



# The GA-ZETTE

MAY 2021

The Campus Newspaper for Penn State Greater Allegheny

VOLUME 8



# *Congratulations Graduates!*

Page 2



## SPRING 2021 COMMENCEMENT EDITION

Graduate's PSUGA Story	Page 5
SGA Faces Post-Pandemic Challenge	Page 7
The Crossing Bridges Summit	Page 8
The ADA at 30, Part 2	Page 10
From Where We Sit	Page 18
Pandemic Safe PGH Summer Events	Page 24

# PSUGA'S SPRING 2021 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

## First in-person graduation since Fall 2019



### NATHAN REGA

Editor-in-Chief

[nrr5191@psu.edu](mailto:nrr5191@psu.edu)

Forty-six Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) students graduated May 8 during the campus' first in-person commencement ceremony since Fall 2019, overcoming an academic year challenged by a sudden and unexpected global pandemic.

PSUGA's Spring 2021 commencement was held in the Wunderley Gymnasium with limited attendance in order to ensure the proper social distance. The faculty and platform party was absent from the stage out of pandemic precautions.

All in-person grad-

uates and their guests remained masked and socially distanced throughout the ceremony, complying with COVID-19 safety measures. While most graduates walked the stage to receive their degrees, some were recognized virtually.



Attendees were greeted by the ceremony's Grand Marshal and Associate Teaching Professor of African and African American Studies, Dr.

Anthony Mitchell. "This is one of the great days of a lifetime for our graduates, their families and friends," he said.

"This past year has been anything but ordinary," Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Jaqueline Edmondson stated, addressing the graduates during a moment of reflection. "Together we navigated a worldwide pandemic. Together we faced the realities of systemic racism and civil unrest. Together we pursued educational goals and hope for a new and better future.

"You accomplished much while also fielding tremendous challenges and here you are."

"While many have experienced great loss and heartache this past year, your presence here today proves that there is always hope," Edmondson added.



A commencement address was given by two Spring 2021 communications graduates, Zachary Schmader and Alisha Tarver. Both expressed *(Continued on next page)*

(Continued from page 2)

gratitude to the PSUGA community as they shared their academic experiences with the guests.

“On behalf of the graduates, I would like to thank the administration, professors, staff, fellow students, coaches, and families for supporting us the whole way,” Schmader said.

“I want to say thank you to the Penn State Greater Allegheny community for creating a space where my story matters,” Tarver stated.

Among the in-person graduates in attendance, one chair remained empty with a single rose to honor the life of Tre Taylor, Spring 2021 information sciences and technology graduate. Taylor passed away unexpectedly Jan. 6.

“The warmth of your flame will never be forgotten,” Mitchell stated, reciting a poem and letter dedicated to Taylor’s family. “It comforted many



members of the village. It comforted us.”

Taylor’s posthumous degree was accepted by his mother, April Taylor, who was in attendance.

“By the virtue of the authority vested in me by the board of trustees of the Pennsylvania State University, I present each of you the appropriate degree,” Edmondson said to the graduates as the ceremony came to a close.

“Candidates, you may now switch your tassel from right to left.”

Fourteen graduates were recognized with PSUGA’s Academic Excellence Award.

“These awards are given to students who achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.6 and above and have completed at least 36 credits at Penn State,” Associate Chief Academic Officer, Honors Program

Coordinator, and Associate Professor of Chemistry, Dr. Megan Nagel, explained.

“You are now and always a part of the Greater Allegheny Community,” Edmondson proudly exclaimed to the graduates.

The ceremony can be viewed in its entirety at <https://greaterallegheny.psu.edu/GA-Registrar/commencement/spring-2021>



# Congratulations 2021 Graduates!

## ASSOCIATE DEGREE GRADUATES

### Information Sciences and Technology

Max Shugerman  
Tre Taylor \*

## BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE GRADUATES

### Communications

Troy David Ferguson  
Sara Payo

Zachary James Schmader  
Alisha Tarver

Aniyia Monique Bentley-King  
Katelyn Dougherty  
Shawn Lewis ♦

### Psychology

Brian Joseph Nuckols  
Haley Nicole Snyder ♦♦

## BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE GRADUATES

### Administration of Justice

Alyssa Leigh Guzzie  
Alysa Noel Kennedy

Brian Charles Koglin  
Mathew Giovanni Smith

### Biobehavioral Health

Alexandra Florescu Eubank ♦♦  
Alexandra F. Hall

Logan Thomas Stein ♦  
Michael R. Weimerskirch

### Business

Alaina Jean Cherry  
Korionna DeVaughn  
Joseph P. Dykes  
Jessica Nicole Gatti

Daisy Marie Pastories  
Kristina Rai  
Maryam Shah  
Brett Joseph Yuhas

### Information Sciences and Technology

Philip John Belinsky  
Arnesh Dandekar \*\*  
Ratna J. Gathala  
Christopher Lee Harrison  
Sara Harshman \*\*

Kyle Kellermann ♦  
Narad Koirala  
Bimal Regmi  
Prajal Sharma  
Katrina Marie Shields

### Project and Supply Chain Management

Jeffery Lawrence Holden  
Alexander Joseph Kahanic ♦♦

### Psychology

Niasia Boyd  
Akiiaa Sarai Compton  
Ivy S. Mervis

Maranda Leigh Ross  
Alexis B. Whitehead  
Ashton Andrew Wygonik



Business Graduate, Kori DeVaughn,  
at commencement with her nephew, Kai'den

*The GA-Zette team  
wishes you all the best in  
your future endeavors!*



♦♦♦ Suma Cum Laude Distinction Candidate  
♦♦ Magma Cum Laude Distinction Candidate  
♦ Cum Laude Distinction Candidate  
\* Degree Conferred Posthumously  
\*\* Summer 2021 Graduate Candidate

# MY STORY TO SHARE

## A reflection on my life at Penn State Greater Allegheny

**ALISHA TARVER**

News Editor

ait5274@psu.edu

*The following is the text of the graduation speech delivered by Alisha Tarver, senior communications major and Spring 2021 commencement speaker at the May 8 ceremonies at the Wunderley Gymnasium on the campus of Penn State Greater Allegheny*



Good afternoon graduates, family, friends, faculty, and staff. Welcome to the Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) Spring 2021 commencement. Whether you are joining us virtually or in person, thank you for celebrating this important moment with us.

I want to say thank you to the Penn State Greater Allegheny community for creating this space where my story matters. I think a lot of what's wrong with the world is that we don't do a good job of listening to people's stories, and making sure people know their stories matter. You're not always given the opportunity to tell your story when you look like me.

In the words of someone who has inspired me, Professor Kimberle Crenshaw: "We must be-

gin to tell black women's stories because without them, we cannot tell the story of black men, white men, white women, or anyone else in this country. The story of black women is critical because those who don't know their history are doomed to repeat it,"

This pandemic has revealed who has been listening to our stories and who has not. Here at Penn State Greater Allegheny, you showed me that my story mattered, and you helped me learn how to tell it. I learned so much about myself by being in the presence of all of you.

I was born and raised in Farrell, PA. My small town was safe, but the people there never leave. There's a lot of love there but no room for big dreams. I was alive but I

wasn't living. My imagination was dim, and I let myself be limited to the barriers my small town put in front of me.

I moved to Pittsburgh, and started attending Greater Allegheny, because I knew there was more to my story than simply existing. To break down those barriers that surrounded me, I had to remove myself from everything that felt safe to me.

When I first started school I only desired to receive my undergrad education, now I plan to get a doctorate. The majority of the people in my family don't have a bachelor's and nobody has a Ph.D. After pursuing my degree at PSUGA, I am now able to see that as a possibility for myself. I am now able to see that as a part of my

story.

