



# The GA-ZETTE

DECEMBER 2021

*The Campus Newspaper for Penn State Greater Allegheny*

VOLUME 11



*Happy Holidays!*  
**HOLIDAY 2021 EDITION**

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# Happy Holidays!

## TO: THE PENN STATE GREATER ALLEGHENY COMMUNITY

With a little more than a week left in 2021, we all seem to be reflecting on this past year...where we were, where we are, and where we hope to be in the new year. Some of us are even going farther back to 2020, to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and how, in three short months, it will be two years since our lives changed and our world began rocking and rolling in a tumultuous spiral of confusion and politics and divisiveness.

Somehow, away from all of this worry and strife, we found some peace within our haven from the outside world on this 52 acres we call the Penn State Greater Allegheny campus. Amid our classroom work, faculty meetings and office hours, masking and unmasking, COVID testing and quarantine, we still found the campus welcoming us to come to learn and to be with friends.

Many see us as a family here at this campus. People at all levels care about each other. They worry when someone is not seen in a while. They are concerned when someone is missing from class. Every day, someone reaches out to help someone, no matter if it is student, staff or faculty. The caring nature of the campus is one of the key elements that seemed to get us through the crazy challenges and unending days and weeks of the past 21 months.

But...we made it! We got through the semester and all of 2021 with a somewhat return to normal of in-person learning and campus life. When we heard from other schools and colleges and universities that the ride was not as smooth and worry-free, we saw it differently. Perhaps that was because we kept our lines of communication open.

Those lines start from the top down and permeate all that we are here. That starts with Dr. Jacqueline Edmondson, our chancellor and chief academic officer. Through the masking and the social distancing and testing and quarantining, she still managed to connect with all of us and keep us focused, on task, and, above all, safe. She became a guiding light, our "North Star," and a beacon for sanity in a sometimes insane world.

Leadership...it seems that the past several years, those who "lead" have been hard to find and even harder to understand. But true leaders inspire us, guide us, and help us be the best we can be, even in a insane, COVID-riddled world.

Thank you, Dr. Edmondson, for always being there to provide us the sanity and the guidance that we sought so hard to find.

It's just like Mister Rogers said: "Look for the helpers." Thank you for helping us...always...along our paths to success and wherever we are headed in the future.



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

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# PSUGA'S FALL 2021 CONCLUDES



Photo courtesy Penn State Greater Allegheny on Twitter [@PennStateGA](https://twitter.com/PennStateGA)

## Semester, Commencement Successful & Safe

**NATHAN REGA**

Editor-in-Chief

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Penn State Greater Allegheny's (PSUGA) fall semester concluded on Dec. 18 with its Fall 2021 Commencement Ceremony. Twenty-seven degree candidates walked the stage to graduate, most literally, some virtually.

Commencement speakers included biobehavioral health graduate, Ke'ira Williams, and President and Chief Executive Officer of The Forbes Funds, Fred Brown.

"Make sure that you, yourself, are well enough to pour greatness into others," Williams challenged her fellow graduates. "Congratulations to each and every one of

you. May you all succeed in the years ahead."

Brown's speech focused on the responsibility each graduate has to strive to be leaders in their community during trying times.



"You represent the promise of tomorrow," Brown stated. "You represent the dreamers who allow people to see light at the end of the tunnel. Do not take your degree

lightly."

All graduates and attendees complied with University pandemic policies during the in-person commencement. Procedures such as social distancing and the wearing of face masks allowed commencement, as well as the entirety of the fall semester, to be conducted in person.

Additionally, students who remained unvaccinated during the semester were subject to weekly COVID-19 tests to ensure not to spread the virus on campus.

All students have remained in compliance at our campus," Director of Student Services and Engagement, Lorraine Craven, stated. "Students who have been required to

test weekly have done so and we have not had to interim suspend any student for non-compliance."

"I'm really appreciative of how hard everyone worked to stay safe, to stay healthy, to get through the semester in a successful way," Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Edmondson, said, reflecting on the semester.

"It takes a lot of effort to manage life these days in the context of the virus and all the safety protocols," she added.

PSUGA ended the semester with 33 total positive tests reported, according to the [COVID-19 Dashboard](#), last updated Dec. 19. The Dashboard also reflects a 75.7% *(Continued on next page)*

(Continued from page 3)

vaccination rate among students, while employees are 80.5% vaccinated.

Craven noted there was an increase in positive cases during the final weeks of the semester across all Penn State campuses. There are currently no foreseen changes in pandemic policies for the Spring 2022 semester, including vaccination requirements for students.

Despite this, the [University recommends](#) and encourages students to get vaccinated and receive their boosters, especially in light of the



recent spread of the omicron variant.

However, all Penn State employees, including students supported on wage payrolls, will be required to be fully vaccinated by Jan. 4, according to a [University press release](#). The University is determined to enforce its vaccination requirements

even if the federal contractor mandate, issued by President Joe Biden in September, is lifted by the courts. Employees with approved [medical disability](#) or [religious-related](#) accommodations will be exempt.

Classes will resume at PSUGA on Jan. 10 for the spring 2022 semester.

Students will have until the deadline on Jan. 9 to register for classes. In the meantime, Edmondson encourages students to enjoy their winter break.

“I just want to thank everyone for a really wonderful fall semester,” Edmondson concluded. “People have worked so hard this semester and I really want to acknowledge the hard work that went into navigating the pandemic and being in person. I’m looking forward to having everyone back again in January as the New Year gets started.”

## EDMONDSON FINALIST FOR VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH CAMPUSES

### NATHAN REGA

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Penn State Greater Allegheny’s (PSUGA) Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Jacqueline Edmondson, announced Dec. 8 via email, that she is currently a finalist for Penn State’s Vice President for the Commonwealth Campuses position.

“You will see an announcement about my candidacy in the upcoming days, but I wanted you to ‘hear’ it from me first,” Edmondson wrote in an email addressed to



PSUGA students.

“I wish I had an opportunity to tell you in person as I worry that email may feel so impersonal, but it seems it will not be possible to do so,” she added.

Edmondson interviewed for the position on Dec. 14.

