion when she took home the 100-Meter Dash crown at the 2019 National Championships with a time of 14.05

“I have a goal to run certain times for my events...I have been going to practice every day, working hard, lifting, and changing my diet,” she said.

“If any girls specifically would like to run, jump or throw for the team,

please contact the coach or me. The boy’s team keeps growing, which is great, but a girls’ team would be nice to have too, so that we can compete and have fun,” she added.

Regardless of the challenges, Schmitt said that he is looking forward to the upcoming track season and expects his team to take home the championship.

“Oh yeah, I’m excited. We have a couple of seniors this year...My expectations are to have multiple athletes qualified for nationals and for my athletes to place very high as a team. I want them to come home with a national title,” he added.

SPRINTER COLEMAN APPEALS MISSING DRUG TEST SUSPENSION

JAMES PLEZ

Staff Writer

jzp5847@psu.edu

United States Track and Field Athlete, Christian Coleman, 24, has appealed his two-year suspension from competing in the Olympics after the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) of the International Association of Athletics Federation suspended him for several missed drug tests.

According to Reuters News Service, the American sprinter said at the time of his provisional suspension that anti-doping officials had not followed procedure when he missed them at his house after going Christmas shopping last year at a time when, the officials said, he said he would be at home.

In a statement released by the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS) regarding his appeal, Coleman said that “the decision of the AIU should be set aside and that the sanction be eliminated or reduced.”

Elite athletes must make themselves available for random testing and state a location and one-hour window where they can be found on any given day. Doping control officers testified before a disciplinary tribunal that

they were present during the whole of the allotted hour in front of Coleman’s house when he said he would be home.

The AIU is not accusing the athlete of consuming illegal drugs, but it states that his actions for missing multiple drug tests are “careless and reckless.”

“For the avoidance of doubt, there is no suggestion that the athlete has ever taken any prohibited substance and we wish

to make that clear at the outset,” the AIU said in a statement.

The AIU said Coleman missed tests from a timeframe of January to December of 2019. It is unclear on why the sprinting superstar missed several of his drug tests and how many tests exactly is unknown.

With the 2020 Summer Olympics being postponed to summer of 2021 due to COVID-19, Coleman will miss the Olympics which

will be held in Tokyo, Japan.

Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) Track and Field Coach, Greg Schmitt, said, “I’m not surprised by the AIU decision to ban Coleman. He missed more than one test for God’s sake. He’ll learn his lesson and be more responsible.

“I would like to see him at the next Olympics, but to me as a coach, missing several doping tests suggests that you have something to hide. He has to suffer the consequences,” Schmitt added.

Coleman stated in a social media post, “I have never and will never use performance-enhancing supplements or drugs.” He added that he will take a drug test every day of his remaining career to prove his innocence.

Eladia Kennedy, a criminal justice major who is also the captain for the women’s track team at PSUGA, is in favor of the sprinter.

“It is a sad situation and I’m disappointed. He’s one of my favorite athletes and I always look forward to seeing him compete,” Kennedy said.

Coleman never before failed a drug test.



Christian Coleman during 2018 IAAF World Indoor Championships in Birmingham. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

11-2 STEELERS CLINCH PLAYOFF BERTH DESPITE DECEMBER DISARRAY

NATHAN REGA

News Editor

nrr5191@psu.edu

For the first time since 2018, the Pittsburgh Steelers are playoff bound. The playoff berth comes because the Miami Dolphins lost to the Kansas City Chiefs in Week 14. However, the Steelers December performance has left the formerly undefeated team's Super Bowl chances looking doubtful.



Ben Roethlisberger takes aim in regular season game against the Buffalo Bills

In a season marred by the ongoing pandemic, the Steelers' Week 12 matchup against division rivals Baltimore Ravens was postponed, not once but multiple times, due to a COVID-19 outbreak among Ravens players and staff. Originally scheduled for primetime Thanksgiving night, the game was finally played on Wednesday, Dec. 1.

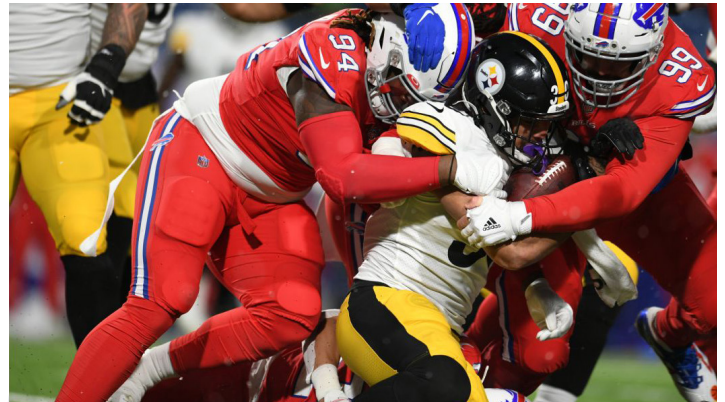
However, the Steelers

barely managed to defeat a Baltimore team decimated by the virus, limping to 11-0 in what Head Coach Mike Tomlin described as a "junior varsity" performance.

The 2020 Steelers finally tasted defeat in Week 13 against the Washington Football Team despite having a two score lead in the first half. Pittsburgh failed to stop Washington's comeback in the second half, ending with a 23-17 loss in an empty Heinz Field.

Six days later, the Steelers lost again 26-15 at Bills Stadium in their Week 14 game against Buffalo. While the secondary held the Bills to only a field goal to start, Quarterback Ben Roethlisberger threw a critical pick-6 to end the half allowing Buffalo to take the lead. The Steelers looked sloppy and completely exposed in the second half, unable to comeback offensively or stop the Bills defensively.

Heading into Week 15 looking far from dominant, it's almost hard to believe that just two weeks ago Pittsburgh was the only remaining undefeated NFL team for the season. The offense looked especially suspect with a nearly nonexistent run game and what



James Conner in regular season game against the Buffalo Bills.

seemed to be an inability to catch in the Red Zone.

"Offensively we're not very good. We're not playing good football and it starts with me," Roethlisberger stated via ESPN. "I think this is a team that has got a lot of resilience and understands what it takes to win football games and understands what time of year it is and right now it's unacceptable."

Defensively, the Steelers are a banged-up group, missing multiple key components due to injury. Against Buffalo, the team was missing outside linebacker Bud Dupree, out for the season with a torn ACL; cornerback Joe Haden, on concussion protocol; and linebacker Robert Spillane, due to a knee injury. Spillane had been covering for Devin Bush, who is also out for the season due to a torn ACL.

Another huge culprit in the Steelers current slump is none other than

COVID-19. Pittsburgh was without starters Maurkice Pouncey, center, and James Conner, running back, for multiple games due to quarantine procedures. Also, the team lost its original Week 7 bye thanks to rescheduling due to a COVID outbreak among the Tennessee Titans. The rescheduling and lack of rest takes its toll on the players and their bodies.

However, some good news came on Monday night and the Steelers owe the Ravens a thank you for winning against the Cleveland Browns. The Browns loss keeps the Steelers safely in the lead for winning the AFC North division.

Still, the team has many issues to address in its final three season games if it wants to be a serious contender come playoffs.

Photos courtesy of Karl Roser, Pittsburgh Steelers.