Until you develop the language to tell the world who you are and what you've been through, you'll never know where you're going. I will always know what I am capable of because I acknowledge the things that should have broken me but didn't, and I make sure to embrace the people and the things that have built me up.

To my fellow graduates, you are all superheroes in my eyes. The world has been on fire around us and somehow, we're making it out of this pandemic with degrees. Please take the day to celebrate and be proud of yourself. Stop and take a few moments to pat yourself on the back.

We couldn't have done it without the support of the people who believed in us. So, when you tell the world your story, don't forget about the people and the places that helped mold it. I am proud of you, and even prouder to be a part of this graduating class.

Whether you know me personally or not, every last one of your stories has shaped who I am today in some way. I'll be forever grateful for my time here at GA.



## ALTERNATIVE GRADE PROCESSES AVAILABLE FOR UNDERGRADUATES & GRADUATES

The following article was obtained via [Penn State News](#) on Apr. 20, 2021

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — For the spring 2021 semester, optional alternative grading is available for undergraduate students, and there is an exception process available for graduate students who wish to request optional alternative grades.

All students are strongly encouraged to talk with their academic advisers as they make decisions about whether to use alternative grades. Undergraduate students should continue to use alternative grading very cautiously and to pay considerable attention to the potential long-term implications of this decision, especially for the selection of SAT grades.

Penn State's [undergraduate alternative grade system](#) is an opt-in system meant to provide flexibility for undergraduate students who may be facing significant challenges

while learning during the pandemic. There are no limits on the number of courses for which students can use alternative grades, though there are some restrictions in specific entrance-to-major (ETM) courses as well as for some major courses. Taking an alternative grade for a course will remove that course from GPA calculation on the student's transcript.

"This is an imperfect solution to an imperfect situation," said Jeff Adams, policies influencing equity task force member and associate vice president and associate dean for undergraduate education, [when the alternative grading announcement was made in January](#).

Adams cited the potential negative impact of using alternative grading on students' future professional and academic goals,

as well as the impact of alternative grading on students' ability to enter GPA-controlled majors, as some of the task force's concerns.

Students are able to access an online alternative grade tool in LionPath until 11:59 p.m. (ET) May 21 to finalize any alterna-

tive grade selections.

The full system and alternative grading choices can be found at [registrar.psu.edu](#).

At this time, there are no plans to offer alternative grades for Fall 2021.

For more information on alternative grading, visit [keeplearning.psu.edu](#).

### ALTERNATIVE GRADES EXPLAINED

#### SAT (Satisfactory)

This grade will be available if a student earns a C or better in a course. A course with an SAT grade can be used to meet prerequisites requiring a C or better.

#### V (Pass)

This grade, which will be available if a student earns a D in a course, will be considered a passing grade. The student will earn credits for the course, and a V grade can be used to meet requirements for which D is an acceptable grade. The V grade cannot be used to meet C-or-better requirements.

#### Z (No Grade)

This grade will be available if a student earns an F in a course. Z can be used to replace an F grade and will be treated similar to a Late Drop (LD).

# SGA ENDS PANDEMIC YEAR WITH NO ELECTION, NO NEW OFFICERS

## Post-semester brings last-minute needed focus, future aspirations

**CHEYENNE HENNEN**

Contributing Writer

ersh5384@psu.edu

The Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) Student Government Association (SGA) held its last meeting of the academic year on Apr. 23, through ZOOM, during Common Hour, where Interim President, Sidney Przybylski, was expecting to announce the results of the election of new officers. With few attendees, except for current officers, the meeting was brief and just enough time for Przybylski to announce that no one from campus ran for elected office nor did any current officers seek re-election.

The lack of an election and interested officers capped a year of governance challenges, changes in officers, and minimal overall campus participation.

“No one reapplied and everyone else is transferring so there aren’t any officers currently,” she told *The GA-Zette* immediately after the meeting.

“I’m still talking with who wants to be vice president with me as president, so the only solid officer position is me...

also [we are] in the midst of restructuring so everything’s kind of up in the air,” Przybylski added, also thanking the executive board “for participating” in SGA this year.

Przybylski announced the success of the SGA Ice Cream social, which was held the previous week. The event was to encourage students to apply to and get involved in SGA.

“That went pretty good. We gave out 25 coupons for free ice cream, so that was fun,” Przybylski said, although she did acknowledge that the goal of the event was not accomplished.

Przybylski later thanked all who attended and participated in SGA

throughout the year and she wished them success in the future. “Thanks for coming to the meetings...I appreciate that. It was wonderful to get to know you guys. Happy end of the semester!” Przybylski said.

Within the week following that last meeting, Residence Life and Co-curricular Engagement Coordinator, Louise Aravich, told *The GA-Zette* that there has now been some resolution to the SGA leadership for next year, but that there is still work to be done.

Aravich went on to say that SGA has moved forward on electing Przybylski, an energy engineering major, and

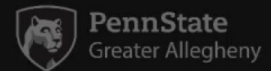
Elijah Akinade, biobehavioral health (pre-med track) major and current SGA chief-of-staff, to SGA president and vice-president, respectively. Both students will be juniors come fall.

“Every campus should have an SGA, but as it’s a student-run organization, if there is no interest, we cannot run it without students,” Aravich said. “Sidney and Elijah are very dedicated to SGA and growing the organization in the upcoming year.”

Aravich also said that Przybylski and Akinade will be recruiting hard during NSO (New Student Orientation) days, as they both are also NSO leaders, and they will be hosting an SGA booth at the club recruitment fair in the fall on Aug 25.

In spite of the situation, Przybylski is still asking and encouraging returning students to PSUGA to apply to participate in SGA in the fall. Aravich says that she and Associate Director of Student Affairs, Justin Dandoy, have plans to dedicate more time as co-advisors to SGA.





Panelists, clockwise from top left to right: Rochelle Jackson, Dr. Johnathan White (moderator), Rikell Ford, Dr. Stella Onuoha-Obilor, Rep. Morgan Cephas

## POLITICAL INFLUENCES ON BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH

### Final installment of PSUGA's 2020-2021 Crossing Bridges Summit

Your voice matters... we citizens have a role to play in our healthcare.

That was the underlying theme of the fourth and final installment of Penn State Greater Allegheny's (PSUGA) 2021 Crossing Bridges Summit on Apr. 15, entitled "Political Influences on Black Women's Health."

The virtual presentation occurred during Black Maternal Health Week and was part of a year-long series focused on the 2019 University of Pittsburgh report,

["Pittsburgh's Inequality Across Gender and Race."](#)

The Summit's April program featured elected officials, women's health advocates and medical experts: Dr. Stella Onuoha-Obilor, vice president, clinical quality, Highmark Health; Rochelle Jackson, executive director and founder, Black Women's Policy Agenda; Rikell Ford, school board member, Clairton City Schools; and Rep. Morgan B. Cephas, 192nd District, Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

Following a welcome from Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Edmondson, and an introduction from moderator, Assistant Professor of History, Dr. Johnathan White, the hour-long discussion probed how just "pulling the lever" on election day does not affect the changes needed. We must "continue to build our voices and our power" when it comes to our healthcare, Jackson told the virtual crowd.

"We need to hold our public officials accountable," she added. "They

must be sympathetic and empathetic to the needs of the people...elected officials who have come from or live in our communities...we need to think of who we vote for that 'looks like us,'" Jackson said.

Black women are not always being heard when it comes to healthcare and their needs are not always being met. She gave a positive shout out to PA Representatives Austin Davis (D) from McKeesport and Summer Lee (D) from Braddock  
*(Continued on next page)*



(Continued from page 8)

who live and work in the Mon Valley as not just doing but listening to constituents' healthcare needs.

As a visiting panelist from the Philadelphia area, Rep. Cephas agreed.