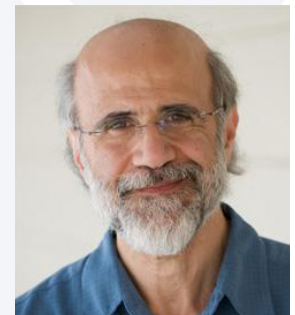
The position was formerly held by Dr. Madelyn Hanes before her



retirement on Aug. 1 after 33-years at Penn State.

Currently, Kelly Austin, associate vice president for administration in the Office of the Senior Vice President for Commonwealth Campuses, fills the position in an interim role. Austin is the third candidate, who was interviewed on Dec. 16.

The first candidate interviewed for the posi-



tion is Dr. Chaden Djalali, professor of physics and astronomy at Ohio University. Djalai held a Town Hall on Dec. 9.

“Please be assured that Greater Allegheny is always in my heart, and no matter the outcome of this process, I will always be working for Greater Allegheny,” Edmondson reassured via email.

# Congratulations 2021 Graduates!



**PennState**  
Greater Allegheny

## ASSOCIATE DEGREE GRADUATES

### *Business Administration*

Alexander Robert Kohler\*\*  
De'Neisha Williams

### *Criminal Justice*

Evan John Reed

## BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE GRADUATES

### *Communications*

Riley Perciavalle  
Madason Porter-Gibson  
Nathanial Ryan Rega

### *Psychology*

Samantha Snashell

## BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE GRADUATES

### *Administration of Justice*

Anijah Gaines\*\*  
Lexus Santiago\*\*

### *Biobehavioral Health*

Lauren Martin  
Ke'ira Marie Williams

### *Business*

Surendra Basnet	Yousuf Ibrahim**
James Joseph Fields	Aaron E. Kercell
Koran Fleming	Tara Rhea Love
Elizabeth Ann Hornicak	Simran Timsina
Joey B. Houston	Zachary Vaughn

### *Information Sciences & Technology*

Zainab Hameedullah ◇**	Bradley Walker**
Hunter Stewart ◇**	Joseph A. Wega

### *Project & Supply Chain Management*

Lauren Martin  
Ke'ira Marie Williams



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

◇ Cum Laude Distinction Candidate  
\*\* Summer 2021 Graduate Candidate

# PENN STATE NAMES NEELI BENDAPUDI AS NEXT PRESIDENT

**Current President and Professor of Marketing at the University of Louisville Takes Office This Spring Semester**

The following article was obtained via [Penn State News](#), last updated Dec. 13

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. -

Neeli Bendapudi, currently president and professor of marketing at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, was unanimously named Penn State's (PSU) next president by the Penn State Board of Trustees on Dec. 9.

When she begins her appointment as PSU's 19th president in spring 2022, she will make history as the first woman and person of color to serve as the University's president.

Bendapudi is a recognized leader in higher education who specializes in marketing and consumer behavior.

With a nearly 30-year career in academia, Bendapudi has taught marketing and served in a variety of administrative roles over the years, including as provost and executive vice chancellor at the University of Kansas, dean of the School of Business at the University of Kansas, and founding director of the Initiative for Managing Services at Ohio State University.

With a focus on collaboration and development,



Bendapudi has dedicated her career to student success, fostering inclusivity, and creating opportunities for students, faculty and staff to thrive.

"Penn State is a world-class university, and I couldn't be prouder and more excited to join this vibrant community of outstanding students, faculty, staff and alumni throughout the commonwealth and beyond," Bendapudi said.

"Thank you to the Penn State community and Board of Trustees. I am grateful for this opportunity and will make it my mission to help Penn State

reach new heights across each of our campuses."

After a comprehensive national search and following an extensive vetting process and overwhelming support from the Presidential Recruitment and Selection Committee, an 18-member group with student, faculty, staff and trustee representatives also participated in the selection process.

She will succeed President Eric J. Barron, who will retire after serving Penn State for more than 30 years in various roles, including most recently as president since

2014.

"We are proud to welcome Dr. Bendapudi to Penn State. She is a dynamic and innovative leader who has dedicated nearly her entire professional life to higher education and is prepared to help our University advance in the ways we support students, create new knowledge and serve society," said Matt Schuyler, chair of the PSU Board of Trustees.

As president of the University of Louisville, Bendapudi, oversees the university's 12 academic colleges, Division 1 athletics program, and integrated academic health system, which includes five hospitals, four medical centers and nearly 200 physician practice locations. Serving more than 16,000 undergraduate and 6,300 graduate students, the University of Louisville is a Research 1 doctoral university with 40% Pell-eligible students.

Bendapudi has focused on creating opportunities for University of Louisville students, faculty, staff and alumni to excel and to serve their communities.

**(Continued on next page)**

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In addition to her academic leadership experience, Bendapudi also previously served as executive vice president and chief customer officer for Huntington National Bank, at the time, a top-30 U.S. bank with \$55 billion in assets and 12,000 associates. She also has consulted for some of the world's largest companies and organizations, including AIG, Proctor & Gamble, and the U.S. Army.

During her 27-year career as an educator, Bendapudi taught marketing at the undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels and received numerous college and national teaching awards, including the Academy of Marketing Science Outstanding Marketing Teacher Award.

She has taught at the University of Louisville, University of Kansas, Texas A&M University and Ohio State University.

With a background in the study of consumer behavior in service contexts, Bendapudi has focused her research on customers' willingness to maintain long-term relationships with firms and with the brands and employees that represent them.

Bendapudi's research has been published in the Journal of Academic Medicine, Harvard Business Review, Journal

of Marketing, Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Retailing, and Journal of Service Research, among others.

Among her numerous professional affiliations, she is a member of several non-profit organization boards, including Internet 2.0, American Council on Education, and Louisville Healthcare CEO Council, and she sits on the board of directors of publicly held Lancaster Colony Corporation. She is a member of the International Women's Forum and Women Corporate Directors.

Throughout her career, Bendapudi has been

recognized for contributions in her field. In 2014, she was inducted into KU Women's Hall of Fame, which recognizes individuals for significant contributions and achievements, overall impact and outstanding character.

She is a former Leadership Foundation Fellow of the International Women's Forum, one of a select group of women chosen globally for this prestigious honor.

Bendapudi earned her bachelor's degree in English and master of business administration degree from Andhra University in India and her doctorate in marketing

from the University of Kansas.

She is married to Dr. Venkat Bendapudi, who is now retired after serving on the faculties at Ohio State University, University of Kansas and University of Louisville.

The president-elect's salary was approved by the Board of Trustees Subcommittee on Compensation and the initial annual base salary will be \$950,000. The full compensation sheet is available online at <https://sites.psu.edu/trustees/files/2019/03/presidential-term-sheet.pdf>



*Penn State President Eric Barron and President-elect Neeli Bendapudi met together in Old Main on Dec. 10, following Bendapudi's appointment as the University's 19th president on Dec. 9. Credit: Patrick Mansell / Penn State. Creative Commons*

# VOICES OF CITIZENS & VICTIMS

## PSUGA's 2021-2022 Crossing Bridges Summit Continues Panel Discussion on Police Reform

**NATHAN REGA**

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Penn State Greater Allegheny's (PSUGA) fifth annual Crossing Bridges Summit continued its 2021-2022 Speaker Series on Nov. 16 with its second panel, "Voices of Citizens and Victims." The panel was livestreamed via WPSU, Penn State's public media station.

"Voices of Citizens and Victims" was the second of a three-part series of panels focused on police reform, revolving around conversations about the [Pittsburgh Community Taskforce for Police Reform report](#). Eric Ewell, director of continuing education, coordinator of The Mon Valley Launch-Box, and pastor of the Divine Restoration Church in Duquesne, served as panel moderator.

Panelists included Leon Ford, chief executive officer of Leon Ford Speaks; Michelle Kenney, director and founder of the [Antwon Rose II Foundation](#); and Samaria Rice, founder and chief executive officer of the [Tamir Rice Foundation](#).

"We have three very unique individuals, all



*Panelists, clockwise from top left to right: Eric Ewell (moderator), Leon Ford, Samaria Rice, Michelle Kenney. Photo courtesy Penn State, Creative Commons.*

tied together by similar circumstances," Ewell stated as he introduced the panelists.

The panel began with Ford, a Pittsburgh native who was shot five times by the Pittsburgh Police during a traffic stop when he was only 19-years-old. The event left him paralyzed.

"It's not my story, it's just part of my story," Ford stated regarding the tragic event. "I didn't give up. I think that is what a lot of you all see in the work that I do, someone

who was able to adapt despite my circumstances and adversity that I was faced with, someone who is creative in finding solutions and bringing people together."

Kenney is the mother of Antwon Rose II, the 17-year-old who was shot and killed by East Pittsburgh Police on June 19, 2018.

"Antwon isn't here to tell his story," Kenney said. "And he should be here to tell his story."

Kenney's story begins much earlier, however,

when she took a job with a police department in 1999, before Rose was born.

"Four months after being hired, I watched 23 men and women band together in amazement to stop a mass shooting in that town," Kenney stated. "From then on, I became engrossed in the good and bad of policing."

"It has been a long seven year journey," said Rice, a mother whose 12-year-old son Tamir was shot and killed by Cleveland Police in 2014. *(Continued on next page)*



(Continued from page 8)

“I was just a normal, American citizen and a single parent at the time, raising four children, Tamir being my youngest,” Rice explained. “I never thought when letting two children go outside to play that day that only one would come back. My life changed drastically, in a matter of seconds.

“I’ve been fighting for justice for seven years,” Rice continued. “I haven’t had a chance to grieve Tamir. I haven’t had a chance to take a break, period. Building Tamir’s legacy requires a lot and takes a lot.”

Currently, Rice is fighting for the Department of Justice (DOJ) to reopen the investigation of the shooting and killing of her son.

In addition to her faith, Rice believes it is her involvement in the Cleveland community

that has kept her going, through “working with families, being Tamir’s voice, giving back to the community, making it uncomfortable for police and being a part of police reform.”

“There are days I question why other people, whether they are pastors, law enforcement, politicians, I wonder why they are not in this fight a little heavier,” Kenney stated when asked how she continues fighting for social justice. “But at the end of the day for me, I don’t have my son. My motivation is the fact that I don’t have my son.”

Ford focused on the importance of healing for the victims of police injustice, attributing his own healing to therapy, self-care and family.

“One of the things that I’m always thinking about is how, when families go through this, as a community we selfishly make



Photos courtesy the Antwon Rose II Foundation

them the spokesperson,” he stated.

“We need to not try to make people into heroes, we need to focus on their healing, because healing is what is going to make them heroic,” Ford concluded.

The entire “Voices of Citizens and Victims,” as well as previous Crossing Bridges Summit discussions, can be viewed in their entirety at

<https://www.watch.psu.edu/crossingbridges/>

“What we’re getting from the panels are some important takeaways about community policing and having police involved with communities in ways where they’re building relationships,” Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Jaqueline Edmondson said.

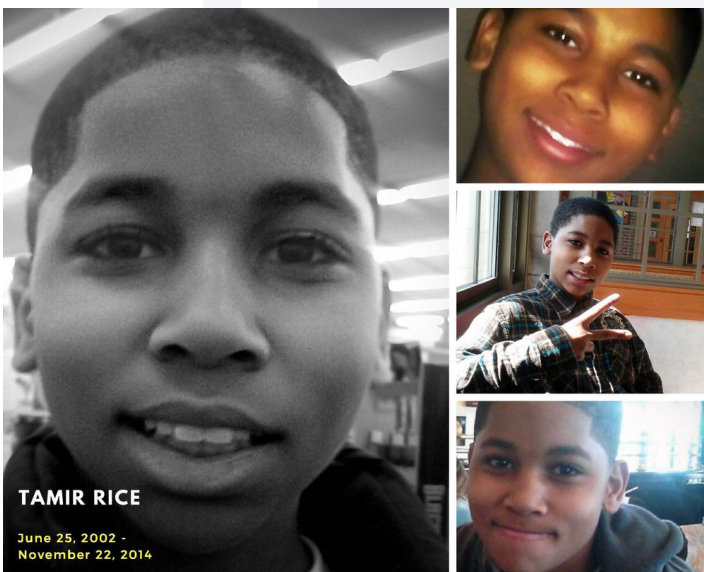
She added that there is also a “need for citizens to be engaged in public policy, the formation of public policy and in voting, so that citizens have some say in what’s happening

in the communities where they live.”