"Elections do matter, and it is good to have a voice (in the State House)...because state and local governments play a large role in advancing changes in trends," she said, citing the data from the Pitt report. Cephas added that this was no more prevalent than in the past year during the COVID-19 pandemic where a disproportionate number of virus cases and deaths were found within the Black community.

"COVID knows no person," she said, "and it came here to roost." She said that healthcare inequities and racial disparities made for challenges in diagnosing and requiring immediate treatment for people of color. "We must look at laws and legislations (and healthcare) through the lens of racial equity."

Dr. Obilor noted that Blacks were already a vulnerable part of the population, due to health issues

like diabetes and heart disease, and that COVID exposed those issues and the healthcare inequities that went along with them.

She also cited pregnancy as another healthcare issue within the Black community. She said that 23% of Black women are likely to die from pregnancy complications so taking time to treat everyone with the same detail and equitably is important. "In order to attain the highest level of health equity for all people, you must remove disparities," she said.

"Racism is a public health threat," Obilor added. "We must advocate for the highest level of care, regardless of race."

Combatting inequities in health needs to start in the schools, according to Ford, who is no stranger to these issues. She noted that 67.5% of Black mothers are sole providers for their families and their take-home wages are from jobs that are some of the lowest-paying.

When students are having issues in school, it is not often related to their behavior, but it is reflective of what is happening at home and healthcare is part of that equation, she added, also reinforcing the

need to hold school boards accountable.

"There are so many issues that students come to school with. In actuality, they are symptoms to what is going on...the trauma they are seeing at home...it is passed down from one generation to the next, so their perception is not always what is 'normal,'" Ford added. "We need more social workers and less school officers... and we must elect officials who have come from or live in the community... who are sympathetic and empathetic to the needs of the people they serve."

Jackson said that it is not enough to just vote, but we all need to get involved beyond the ballot box and find ways to let our voices and our concerns be heard and to continue to advocate until change is made.

"The late (Congresswoman) Shirley Chisholm said it best...if they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair," Jackson said.

This virtual series marked the fourth year that the Greater Allegheny campus hosted its Crossing Bridges Summit. The goal of the Summit—and its related unity talks and task force on racial

equity and justice—is to help address racial divides in the Mon Valley. Past programs have included local artist, Vanessa German, and internationally-noted speakers, Dr. Cornel West, Angela Davis and Michael Eric Dyson.

"Our theme (this year) was focused on Black women's health because of the gender and inequality report that came out of the University of Pittsburgh," Chancellor Edmondson said. "I feel like we've done a really thorough job of getting expert panelists to address the issue. I've been really pleased by the number of people who've participated."

Edmondson added that it was great working with Penn State's public media station, WPSU, for the livestreaming and the archiving of all of the presentations so "people can look at them whenever they have time. "I think we're getting some good, actionable takeaways that we'll be working on in the future too," Edmondson concluded.

All four of the Crossing Bridges Summit events from this past academic year can be viewed at <https://www.watch.psu.edu/crossingbridges/>

# THE CROSSING BRIDGES SUMMIT

BRIDGING RACIAL DIVIDES IN THE MON VALLEY

# AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AT 30

## Employment challenges & successes

**SARA PAYO**

Contributing Writer

sap5403@psu.edu

*This is the final installment of a two-part series by Sara Payo, Spring 2021 communications graduate and recipient of Greater PSUGA's 2021 Dedication to Diversity and Inclusion Student Award*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law by President George H.W. Bush on July 26, 1990, a law which provided “equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities” and through the Department of Justice, made it a federal offense to discriminate against individuals based on their disability.

Similar pieces of legislation were submitted to Congress in years prior, but they failed to pass due to the lack of support and votes. It took years of advocacy and physical demonstrations to make an impact.

What followed were years of revisions, amendments, and additional legislation that would enable individuals with disabilities to have access to opportunities in all aspects of their lives. The ADA defines disability as “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major



**President Bush signs the Americans with Disabilities Act on the White House South Lawn on July 26, 1990**

life activities.”

As the ADA celebrated its 30 years of change, Pittsburgh’s disability community has found that there are still changes that need to be made, specifically in the employment provisions of the law. The Department of Labor states that the ADA’s employment provisions “prohibit discrimination in job application procedures, hiring, advancement, termination, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.”

Even with these provisions, commonplace issues that might not be considered discriminatory or inaccessible are

actually invisible barriers that many disabled people encounter in different areas of their professional lives. Harsh lighting, loud noise, or uncomfortable furniture in an office can cause sensory overload and affect focus and performance. Just ask Kaitlyn Myers-Brooks.



Myers-Brooks is a licensed counselor at Connection: Counseling & Consultation Inc, a local

organization that provides counseling, coaching and additional services for adolescent and adult clients with diverse disabilities and identities within the Pittsburgh area.

Prior to private counseling, Myers-Brooks worked at a non-profit helping people with career counseling and, as she said, she “kept mental health considerations in mind as part of the job search process,” adding that “I became pretty familiar with what the ADA says about that and supporting people because it’s so important to know that it is there, to protect and make sure that people have an equitable  
**(Continued on next page)**



Photo courtesy [Counseling & Consultation Inc.](#)

(Continued from page 10)

experience in their professional lives,”

Myers-Brooks said.

Individuals who were qualified for jobs but did not know they could request workplace accommodations, sought Myers-Brooks help in figuring out the environmental changes that would allow them to feel comfortable and be successful. She explained the dynamics of disclosing disability status and requesting accommodations.

“If somebody who used a wheelchair needed a ramp to get into the office...if somebody with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), pending their preference of language, might need fidgets at their desk,” Myers-Brooks said. “That just makes it so that they have the same ability to focus as the other person who might need to get in physically to the space.”

For K. Rose Quayle of Homestead, the ADA

“kept my job safe.”

“It allows for me to hold my position and have some degree of freedom in what duties I do, which I am able to do with some modifications to my cognitive disability. For example, I can ask more questions, have things explained to me more often and do duties which require less reading,” she said.



Quayle, a New Orleans native with a degree in graphic design, works in finance. She shared that she and her mother have disabilities. While Quayle’s experience with

the ADA is mostly positive, as her employer has actively worked to be inclusive to individuals with disabilities, she shared the difficulties that her mother, who uses a wheelchair, experienced due at a well-known university.

“She was yelled at in front of a class for being late to turn in a paper. She was literally unable to get into the room.” Quayle said it was “one of the few times in my life I have seen my mother cry.”

Michael (last name withheld upon request) also experienced discrimination based on his mental health, which affected his education and professional success. Michael is a designer who identifies as having psychiatric and developmental disabilities.

“Unfortunately, when I had a mental health episode for the first time, I had not had any accommodations in place and ended up losing my student job at the time,” Michael said. “I similarly did not have any accommodations in place for my classes. I ended up dropping all but one class and was able to get an accommodation in that class to turn in assignments later.”

After college, Michael found a new job but did not request accommodations. He said a major concern was “the fear of disclosing [disability status] in the workplace” and he mentioned he was

involved in the group for employees with disabilities and a few “had negative experiences, especially with retaliation.”

Michael experienced another mental health event while working and he was terminated before he could request accommodations. Afterward, his employer would not accept medical documentation from a licensed social worker because they are not considered a mental health professional under the ADA.

“The ADA allows employers to require medical documentation of a disability and that an accommodation will help a limitation caused by a disability that interferes with a major life function,” Michael said. “But sometimes it’s hard to get documentation.”

While employment is a major part of the ADA, it also covers “state and local government services... and public accommodations and commercial facilities.”

James Shirley is a Pittsburgh native with degrees in theology and history. Shirley said the ADA assisted him in school when he was diagnosed with a learning disability and had emotional disturbances.