Finally, Edmondson encourages students to enroll in the Spring 2022 class AFAM 197I: Intro to Anti-Black Racism in the U.S. The course will be taught by Associate Teaching Professor of African and African American Studies, Dr. Anthony Mitchell, and Assistant Teaching Professor of Psychology, Dr. Jennifer Croyle.

*The Crossing Bridges Summit returns on Feb. 4 at 3 p.m. with “Voices from the Judicial System and Police” via WPSU livestream*

*A final event entitled “The Year in Review: What We Learned and Where We Go From Here” is expected to be conducted in-person on campus on Apr. 7*



TAMIR RICE

June 25, 2002 - November 22, 2014

Photos courtesy the Tamir Rice Foundation



## PSUGA CAMPUS SURVEY SHOWS POSITIVE, TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PUBLIC SAFETY

**NATALIE SMAIL**

Student Life Editor

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The Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) campus' relationships with campus public safety fared well in response to a recent Penn State-wide public safety survey, sponsored by the Office of Planning, Assessment and Institutional Research. The survey was available to all faculty, staff and students, to make sure that all University officers are operating in concert with the campuses they serve.

The results for PSU-GA found that 62% of those who took the survey believed that University Police were more trustworthy than national law enforcement. In all

the questions asked, the results were answered positively by a majority of those taking the survey.

Most of the respondents—about 89%--who had been involved with campus police in the past two years had positive interactions with them, and they also acknowledged that their knowledge was sufficient and they handled the issue professionally.

The survey also showed areas which need improvement. For example, when asked if people felt comfortable contacting University Police for assistance--by minority status, 33% of respondents answered in the categories of somewhat/strongly disagree or neither agree/disagree.

According to the survey website, surveys are released to improve how University Police operate. Those in charge of the survey will “use the results to improve University Police services for all community members. With relevant conversations of police brutality, asking these questions can only improve how University Police operates” for the safety of everyone on our campus.

“It gives the campus community the opportunity to voice their opinions which in turn will help us do our jobs better,” Lt. Diane Grimm, University police and public safety, explained.

“We value feedback from our communities

as it helps us adjust what we are doing to meet the needs as times change,” Grimm continued.

The complete findings from the survey will be released in spring of 2022. This is only the second University-wide survey conducted by Penn State's Police and Public Safety to get a better understanding of attitudes and opinions regarding policing, public safety, and programs and services, as well as overall campus safety at Penn State.

The first survey came out in 2019 and each campus' results were then summarized in a report.

The current survey opened University-wide Sept. 29 and closed on Oct. 17.

**THE CROSSING BRIDGES SUMMIT**  
 BRIDGING RACIAL DIVIDES IN THE MON VALLEY  
 Penn State Greater Allegheny presents the 2021-2022 Crossing Bridges Summit

Examining Police Reform:  
 Conversations about the "Pittsburgh  
 Community Taskforce for Police Reform" and its implications for the Mon Valley

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Thursday, February 3, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. - live streamed by WPSU  
 "Voices from the Judicial System and Police"  
 Moderated by Dr. Sandra Trappen, Assistant Professor of Administration of Justice

Thursday, April 7, 2022, Time TBA - In person at Penn State Greater Allegheny  
 "The Year in Review: What We Learned and Where We Go From Here"  
 Moderated by Dr. Johnathan White, Assistant Teaching Professor of History

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# ARREST MADE IN DEATH OF KARLI SHORT, WHO WAS FOUND SHOT & KILLED IN MCKEESPORT



Police announced that the father of the unborn child, 25-year-old Isaac Smith of McKeesport, has been charged with her death. Photo courtesy Allegheny County

The following article was obtained via [WTAE](#), last updated Nov. 5

An arrest has been made in the death of 26-year-old Karli Short, who was found shot and killed in McKeesport on Sept. 13.

Smith has been charged with criminal homicide and homicide of an unborn child, police said.

Short was found dead in the 300 block of 25th Street from a gunshot wound to the head. Police also said detectives determined that Short was five months pregnant when she was killed.

Smith was arrested by Allegheny County Homicide Detectives and Pleasant Hills police around 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 5.

Police said Smith will be held at the Allegheny County Jail awaiting arraignment.

Police announced Nov. 5 that the father of the unborn child, 25-year-old Isaac Smith of McKeesport, has been charged with her death.

Karli Short is the daughter of former NFL player and Penn State linebacker, and Penn State trustee, Brandon Short.



# DIETARY NEEDS LEAVE “BAD TASTE” WITH SGA

## Improvements Already Underway for Speed of Service, Menu Option Changes at Café Metro

**NATALIE SMAIL**

Student Life Editor

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In order to address comments from the campus regarding dietary concerns at the Café Metro, Penn State Greater Allegheny's (PSUGA) Student Government Association (SGA) has been engaging with campus Housing & Food Services during the past month on issues related to cross-contamination of the food served and speed of service.

Some students with special dietary needs expressed concern to SGA about cross-contamination in the kitchen between foods, including concerns from vegans, pescatarians, those who cannot have gluten, and others with food restrictions.

There are different levels to how serious the risk of cross-contamination is based on allergies or personal choice diets. Regardless, cross-contamination is something they always aim to avoid.

“We make sure that those dieticians go through all of the menu items. They cannot serve something if they don't know what the ingredients are,” said Anthony Orlando, manager of hous-



ing and food services for PSUGA

As far as having more options for those with dietary restrictions, Orlando says that they “try to put at least one vegetarian option out” for every meal. In response to this concern, SGA was also told by food service that “the number of staff they have directly correlates to being able to prevent cross-contamination.” Cross contamination is a very serious concern in any kitchen that mass distributes food, Orlando explained.

The allergen cards that exist for each menu item help a substantial amount, but the “best way to prevent eating anything that you might be allergic to is to let the staff know that you have a food allergy.” Orlando stated that “We try to encourage everyone if they have an allergy to

identify it with us.”

Café Metro regularly has the fruit and yogurt bar available, as well as a consistent collection of salads daily. Orlando mentioned that they do try to put vegetarian entrees on the menu, but when they are out for sale, barely anyone buys them.

The question becomes, he said, “How can we meet the demand for vegetarian options or other diets, while maintaining a food supply that doesn't get wasted?”

Orlando said “We're definitely committed to making sure that there's an option on every meal.”

One of the difficulties with creating new options that suit these diets is that all of Penn State's cafeterias are not permitted to add anything to the three-week meal cycle, a cycle that exists throughout Penn State, because

most of the menus have to be the same. Penn State operates this way because of “purchasing power.”

About 75% of the menu has to be the same as what is offered at University Park. “Every manager of Housing & Food Services at every campus is involved in the culinary liaison,” Orlando said. Changes to the menu do occur, however, but more so by year than by the semester, he added.

“Penn State wants to increase their purchasing power by buying the same items. If everyone is making the same menu items, then they can bulk buy this chicken and get a good price on it,” Orlando said.

Also on the list of student concerns were how students noticed slow service at times.

In response to the latter, the Housing & Food Services department informed SGA about new kiosks that are going to be installed in order to help with the speed of service. No specific date for the installation has been determined, Orlando said, but he hopes that the kiosks will be up and running by spring.

# THON 2022

## Penn State's Phenomenal Event Is Back In-Person

**RILEY PERCIAVALLE**

Digital Media Manager

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Throughout all of the Penn State campuses, there is always one event that makes students, faculty and alumni come together as one family. It is the annual Penn State dance marathon, known now by its brand name of THON.

THON started back in 1973 with 78 dancers who participated that first year for 30 hours, raising about \$2,000, which, accounting for inflation, would be about \$13,000 today. The goal, however, has always been the same: to give back to the community.

THON is the world's largest student-run philanthropy, committed to enhancing the lives of children and families impacted by childhood cancer. The mission is to "provide emotional and financial support, spread awareness, and ensure funding for critical research—all in pursuit of a cure."

The Four Diamonds Fund at the Hershey Medical Center uses the THON funds to pick up where insurance leaves off, enabling families to solely focus on care for their child.



According to the THON website, assistance from the Four Diamonds Fund ensures that counselors, social workers, music therapists and other specialists are available to provide comprehensive care in a family-focused atmosphere.

More than 16,500 students have participated in the 46-hour, no sleeping, no sitting event throughout the years in many ways to help raise money for pediatric cancer research. At Penn State Greater Allegheny, Rebecca Anne McCallister, THON co-captain, said that "Greater Allegheny's part in THON has been raising money since the start of the fall semester... you can see us doing this by participating in fundraisers, and more commonly, working the sports games on campus."

McCallister and her twin sister, Riley, will once again be representing the campus and attending

THON in-person come February. This past year, the two participated virtually from the living room at their parent's home since COVID-19 prevented everyone from gathering at the Bryce Jordan Center to dance.

McCallister said THON 2022 will be a "celebration of perseverance through hardship, like a firework exploding in the night sky," she added, matching the theme for the event—"Spark Endless Light."



(Left to right) PSUGA THON Co-Chairs, Riley and Rebecca McCallister. Photo Courtesy Sharon McCallister (proud mom)

According to THON's Executive Director, Kate Colgan, COVID policies for the upcoming THON will require that everyone be vaccinated. "Everyone in attendance deserves to feel safe and comfortable," she said, as her team of 16 are currently focusing on preparing to keep the dancers and other participants safe.

"There are many protocols to allow us to have the safest THON Weekend 2022 possible," Colgan said. "All Penn State students and staff members that wish to access the floor or mezzanine levels of the event will need to be fully vaccinated." She added that mask mandates are also required for on-site viewers at the Jordan Center, but any active Four Diamond families may have a better time watching virtually as to also stay safe.

Even though it was held virtually this past year, THON still raised over \$10 million dollars. Colgan is hoping that everyone is ready to help make a difference as the event attempts some form of normalcy in 2022.

# OPINIONS... FROM WHERE WE SIT

## THE FINAL SEMESTER OF MY PENN STATE STUDENT LIFE

### A Look Back...A Look Ahead

**RILEY PERCIAVALLE**  
Digital Media Manager  
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Back in August of 2017, I took my first steps onto the Greater Allegheny campus and I was having the same reaction as all students. I was nervous. High school teachers put a lot of pressure on me with college, saying it was going to get harder within college.

However, they were wrong. They forgot that professors do give you respect and relate to you on the same level.

Within the four years I have been at Greater Allegheny, I met most of the faculty who made it feel like I was home. I became friends with most of them, usually having a conversa-

tion with them in the SCC (Student Community Center) or just by walking to class. It was like being on an episode of the TV show *Cheers*, where everybody knew my name.

In addition to it all, a bonus of it was not waking up at 6 a.m. like in high school. I am not a morning person at all, but given how some of our classes started at 9 a.m., it was better than early mornings.

In addition to that, you had no real cliques like high school (i.e., Jocks, theatre, band, etc.) but you had your own smaller groups of the same college kids who were there just like you.

There were always a few reasons why I decided to join the campus--be-

coming a Nittany Lion to begin with. One was my mother, hearing how she graduated from the campus before was something I wanted to follow. Although she had not been there for all four years, she had been there for the last two years.

The second being was the convenience of being in McKeesport. Few colleges are around the city. It was an easy commute, rather than sitting in traffic on the Parkway just to get to class. It was a pleasure knowing it was a simple five minutes from my house, without traffic or any issues of roadwork getting in the way.

It was easy to get from campus to home in a matter of minutes.

Although the strug-

gle was there with some classes, I did not want to just drop them. I wanted to at least put in the effort rather than see it hurt more on my time. I made it through all four years with no issues before and still managed to continue with determination to be there.

Throughout my semesters, I managed to do a few things that I thought I could not do, like see a performance of Hamilton, help a nonprofit, and work with a team that started this newspaper--*The GA-Zette*--for the campus to read. That is something I thought I never could do with my time.

I also helped to start a campus PR/marketing

*(Continued on next page)*



(Continued from page 14)

agency called *Be Greater Creative*, as I continued with my learning.