“The impact that ADA had on my life is that it taught me that even though I had a disability (Continued on next page)

# THE FUTURE OF ADA

*(Continued from page 11)*

making me different from others, my life is still important and that I have equal rights under the law and the power to be or do anything that I set my mind to,” Shirley said.

“On the job, ADA allowed me to get the training and experience I needed to obtain my degrees, and to achieve gainful employment,” he said.

Siobhan Brooks is the disability services coordinator at Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA). Brooks stated the importance of the ADA and what the campus has done to be accessibility-compliant.

“We do our best to guarantee program access so that all barriers are removed to ensure equal opportunity for everyone ... to make sure students can be successful,”

Brooks said. “Access is everything, and I think you want everybody to have an opportunity to thrive and flourish in any environment, regardless of any type of ailment.”

**According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in 2016, 19% of undergraduate students reported having a disability.**

Where does a 30-year-old program go in the next decade? The consensus from the interviews with members of the Pittsburgh disability community is that there is still a long way to go to ensuring equitable access, non-discrimination, and opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

While the ADA as a law automatically applies to all individuals with

disabilities, there is still pushback from the government and business sector. It is still legal to pay disabled workers less than the federal minimum wage. The disability community constantly advocates for equality.

Myers-Brooks says that educating and working with employers and individuals with disabilities is a key step to “creating an equitable and truly inclusive environment that is really embodying the spirit of the ADA.”

“The more that we can talk about the value of a diverse workforce, the value of having people who think in new ways, who’ve had maybe different challenges and experiences than a neurotypical person or a person who’s never experienced a mental health challenge, the resilience there, the problem solving capacities are all the good reasons to

do what the ADA wants you to do,” Myers-Brooks said.

Michael shared a different perspective of what the future for the disabled community could be, saying as it stands now, the ADA is more focused on accommodations when it should be about advocating for changes to make workplaces more inclusive.

“For me, it’s the same distinction between accessibility versus inclusion, or accommodation versus inclusion,” Michael said. “It’s a cultural change that is needed.”

The ADA admits “that many barriers to equal opportunity still remain. We recommit to our work of making the promise of the ADA a reality, enabling all Americans with disabilities to achieve their dreams and reach their full potential.”

In the end, disability rights are human rights and disability advocacy is for everyone.

To learn more about the 30th anniversary of the ADA, please visit [https://www.ada.gov/30th\\_anniversary/index.html](https://www.ada.gov/30th_anniversary/index.html)

To learn more about the work of the Pittsburgh disability community, please visit <https://adapittsburgh.com/stories>



## LGBTQ+ SUMMER VIRTUAL EVENTS



The Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity invites you to Camp Crystal Queer!

All summer programs for the Center will have a summer theme! We'll have virtual and in person programs, so you can stay connected with the Center, no matter where you are.

Include an email in this form (<https://bit.ly/2P-WDxbi>) to stay updated with Camp Crystal Queer Programs!



**HAVE A HAPPY AND SAFE SUMMER BREAK!**

## PSUGA LAUNCHES NEW SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM



### RILEY PERCIAVALLE

Staff Writer

[rup70@psu.edu](mailto:rup70@psu.edu)

In a few short months, Dr. Charles Robinson will make his way from Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) to the Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) campus to help students understand the social work environment and the new degree program he is about to launch on the campus.

“Service, social and integrity are the main keys on why I chose to work my way into this field,” he said. His main goal is to help teach students why this field of endeavor is important.

In the ideal class time, Robinson plans to hold students to the three Hs: honor, humbleness and humility as part of the social work studies.

This fall, he plans to teach an introduction to social work class on Mondays and Wednesdays. His arrival at PSUGA culminates in a vision he had to help and work in the Mon Valley after he moved to Pittsburgh 15 years ago. After earning his doctorate and developing a social work program at CCAC, Robinson was excited to apply for and accept this new opportunity on campus.

“I figured it would be a great strength and opportunity to help the McKeesport area by helping to advance students in social work,” he said.

“He brings a wonderful experience to the degree program,” Chancellor and Chief Academic officer, Dr. Jacqueline Edmondson stated. “I’m excited about him joining our faculty, then joining our campus community.”

# LEADERSHIP SKILLS SHOULD START EARLY IN COLLEGE CAREER

## Set stage for graduation, future



**MADASON PORTER-GIBSON**  
Staff Writer

[mnp5208@psu.edu](mailto:mnp5208@psu.edu)

Students, take the lead in life and become a leader at Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA). Be the student who can demonstrate versatility and experience in leadership to set yourself apart from your competition. And students...you do not need to overextend yourself to gain that out-of-class experience.

At PSUGA, being a leader goes beyond a formal role; it is about your passions and wants to change your environment.

Associate Director of Student Affairs, Justin Dandoy, says the best advice for students who want to take on leadership roles is to find what they are passionate about and not just taking on a part because it looks good on a

resume.

“It will not benefit those students or anyone because they are not going to enjoy it, nor will they learn much from it, and they won’t put in the time and effort,” he said. “As a student, you should focus on an opportunity or a leadership position because it helps...engage in something you have passion for. Don’t focus on an opportunity or leadership role just to be involved in something.”

Dandoy said that enhancing a resume and a personal experience should be on depth, not on the number of activities. He calls it a focus on depth, not breadth.

“Some students get involved in every program and leadership position... unfortunately, it is too much for them to handle, and they do their roles halfheartedly and barely get involved. We want our

students to take on a role and be great at them,” he added.

It is about taking the time to focus and use personal energy wisely.

“As a student, you only have so much capacity, and your main priority is making sure you succeed in your classes and maintain your health. So find a couple of things to put your heart and soul into because you’ll have more success as a leader,” he added.

Students passionate about a cause and want a change in their community should find ways to get involved and demonstrate leadership off campus, as well. Dandoy said that leadership isn’t about having a formal role on-campus, but that it also means “helping to promote issues and concerns that are important to you as a student.”

There are many different ways to take action and guide a team. Engaging and taking on various challenges within a classroom or project expresses leadership.

“For example, students can take on a role as a researcher or someone who comes up with a great project; these are just two great ways to

gain leadership skills. So it’s not just about joining a club or organization and getting those traditional leadership roles; it can be about doing other things on campus too,” he added.

Authoritative skills are vital to a student’s professional field. It is a fundamental role that challenges students to carry a team and work through different situations. Each job is different so students will exercise different skills. Dandoy said being a leader is also about preparing to graduate so that students can take their leadership experience and skills and transfer that experience to their new job.

“It will make students better as professionals and better community members because they are learning how to deal with different situations,” he said. “It is about learning and being able to apply your skills once you are in a professional field. Students should build a strong foundation and find specific skills that will benefit them in their careers,” Dandoy added.



**PennState**  
Greater Allegheny

# PENN STATE POLICE EQUIPPED WITH BODY-WORN CAMERAS

The following article was compiled from University emails and [Penn State News](#)

Beginning yesterday, Penn State police officers began wearing body cameras, [fulfilling a University commitment announced in June 2020](#).

“Equipping every officer with body-worn cameras enables Penn State police officers to be more transparent and accountable with the communities they serve,” Greater Allegheny Station Commander, Lt. Diane Grimm, stated via a campus email. “The tool also supports community and officer safety.”

Body-worn cameras are small cameras worn on a law enforcement officer’s chest to record interactions between the officer and the public. The cameras have a microphone to capture sound and internal data storage to save video footage for later review.

“This important step builds on our ongoing efforts to cultivate a more trusting relationship with community members,” Charlie Noffsinger, associate vice president for Penn State University Police



*The Penn State police officer uniform features a body-worn camera. Photo by Patrick Mansell.*

and Public Safety (UPPS), said.

“Body-worn cameras contribute to officer accountability and give police and citizens another tool that contributes to better policing. While not a solution on their own, body-worn cameras can be used as a promising approach to improve interactions within communities when appropriate policy safeguards and training are in place,” he added.

In recent years, UPPS researched body-worn camera technology and relevant laws, best practices and training. Following this thorough review

last year, UPPS requested funding from the University for roughly 150 police officers and related funding for video data storage, training and operations.

All sworn police officers within UPPS are equipped with a body-worn camera and they serve the Penn State campuses, including University Park and Greater Allegheny.

“Appropriating funds for this initiative during fiscally challenging times triggered by a pandemic demonstrates that University leaders understand how important

this equipment is to our officers and the Penn State community,” Senior Vice President for Finance and Business, Sara Thorndike, said, adding that the cameras support safety and accountability, and demonstrate transparency in policing operations.

Equipping police officers with body-worn cameras followed development of a UPPS policy based on state laws and industry standards, development of an internal training bulletin, hosting hands-on training sessions for officers, and leading briefings with multiple University stakeholders, including University leaders and faculty and student groups.

“If your campus organization or work unit would like to learn more about this program, please contact me [[dlg13@psu.edu](mailto:dlg13@psu.edu)] to schedule a virtual session that would include an overview of this program and provide an opportunity for our department to answer your questions,” Grimm said.



**DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!**  
**PENNSYLVANIA PRIMARY**  
**MAY 18, 2021**



# GOATS GETTING BACK TO WORK

**CHEYENNE HENNEN**

Contributing Writer

[cs5384@psu.edu](mailto:cs5384@psu.edu)

Finals are over. The dorms are vacant. The campus commencement ceremony has concluded. Another academic year has come to a close at Penn State Greater Allegheny. But a new cohort of “kids” is making its way to campus.

Yes, the goats...the goats of Greater Allegheny are back!

The campus has been working with Allegheny GoatScape, a Pittsburgh-based company, to provide goats that assist with the landscaping challenges that arise on campus. The goats are anticipated to work for 4-6 weeks on the areas adjacent to the Wunderley Multi-Purpose Building and the Maintenance Building on the upper side of campus.



*Photo courtesy Allegheny GoatScape*

“The goats are utilized to get into the deep wooded areas to help address invasive vine and tree species.” Adam Homer, maintenance manager, physical plant, said.

“The goats are part of our team. Without the goats, we would need to look to a heavy mechanical solution to address these issues. This would

include excavator equipment,” he added.

Allegheny GoatScape typically provides eleven goats with one donkey, that latter that serves as a guard or protection to the goats from other animals. With the help of the goats, the vegetation is cleared, and the roots of invasive species are killed without the need for heavy equipment, making it a sustain-

able practice overall.

“The goats are a truly sustainable tool to utilize when trying to address overgrowth and troublesome areas.” Homer continued. “Utilizing goats to assist with our landscaping challenges allows for a less invasive and more sustainable approach to maintaining our grounds and addressing trouble areas.”

After the goats finish their work this spring, they will leave to work elsewhere in the Pittsburgh region, only to return to the campus in the fall for two weeks in early Sept.—just as other students are returning to class—and they will work quietly, to perform their maintenance duties on an area that was previously worked on behind McKeesport Hall.





# THOUSANDS OF NEW SUMMER ARRIVALS SET TO HELP PSUGA “BEE GREATER”



## CHEYENNE HENNEN

Contributing Writer

[csh5384@psu.edu](mailto:csh5384@psu.edu)

Associate Professor of Information Science and Technology, Galen Grimes, is not only a professor, but a beekeeper... of approximately 160,000 bees...safely living in the backyard of his home.

Bees play a major role in sustainable agriculture. “Between 60-70% of all of our food depends on bees as pollinators,” he said.

Grimes has been a beekeeper for three years. He currently has seven hives in his backyard, two of which he plans to transfer to the Greater

Allegheny (GA) campus. By mid-summer, Grimes expects to have more than 250,000 bees.



“These are all European honeybees. A lot are Italian and Carniolans,” Grimes said. “I get them from the president of the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Associa-

tion...he is a breeder.”

The bees will be transported to GA with the help of Adam Homer, maintenance manager, physical plant. The bees and hives will then be placed behind an electric fence for safety. However, a date and location has yet to be determined for transport and construction.

The campus already had goats visiting this spring to help maintain and curb overgrown vegetation. The bees are another aspect of the campus’ focus on sustainability.

“We are trying to provide another exam-

ple of how individuals and groups can work to help maintain the environment.” Grimes said. There is a plan to start a bee club and to find ways to get faculty staff and students engaged in the life of the bees.” Yes, there will be honey, too.

Professor Grimes is hopeful for the future of bees, even though bees are declining because of pesticides and disease.

“More people are getting into beekeeping, which is a good sign,” he said. “We have to work to eliminate pesticides that are harmful to bees and the constant destruction of greenspace.”

# OPINIONS... FROM WHERE WE SIT

## GUILTY VERDICT IN DEREK CHAUVIN TRIAL FOR DEATH OF GEORGE FLOYD

**SHANNON M. REID**

Guest Columnist

[smr96@psu.edu](mailto:smr96@psu.edu)

Well, this is a day we have looked forward to more than anything. Former Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin has been found guilty on all three charges of murder in the death of George Floyd.

It looks like after all the hard protests and the embalming of the incident that incited the entire nation into unrest last year, the jury had decided that all the old practices of social injustice toward Black Americans had been used up.

Though we must not be so quick as to conclude that justice has been served for all of Black America. When an officer gets convicted for murdering a Black man, a path towards civil redress is only just beginning. Before the trial even ended, we have seen two more police-related murders in the process: Daunte Wright and Adam Toledo.

The aftermath of the trial only opens up a space large enough for us to exhale relief and give ourselves a pat on the back. George Floyd was not the first and he definitely will not be the last.

For me, this whole



*Derek Chauvin booking photo, April 20, 2021.*

*Photo courtesy Minnesota Department of Corrections*

verdict was about truth, protest and accountability.

One thing we could learn from this is that systemic racism has not worsened. It merely has dimensions to it that are revealed to us each day. This is a form of truth those who practice it want to suppress, not because it is ugly, but because they fear that some action could be taken against them. Mrs. Darnella Frazier, who had recorded Chauvin and his fellow officers on her phone the minute she caught them in the act, is the reason this injustice became known to the world.

The protests last year over the death of George Floyd, to me, were per-

haps the most defining event in the pursuit for racial justice in United States history. I believe in my heart of hearts we owe most of the thanks to those people around the nation who fought hard to make their voices heard and those 38 witnesses who had the courage to testify in the trial, including those police officers and health experts. Without them, none of this would have had a chance or even mattered.

The defense did everything it could to help Chauvin get off the hook. It failed and everybody got a victory they never even knew they could have. Perhaps Chauvin could have expected to

beat the odds and ultimately dodge the sentence he ended up with. After all, quantity does not match quality. By the fact itself, this occasion was a very rare one.

I will not call it luck, just a rare occasion. Every Black civilian who has died in police custody, holding the police officer accountable, comes at a very small likelihood and there have been many Derek Chauvins in previous cases who had gotten off on these types of charges in the end.

I mean, that is the laziest thing about it. They have a knowledge of the law and the badges to prove it. One dead person,  
*(Continued on next page)*

(Continued from page 18)

white or Black, cannot get four officers, backed by a whole department, indicted.

We need to face the fact that officers cannot be held culpable every time an innocent person gets killed while they are on-duty. This just so happens to be a problem unique to the Black demographic. It matters, but very few have ever had enough power to do anything about it.