I will say, after the struggles with the pandemic, I was glad to get back into the classroom. Even with the current mask policy, it was better than nothing as I sat here in my house and took classes through ZOOM. Those were two semesters

I would rather forget and not remember because it was stressful.

I never knew what life was throwing at me during college, but luckily, I was happy enough with what I experienced and had no issues at all from it. I am always a Nittany Lion and proud to be from Penn State and I soon will make plans for my future down the road.

### 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)



# MADE IN MCKEESPORT



## DOROTHY'S CANDIES: Handmade Sweets, A Heartfelt Tradition

**ANNA OSINSKI**  
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*This is the first in an ongoing series of news features about the long-standing businesses that have been a legacy to the economic landscape of McKeesport and the Mon Valley.*

The “pink building” on Route 48 in White Oak is the building everyone talks about. Why? That’s because it is the home of Dorothy’s Candies, a 74-year-old family enterprise built on tradition, love, community, friendship, and...chocolate.

Robert Gastel, the current owner of Dorothy’s Candies and son of the

founder—yes, his mom’s name was Dorothy—said her love of making sweets and sharing them with family and friends started before he was born when, during the Depression, she and her mother would sell homemade Swiss chocolate sweets door-to-door in the McKeesport area.

“It was a different world then than it is now,” Gastel said. “You had more close relationships back then with family and friends.” In 1947, the year Gastel was born, Dorothy officially started the business from inside her home off Lafayette Street in McKeesport.

With the business out of their home, some close friends, and relatives then

became their distributors.

“They would come and buy a carload of chocolate and then distribute it to their friends, and sometimes come back several times for more,” Gastel added.

In 1957, Gastel’s parents rented a storefront on Versailles Avenue so they had more of a commercial place to sell their sweets.

In addition to the love of giving to others, Gastel said the business helped to put him through college.

“Most Pittsburgh people were blue collar people and very few didn’t go to college,” he recalled, adding that his father taught him trigonometry, arithmetic and geometric progressions, in spite of

the fact that he dropped out of school at the beginning of his junior year to help support the family.

“His father couldn’t get a job, so, he had to support four people. Since he couldn’t get the education, it was important to him that I had it and my mother felt the same way.

**(Continued on next page)**





(Continued from page 16)

So, she formally started Dorothy's Candies as a business to get me through...college," Gastel said.

The Dorothy's Candies business found the "sweet spot" on Route 48 in White Oak in 1992, in what is now the pink building. The building, however, wasn't always pink. Dorothy made it pink.

"My mother was very artistic," Gastel said. "She painted, she decorated cakes, and whatnot. The Dorothy's Candies car was always pink, white, black, and gold," he added. The building became the same.

Presentation was everything to Dorothy, from the storefront to the candy to the packaging, Gastel recalled.

"Someone would be presented with a box of her chocolates and she wanted them to be visually appealing, so it would put a smile on that person's face...particularly when they opened and tasted the chocolate. What motivated her was seeing that smile," he added.

Not only does Dorothy's Candies sell chocolate and sweets in White Oak, but they also send ship all over the country and the world to people who remember eating Dorothy's Candies as a kid. The nearby steel



**Robert Gastel, owner, and Marlene Druskin, store manager**

industry was also part of that legacy.

"The population in McKeesport in 1960 was 52,800 people. Now, the last time I looked, it was around 20,000," Gastel said. "So, if you were a McKeesport kid, I joke about it now, but most people thought at the time we lived in the center of the universe."

In elementary school, Gastel recalled that teachers would ask students what their fathers did, and most kids would say their father worked at U.S. Steel. In high school, his fellow male classmates would say they were going to get married, get a house, and get a job at U.S. Steel.

"Then in the seventies," Gastel said, "the population of steel jobs

went way down, and I don't mean like 20%, I mean like 80%, and as a result, those people had to change their plans, meaning move to wherever."

But no matter where they lived, they always took Dorothy's Candies with them. "They remembered at the holidays eating Dorothy's Candies. So, we have been in the mail ordering business since," he said.

Marlene Druskin, a manager who just celebrated her 10-year anniversary at the beloved candy store, also is in charge of all the mail order shipments.

"I love everything about Dorothy's Candies. I love that it's a family-owned business, I love that it's a small business, I love that it's in my com-

munity, and you can't beat the chocolates!" she said.

With the Christmas season just days away, one would think that it is the busiest season of the year, but Gastel explained differently.

"It used to be Easter, but moms don't make the big fancy baskets anymore, so both holidays are really about equal...40% at Christmas and 40% at Easter.

"Our season really is mid-September through Mother's Day, and then after that, we have a skeleton staff that will come in," Gastel said. They make chocolate Monday through Friday during these busy months, and, if needed, they will come in on a Saturday. But during off season, they make  
(Continued on next page)

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candy usually once a week, he added.

Like so many businesses, the COVID-19 pandemic affected Dorothy's Candies from day one, starting in mid-March, 2020, when Gastel had to shut down face-to-face retail operations. However, he already was prepared for the Easter season.

"We had an exemption because we were manufactured, but we weren't able to sell in the store," Gastel said. "It was an incredible challenge for us to stay in business."

Like his mother's ingenuity, Gastel found ways to keep the business going.

"What we did is we set it up so people would call, we produced the order, and then we would deliver it outside the front door there [he pointed at

the door of the store]... when they would call and say they were here," he said. It was his version of contactless delivery.

"We'd send it out and would have a mask on, of course, and usually, people would say, 'could you put it in the trunk?' because they didn't want to interact," he added.

The pandemic did change the mail order side of the business, which, Gastel said, quadrupled. "I mean, even to send it to, say Dormont, or the West End, even to a few people to McKeesport... so, we survived, but I mean our business went down 50%," he added.

And at the start of the pandemic, there were worries about transmission and virus spread, so his employees were hesitant to come to the factory to make candy.

What really is the

Dorothy's Candies difference? Gastel did not miss a beat.

"The larger companies, like Sarris Candy, they have machinery that does everything while we do everything by hand," Gastel said. For example, he added, "With nut clusters...people want larger nuts, so that's what we do. If you have a machine, you put it in an extruder... and you tend to get very small nuts... by hand like we do at Dorothy's Candies is just like night and day."