Well, not this time. Floyd's life was worth the guilty verdict. But again, we must not mistake this time of jubilation as a justice for all of Black America.

As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. uttered at his Penn State University Park Recreation Hall speech in 1966—and it still rings true today: “We’ve come a long, long way, but we have a long, long way to go before the problem of racial injustice is solved.” In other words, the road to change is a never-ending journey.

For the moment, everybody could just be glad to be able to put all of this behind them, knowing that they had done everything they could and that for the first time in years, the Black community has had accountability.

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

**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 published monthly, but is also posted and updated bi-weekly, on a digital platform at [sites.psu.edu/gazette](https://sites.psu.edu/gazette).

**Address:**

4000 University Drive, McKeesport, PA 15102

**Phone:** 412-675-9025

**Editor-in-Chief:**

Nathan Rega, COMM

**News Editor:**

Alisha Tarver, COMM '21

**Entertainment Editor:**

Troy Ferguson, COMM '21

**Staff Writers:**

Riley Perciavalle, COMM

Madason Porter-Gibson, COMM

**Contributing Writers:**

Cheyenne Hennen, GIS

Sara Payo, COMM '21

**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.*

**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:

[ga-zette@PennStateOffice365.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:ga-zette@PennStateOffice365.onmicrosoft.com)



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

The staff and management of **The GA-ZETTE** welcome Letters to the Editor by writing to [nrr5191@psu.edu](mailto:nrr5191@psu.edu).

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

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

**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](mailto:ga-zette@PennStateOffice365.onmicrosoft.com)



**FOLLOW THE GA-ZETTE ON TWITTER @zette\_ga**

# 90 SECONDS UNDER THE BLUE UMBRELLA TIMELY TOPICS FROM AROUND CAMPUS

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

**“Following the verdict in the Derek Chauvin trial on the death of George Floyd, do you think there will be a change in the justice system and how police officers are policed?”**



**Anthony Mitchell**, *Associate Teaching Professor of African & African American Studies*  
 “The Chauvin verdict is a significant victory in the social justice struggle, but only a single win. In the African American experience, amendments to the U.S. Constitution and court rulings have not produced racial and social justice. The “people” produced this victory! It is procedural justice or courtroom justice in a society that has not treated African Americans fairly and justly in courtrooms.

“With this verdict, my optimistic self would like to think yes. However, the history of policing in the United States has shown that police officers hold racially implicit and explicit biases toward African Americans. These biases influence their responses and harsher, violent treatment of us. Consequently, until systemic societal change and law enforcement education and training tactics improve officer’s attitudes, beliefs, and field training practices. I do not think this one verdict will radically change or transform the justice system in the United States or policing oversight. Nationally, systemic change is a matter that must be acted on by the U.S. Department of Justice! I wish I could be more optimistic. So, the struggle continues!

**Katherine McLean**, *Associate Professor of Criminal Justice*

“I am wary of the long-term ramifications following Derek Chauvin’s conviction. Even as most commentators have affirmed the necessity and the justice of the verdict, I fear that Chauvin might ultimately represent a convenient individual scapegoat for much more insidious, systemic problems: implicit bias among officers, a warrior subculture in law enforcement and a legal standard for evaluating use of force that is highly deferential to police themselves. Still, I look forward to the findings of and actions from the U.S. Justice Department’s investigation into the Minneapolis PD, which might at least seed an institutional shift”



**Michael Vicaro**, *Associate Professor of Communications*

“Due to the verdict of Derek Chauvin, I would hope that all of this political activism would transform policing. Still, again I am skeptical that this verdict will change anything because there is a lot of evidence suggesting that this case has been framed as an admiration outside of everyday policing; meaning that regular policing is working just fine even though normal policing is not working for black and brown people. Until we see normal policing transformed or cases that endite standard police work and show that it is racist, hyper-violent and unjust, we won’t have a real change.

# TIRED OF COVID? GET VAXXED!

**NATHAN REGA**

Editor-in-Chief

nrr5191@psu.edu

When COVID-19 first hit the states in early 2020, I felt like we were living in the early scenes of an apocalyptic disaster movie. Throughout the next several months, doomscrolling inadvertently became my new pastime. From toilet paper panic buying, to financial uncertainty, to ever-increasing infection rates and death tolls, my phone had no shortage of bad news to depress myself with as I sheltered at home.

Then it all became routine. In March of this year, a full year after the initial lockdown occurred, I found myself complacent in the “new normal:” ZOOMing all day, masking up, social distancing, staying home bored all the time, etc. Finally, an unexpected text message flashed some good news on my phone: “Please reply to this message with a time you would be available for your COVID-19 vaccination.”

Initially, I thought it was a mistake. I wasn’t expecting for someone my age to be able to get vaccinated for several more months. But, being a veteran has its moments. The message was from Veteran Affairs (VA) and my stint in the Air Force

a few years back apparently qualified me to get a slightly early vaccination.

The appointment was at Westmoreland County Community College (WCCC), the school I attended before transferring to Greater Allegheny. After a few questions and a temperature check, I waited in line with my fellow patients, mostly senior citizens. I saw the nurse and got a quick needle in my left arm, no different than any other shot, and my first stamp on my coveted new vaccination card.

The whole process, from the time I entered the lobby at WCCC to getting my card, couldn’t have taken more than five minutes. I spent most of my time there waiting to go home in the mandatory fifteen-minute observation area. Three weeks later, I was back for round two and fully-inducted into Team Pfizer!

My reaction to the vaccine was pretty mild. Actually, for my first dose, ripping the bandage off of my arm later that day was probably the most painful part. Dose two was slightly worse. I felt a bit sore in my vaccine arm and later, in the rest of my body. I probably had a mild fever, although I never checked my temperature to confirm. However, it only lasted a day.

For me, the best part



about getting vaccinated is that it finally made the end of this pandemic feel like a reality. I have a sense of relief knowing that I made it through this year without contracting the virus.

However, I can understand the hesitation to get vaccinated. Needles aren’t fun and the barrage of vaccine misinformation and conspiracy theories polluting the conversation don’t help either. I feel like most of this is just left over from the absurd election season we had in the middle of the pandemic and it doesn’t hold up when against the facts.

Recently, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) announced that fully vaccinated people can start getting back to pre-pandemic activities. There are some concerns that

anti-vaxxers will use this announcement to lie their way out of masking up and practicing pandemic safety, to which I say is just another good reason for the rest of us to get the shot as soon as we can.

For students, it’s quite likely that being vaccinated by the fall semester will be a requirement. Carnegie Mellon, along with 341 other schools, already announced that vaccinations will be mandatory for students.

While Penn State hasn’t made such an announcement, given the Faculty Senate recently voting 113-31 in a resolution that favored vaccination requirements, I’d say best have that vaccination card filled out and ready to go before coming back to campus in August.

# DIARY OF A STILL MAD ESSENTIAL WORKER (But a bit happier!)

**TROY FERGUSON**

Entertainment Editor

tdf5134@psu.edu

Ever since COVID-19 flipped our worlds upside down, the service industry has been impacted like every other business. It is so hard to believe that we are still living through this global pandemic a whole year later. From my experience, things have gotten a little better this year, but your food service industry friends are still struggling.

This is a reminder that all of us working in this industry do not have control over the virus, the restrictions put in place by state and local health officials, and the behavior of other patrons. In my observation, some people have been very generous during these very uncertain times, which is a bit different from my reporting on the situation last summer.

That is not to say that



Photo illustration by The GA-Zette

you still get that occasional bad table or tip here and there, but for the most part, it has been pretty dandy.

When you dine in a restaurant, the first interaction you usually have is with a host. Like the rest of us, these hosts cannot control how long the wait is for your table, but they do their best to seat you as quickly as possible—especially with six-feet of distancing. That is one of the biggest complaints when you first walk in. They are trying their best

to accommodate everyone who wants to have a night out.

Let's also keep in mind that most of these hosts are teenagers, so screaming and demeaning them is not going to help you get to your table faster.

The most stressful part of this pandemic right now is restaurants are severely understaffed. Front-of-house and back-of-house staff are really trying to give you quality food and service, but with not having the right number of employees to execute a

normal workday, it is very frustrating. For example, one person on the kitchen staff sometimes must do jobs that three people usually do. Please do not take it out on your server because trust me, we're already panicking that your entrees are taking a little longer than expected.

From one server to our guests, we are trying our absolute best with the given circumstances of the world. I think the most important thing that patrons should remember is to be kind. Even if you're unsatisfied with your experience, just say thank you and move on.

With the climate of the world around us, that is all we need. Hopefully, this pandemic will start dwindling down soon. So as always be kind and, remember, PLEASE tip your server AT LEAST 20%. I...I mean...WE... appreciate it!

## 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](mailto:ga-zette@PennStateOffice365.onmicrosoft.com) or Professor Rosemary Martinelli at [rum31@psu.edu](mailto:rum31@psu.edu).



# PENN STATE'S POST-PANDEMIC SITUATION

## A nearly-graduating student's thoughts

**RILEY PERCIAVALLE**  
Staff Writer

rup70@psu.edu

A full year of the COVID-19 pandemic has passed and in some places, allowed us to slowly progress to the normality we once had before. At the beginning of non-remote learning on our campus on Feb. 15, I managed to finally walk on the campus grounds and enjoy the lunch time I had before.

However, a few changes from the pandemic had to happen. It was still great to see old friends and now new friends for a few in-person classes. It was very pleasing to return to the desks, rather than staring into the computer or tablets we used to see our professors and classmates.

However, with the end of the semester, I had to admit that it was great to finally catch a break. The constant class time with no spring break really wore me out. It did also to many of my colleagues. It is an issue when the one vacation, not available as it is, is replaced with "Wellness Days," which really were not much.

When looking at it from a student's perspective, our brains are not really wired with keeping up with no breaks. Yet,

through all the issues, I managed to make it up the mountain of work and conquer most of it.

However, I will admit I cannot wait for summer to hit and I can rest for four months.

The past year, ranging from nothing but mostly work from home via Canvas, to turn in work, is not the same. Many students, such as myself, welcomed back the buildings to get our classroom learning. Yet, it was still

desks all six-feet apart to help not spread the virus. I personally had no issue learning from home.

The only issues were paying attention to class with my neighbors causing a ruckus outside (my home). I would have preferred sitting in Frable, taking notes in person rather than facing a tablet. It is better to learn in person rather in ZOOM meetings.

In addition, wrapping up the spring semester and

completing finals, summer will be upon us. To those who graduated, it'll be the best time to relax and sink into the working world. As for those taking in one more semester, such as myself, we will have a little Christmas present when the fall semester ends.

After mentally relaxing, I can prepare for what comes next in the fall of 2021.

Welcome back!



# CULTURE, ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## PITTSBURGH CLO TAKES TO NEW FIELD FOR SUMMER VENUE

**TROY FERGUSON**

Entertainment Editor

tdf5134@psu.edu

With COVID-19 regulations being lifted and vaccinations increasing, the arts industry is slowly getting back to normal.

The Pittsburgh CLO is having two performances at Heinz Field for its “Summer Under the Stars” season.

The productions are “The Wizard of Oz,” July 8-10 and an original revue, “A Broadway Musical Celebration,” July

21-24. There will be VIP tables around the stage that will seat four individuals. Tickets will go on sale June 7 at [pittsburghclo.org](http://pittsburghclo.org).

“There’s no place like home, or the home field,” said Van Kaplan, CEO of Pittsburgh CLO. “Our musicals started in 1946 at Pitt Stadium and 75 years later, in a full circle moment, we are back outdoors.”

The CLO will follow all CDC COVID-19 guidelines for safety.



## #NOTWHITECOLLECTIVE



Photo courtesy The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust

The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust is beginning to reopen the doors to some of its arts venues as it returns first to its galleries and visual art spaces on Friday, June 4 with the special art installation from the #notwhite collective at

the studios at 812 Liberty Avenue. The exhibit runs through Aug. 1.

The #notwhite collective is a group of 13 women artists whose mission is “to use non-individualistic, multi-disciplinary art to make their stories visi-

ble as they relate, connect and belong to the global majority.”

“In the wake of the national tragedies we have experienced with the murders of six Asian women in Georgia, in addition to the immense losses of 2020--Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd, and the 2.75 million deaths worldwide due to COVID--we are in various stages of collective trauma and grief,” states the #notwhite collective through a press statement from the Trust.

“It is the hope that through our gathering of art and creative spirits that

we may heal and empower one another to stand firmly in solidarity against white supremacy and hate and to share love and humanity as The Global Majority,” the collective added.

Founded in 1984, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust is a non-profit arts organization whose mission is the cultural and economic revitalization of a 14-block arts and entertainment/residential neighborhood called the Cultural District.

Visit [trustarts.org](http://trustarts.org) for more information and tickets.





## PGH THEATRES RECEIVE GBAC STAR

**TROY FERGUSON**  
Entertainment Editor

[tdf5134@psu.edu](mailto:tdf5134@psu.edu)

The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust has announced that its theater venues achieved the Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) STAR accreditation. The venues receiving this status were The Benedum Center for the Performing Arts and the Byham Theater.

To get this designation, the Cultural Trust had implemented cleaning and safety protocols to disinfect against infectious diseases, especially in this past pandemic year. The Operations Manager of the Benedum Center,

Joanna Obuzor, said in a Trust statement: “We have been working for months to implement the necessary health and safety improvements to our venues and art spaces in order to meet GBAC STAR™’s impeccable standards.”

Obuzor also explained, “Receiving this validation is a major step in our Roadmap to Reopening, a working plan that the Trust has been adjusting and building upon since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are more confident than ever in the safety of our venues, and truly cannot wait to welcome our guests back through our doors.”



## THREE RIVERS ARTS FESTIVAL RETURNS



### Various modalities featured at new venues June 4-13

The City of Pittsburgh will bring forth a colorful summer again as the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust announced the return of the Dollar Bank Three Rivers Arts Festival. Music headliners, gallery exhibitions, food, fun, and, of course, art will run June 4-13 in-person and virtually, thereby creating a special hybrid festival format that builds upon the digital footprint from 2020 and an exciting return to live events, pre-pandemic.

The festival in its hybrid format will be divided into in-person and virtual attractions. All activities will proceed with the utmost of caution, with health and safety at the forefront of all efforts.

For example, the artist market will feature 100 independent artists in an open-air setting, selling handmade fine art and fine crafts. In addition, 350 artists from around the

country will participate simultaneously in a virtual artists’ market format.

Other gallery exhibitions and public art installation events and activities scheduled throughout the Festival will be socially-distanced to comply with Centers for Disease Control and Allegheny County Health Department protocols.

The highlight of this year’s Festival is a return to musical headliners at the Dollar Bank Main Stage in Point State Park.

“We could not be more grateful to our Governor, elected officials, and partners at the Park for making this transition to utilization of Point State Park possible,” Sarah Aziz, director of the Dollar Bank Three Rivers Arts Festival and director of Festival Management for the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, said in a news release.

*(Continued on next page)*

(Continued from page 25)

“It’s really a dream come true – we are able to return to Point State Park for components of the Festival, while also featuring so much of the Cultural District through our planned gallery exhibitions, public art pieces, Artist Market sections, and performances on the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership’s Riverside Stage at the Allegheny Overlook Pop-Up Park.”