Druskin said she knows what makes Dorothy's Candies so special in the community. "It being family owned...I mean his mother has been gone, and we see that she has transferred into him... photos we have around here and the way he talks about her...just the whole history of how this was created... it's awesome," she said, adding that her own grandmother was a businesswoman, "so I really like that idea of it being family based."

The family-owned business has only been passed down to one generation and Gastel hopes and plans on making it more generations.

Dorothy's Candies... handmade Swiss chocolate are there candy favorites with customers and the staff?

Druskin loves the peanut butter meltaways



and Gastel just loves, "anything peanut butter," including the chocolate peanut butter pretzels.

Druskin said the number one thing that is sold the most is the Dorothy's Candies deluxe assortment.

"That gives everybody the opportunity to taste everything. We have creams in there, we have fruits in there, we have nuts in there, there's meltaways in there, so if you want to experience Dorothy's for the first time, that's what you do."

Druskin echoed that her experience at Dorothy's Candies means "it's happy creates happiness for me, enjoyment and fulfillment."

Sweet!

**Dorothy's Candies**  
1228 Long Run Road  
(Route 48)  
White Oak, PA, 15131  
412-678-2723  
[dorothyscandies.com](http://dorothyscandies.com)

Check website for regular and holiday store hours. Dorothy's Candies remains the exclusive chocolatier to the Pittsburgh Opera and has been featured at the Academy Awards, the Grammys, and the Kentucky Derby.

*Dorothy's*  
CANDIES   
Premium hand-crafted Swiss Chocolates since 1947



# CULTURE, ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## HIGHMARK FIRST NIGHT PITTSBURGH 2022



### A Next Year's Excitement

**RILEY PERCIAVALLE**  
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December is here, but while Christmas and Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Ramadan are all part of the holiday season, many people seem to prepare for the last six hours of the month to signal the new year.

Dec. 31 marks saying goodbye to 2021. However, it's not a New Year's Eve party without Highmark sponsoring the annual First Night

Pittsburgh, with events occurring at multiple sites in the Cultural District in downtown Pittsburgh.

Culminating with the city's 'Countdown to Midnight' and the raising of the 1000-LED-lighted "Future of Pittsburgh Ball" that is a "physical embodiment of Pittsburgh's bright and healthy future," this six-hour evening celebration sprawls downtown's renowned 14-block Cultural District along the Allegheny River. Events are held inside theaters, galleries, and

unique spaces, and along city streets on four outdoor performance stages.

Acclaimed national artists and Pittsburgh's vibrant artist community ring in the New Year for revelers with live music, dance, theater, visual arts, comedy, magic, kids' activities, and a signature parade, along with two Zambelli Fireworks displays, one at 6 p.m. for children and another at midnight.

Signature performances this year include ZUZU African Acrobats and The Bryan Nash Trio, a sing-off competition, Steeltown Fire, and massive ice creations, along with a Giant Eagle-sponsored parade.

Giant puppets that have been a tradition of the parade in previous years will once again march down Liberty Avenue.

Three large inflatable rabbits from an Australian art studio are a unique addition to this year's

festivities. They will be located along the Eighth Street block of the Cultural District, with the largest rabbit more than 50-feet tall.



The Future of Pittsburgh Grand Finale occurs around 11:55 p.m. at the corner of Stanwix Street and Penn Avenue when crowds can gather to watch the Future of Pittsburgh ball "rise" in celebration of good things for everyone for the new year.

Events for kids are also available like the Baby Rave and the children's story Don't Let The Pigeon Drive The Bus, as they take over the Dollar *(Continued on next page)*



(Continued from page 19)

Bank stage and Family Tent for all families to enjoy time together.

Most of the night's events are free-of-charge. Several inside performances require a small admission price. Admission button prices remain among the most affordable in the nation, at \$10 per person (kids five and under are FREE) and they can be purchased at [TrustArts.org/FirstNight-PGH](https://TrustArts.org/FirstNight-PGH)

Ticketed indoor events will be subject to the Cultural Trust's COVID-19 protocol, including masking and proof of vaccination and ID. Outdoor

events do not require masking, although they are recommended.

For many who attend, enjoy the time with friends and family in the Cultural District for the first time in two years to enjoy the final six hours that 2021 has to offer and



make way for 2022 when it arrives.

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. The District is one of the country's largest land masses "curated" by a single nonprofit arts organization.



A major catalytic force in the city, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust is a unique model of how public-private partnerships can reinvent a city with authenticity, innovation and creativity. Using the arts as an economic catalyst, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust has holistically created a world-renowned Cultural District that is revitalizing the city, improving the regional economy and enhancing Pittsburgh's quality of life.

# JANUARY BOOK CLUB

JOIN US TO DISCUSS

## Ready Player 2

By Ernest Cline

**Wednesday January 26**  
**12:15 - 1:15**  
**Quiet Study Room**  
**Kelly Library**

Everyone is welcome!



**HOLIDAY MOVIE  
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM  
THE KELLY LIBRARY**

[A Christmas Carol](https://digitalcampus-swankmp-net.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/psu279437/play/E8EB4FBF2916F736)

<https://digitalcampus-swankmp-net.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/psu279437/play/E8EB4FBF2916F736>

Faithful version of the Charles Dickens classic about miserly Ebenezer Scrooge who, after being visited by three ghosts on Christmas Eve, learns the meaning of the true spirit of the holiday. Reginald Owen took the role of Scrooge in place of an ailing Lionel Barrymore. Real-life husband and wife Gene and Kathleen Lockhart play Mr. and Mrs. Bob Cratchit, and their daughter, June, costars as a Cratchit daughter.

[Love Actually](https://digitalcampus-swankmp-net.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/psu279437/play/68851F0210594B5C)

<https://digitalcampus-swankmp-net.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/psu279437/play/68851F0210594B5C>

Richard Curtis, the Oscar-winning writer of "Four Weddings and a Funeral," makes his directorial debut with this charming romantic comedy. Set in London, the film chronicles the affairs of several couples during Christmas-time. Hugh Grant heads an impeccable cast, which also includes Emma Thompson, Liam Neeson and Laura Linney.