The Pop-Up Park is located between Stanwix and Seventh streets, along

the Allegheny River.

A complete schedule of events can be found at [TrustArts.org/TRAF](http://TrustArts.org/TRAF).

“We cannot imagine summer in Pittsburgh without the...Arts Festival, and we are thrilled to see the work being done to return to in-person arts events and also build upon the accessibility of virtual experiences,” Joe Smith, senior vice president of marketing for Dollar Bank, said.

## MAIN STAGE HEADLINERS

- June 4 - Celisse
- June 5 - Bassel & the Supernaturals
- June 6 - Rayland Baxter
- June 11 - Shemekia Copeland
- June 12 - Caroline Rose
- June 13 - Son Little

All performances begin at 7 p.m.

# 2021 IN PERSON FESTIVAL MAP

**OPEN FRIDAYS, SATURDAYS & SUNDAYS**

**DOLLAR BANK MAIN STAGE**

POINT STATE PARK

COMMONWEALTH PLACE

**OPEN ALL TEN DAYS**

ALLEGHENY RIVER

TENTH STREET BYPASS

ALLEGHENY OVERLOOK

FORT DUQUESNE BOULEVARD

RIVERSIDE STAGE

STANWIX STREET

FIFTH AVENUE

SIXTH STREET

SEVENTH STREET

EIGHTH STREET

NINTH STREET

O'REILLY THEATER LOBBY

PENN AVENUE

BENEDUM LOT

TRUST OASIS

707 GALLERY

LIBERTY AVENUE

WOOD STREET GALLERIES

SPACE GALLERY

937 LIBERTY

820 LIBERTY

**THREE RIVERS ARTS FESTIVAL**

**PITTSBURGH CULTURAL TRUST**

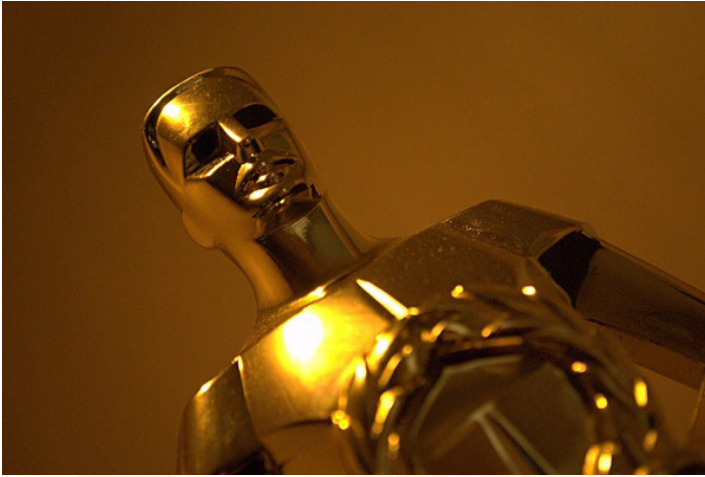
**MAP KEY**

- ARTIST MARKET
- STAGES
- ART GALLERY
- PUBLIC ART

JUNE 4-13, 2021 | 12 - 8 PM

# OSCARS HAPPEN DESPITE PANDEMIC

## Criticized for lack of better optics



**TROY FERGUSON**

Entertainment Editor

tdf5134@psu.edu

With COVID-19 still affecting the world, award shows have adapted to ensure safety for the workers and patrons of the events. The Oscars certainly made adaptations to their award show to make it safe for all during a live telecast last month.

The ceremony took place at The Union Station in Los Angeles. I thought that was a very interesting idea to have a bunch of actors in a train station for an awards show. At least they followed CDC guidelines for distancing and masking, except for when they were on camera. It was determined that they would follow the masking rules that Hollywood uses during the filming of a movie or TV show.

As expected, many awards were given out to incredible individuals who contributed to the art of

a major motion picture—whether for the theater or streaming on TV or a mobile device. It was so exciting to see so much diversity in all the winners. There was Disney Pixar’s movie “Soul,” which won for Best Animated Feature Film, in spite of the fact that it never played in any theater, only on the Disney+ streaming service. I loved the music and the storyline about a jazz musician trying to reunite his accidentally separated body and soul.

Daniel Kaluuya won Best Supporting Actor for his role in “Judas and the Black Messiah” Youn Yuh-jung also won for Best Supporting Actress in the movie, “Minari.”

There was a touch of Pittsburgh in the show.

Monessen native, Frances McDormand, won her third and fourth Oscars, taking home Best Actress for her role in “Nomadland,” and also getting

a trophy for serving as a producer on the film, which won Best Picture. McDormand has two previous Best Actress wins for “Fargo” and “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri.”

“Ma’ Rainey’s Black Bottom,” which was shot in Pittsburgh, won two Oscars for Best Makeup and Hairstyling and Best Costume Design.

Jan Pascale, a Beechview native and former puppeteer for “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood,” won for Best Production Design for the movie “Mank.”

Mercer County native and music composer Trent Reznor won Best Score for “Soul.”

While watching the show, I found it very weird that there was no host. That has never happened before at the Oscars. Actually, there was no orchestra, either, but QuestLove served as DJ and music director and played a variety of tunes throughout the show.

Criticism arose from the lack of video clips and the fact that there was no limit on the length of any acceptance speech, which made the show run longer than its three-hour run.

Another moment that I was really disappointed about was the late

Chadwick Boseman not winning for Best Actor for his role in “Ma’ Rainey’s Black Bottom.” This category was held for the end of the show, with the anticipation that he would win as a sentimental favorite. Instead, Anthony Hopkins won for his starring role in “The Father.” Hopkins was not even present or via livestream to accept his Oscar victory.

I was also disappointed that Viola Davis did not win for Best Actress for “Ma’ Rainey’s Black Bottom” She is such a talent and I really enjoyed her performance. However, it is not about winning, it is just an honor to be nominated.

I think it was great to award the movies that helped us get through this quarantine. I am a firm believer that art is the best form of therapy. A lot of the movies and actors and actresses nominated really gave us something to look forward to. I cannot wait to watch the next award show!



# SPORTS & ATHLETICS



## SEASON COMES TO AN END FOR GA BASEBALL

The following article was obtained via [AthleicsGA.com](http://AthleicsGA.com) on May 3, 2021

MONT ALTO, PA — Saturday, May 1 saw the end of the 2020/21 season for Greater Allegheny Baseball.

Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) dropped a 4-1 decision against Penn State DuBois in the first round of the PSUAC Playoffs played at Penn State Mont Alto.

Greater Allegheny jumped out to a quick 1-0 lead after a Brian Koglin, catcher and Spring 2021 administration of justice graduate, double and subsequent error after Brian

Woods, freshman, reached first.

The lead was short lived.

DuBois scored three in the bottom of the first, two coming off of a Toner Corl home run. DuBois added their fourth and final run in the bottom of the second on a called balk allowing Cory Lehman to score.

Freshman Infielder Nathan Grice went 5 2/3 innings for GA, striking out six. Brandon Orsich went the distance for DuBois striking out seven.

PSUGA finished the season with 25 games played, 179 runs scored, .318 batting average, .407 on-base percentage, .425 slugging percentage, and six home runs offensively.

The Greater Allegheny pitchers stuck out 147 batters, had a 4.78 ERA, and went 173 and a third innings on the season.

Freshman Pitcher, Gustavo Delgado is confident about GA baseball's next season.

"We are getting better every day and there's

no doubt in my mind we will keep getting better throughout the summer," he said.

"When it comes to COVID-19, we are hoping things get better by the time we are back on campus in the fall so we are able to play baseball," Delgado added.



Staff Writer,  
Riley Perciavalle  
([rup70@psu.edu](mailto:rup70@psu.edu)) also  
contributed to this story