# KENNYWOOD'S 10th ANNUAL HOLIDAY LIGHTS SPECTACULAR CONTINUES

## Park Unveils Multi-Year, Multi-Million Dollar Improvements & Plans for 125th Celebration

The following article was compiled from various Kennywood press releases

WEST MIFFLIN, PA. – Deck the halls! Holiday Lights made a triumphant return to Kennywood on Nov. 20.

*Pittsburgh's Home for the Holidays* celebrates the season over 24 nights and will feature more than one million lights, Pennsylvania's Tallest Christmas Tree, sweet and savory seasonal snacks, and favorite family rides and attractions.

For 2021, Holiday Lights expands its calendar to offer more nights of festive cheer than ever before. Holiday Lights continues Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through Dec. 24.

Visitors will enjoy many new light displays since Holiday Lights was last held in 2019, an extra hour of fun most evenings, plus extra after-Christmas bonus nights Dec. 26 through Jan. 2 – the first time Kennywood will welcome guests in January in the park's 124-year history.

"There's no better way to conclude 2021 than with Kennywood's biggest and best Holiday Lights



ever," says Kennywood General Manager Mark Pauls.

"Guests will have a great time walking through our winter wonderland, enjoying some rides and celebrating the most wonderful time of the year together. We have some great gifts to share this season above and beyond Holiday Lights, too – some that may even arrive before Christmas. So, stay tuned," Pauls added.

Additionally, Kennywood's 125th season of fun is on the horizon in 2023. On Dec. 16, Kennywood announced plans for a major, multi-million dollar im-

provement project to the park, along with a lineup of special events unlike anything seen since its founding in 1898.

A party 125 years in the making is too big for just one season. Park leadership unveiled a two-year celebration starting with major changes coming in 2022 that will enhance guest experience, refresh landmark locations, and provide reasons to visit every single day of the season – from Opening Day on April 23 to the final night of Holiday Lights.

"The restoration of the iconic Kangaroo and launch of our smashingly

successful Bites and Pints Food & Drink Festival is just the beginning," Pauls said.

"In 2022, we look to build off those big wins with eye-catching updates all over the park while retaining what makes Kennywood, Kennywood. Add in a bigger and better than ever events lineup, and we expect to make next season our best yet," he added.

Kennywood will continue to reveal additional details in the months to come.

To bring together all the big updates and additions coming to Kennywood for its multi-season 125th celebration, Gold Season Passes have been discounted to \$125 for a limited time. In addition to a full year of fun in 2022, Gold Passes include free admission for the remaining nights of Holiday Lights.

For more information on Kennywood's 125th celebration, Season Passes, or Holiday Lights, visit [Kennywood.com](http://Kennywood.com).

# LET'S GET CRAZY WITH CHRIS CAPEHART

## Journey of the Master at Liberty Magic

**RILEY PERCIAVALLE**  
Digital Media Manager  
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Pittsburgh's Cultural Trust has always been a force for exciting shows and musicals, whether at the Byham Theater at the Benedum or Heinz Hall.

Since reopening this past fall with specific pandemic protocols, the Trust has performed a little bit of magic of its own once again in downtown Pittsburgh, thanks to the return of its Liberty Magic series of stage performances at 811 Liberty Avenue, the performances range from sleight of hand to offbeat illusions.

Take Chris Capehart, for example, who performed earlier this fall. The 71-year-old Capehart has been making magic most of his life, from his time in New York in the 1970s and 1980s on the street corners performing tricks, to his current series of performances on major cruise lines and on stages around the world.

No doubt about it. Capehart is an accomplished master, respected throughout the world by the most famous of magicians and sought after for repeat performances by critics and audience members alike. Besides his own brand of magic and

humor, for more than 40 years, he has also created routines for the biggest names in magic.

His skills in the art of close-up performance are no less than astonishing that it took 23 pages in Genii Magazine (a publication for conjurers and the field of magic) to tell the Capehart story.

"You need more than just the tricks, but an act," he said. "Any magician can pull a card you called on, or disconnect any three rings together, but you need more...you need more of a personality to go along with it, or else when your tricks go wrong you cannot save yourself."

Along with his time in New York earlier in his career, Capehart connected with Penn Jillette, half of the famous Penn and Teller team. Capehart recently reconnected with Jillette when he became a guest performer on their TV show, "Fool Us," where magicians and illusionists try to stump the iconic duo with magic tricks. It was a fun show and something Capehart was glad to do, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It was nice seeing Penn again, as he was one of the many who helped me with my career. As for



being on the (TV) show, it was odd with still quarantining," Capehart explained.

"There was always someone bringing us food in brown bags to eat since we had to keep away from each other. It was rather odd being there on stage with only three others and everyone was watching from home," he added.

Capehart won his appearance and was awarded the Penn and Teller "FU" trophy, which he shows at his various performances, including during his

recent visit in Pittsburgh.

The isolation from the audience makes it clear that Capehart prefers the usual live-on-stage and street shows, rather than the virtual performances.

Capehart knew to let out something special with his Pittsburgh audiences as he interacted with them by bringing them on stage. He was able to do that thanks to the Trust's mask and vaccination mandate and ongoing COVID tests, which Capehart took daily  
*(Continued on next page)*



(Continued from page 22)

in order to keep magic going during his schedule here.

As Capehart's press materials state, his background and talent are no wonder "he is held in such high esteem by magicians around the world." Journey of the Master was amazing, as his one-man show turned old magical props (like interlocking rings and playing cards) into "modern, mind blowing, close-up illusions," sprinkled in with a bit of

"magical" wit, comedy and deception.

*The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust's Liberty Magic schedule showcases a new magic/illusionist each month through next spring.*

*Go to [trustarts.org/magic](http://trustarts.org/magic) for a complete schedule of performances and times.*

*Penn State Greater Allegheny students can receive special discounted tickets with college ID at the time of purchase.*



## DOUBLE FEATURE OR DOUBLE FAILURE?

RILEY PERCIAVALLE

Digital Media Manager

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Ryan Murphy has produced more than a dozen shows like "Glee," "Hollywood" and "Ratched." However, his most popular work since 2011 is that of "American Horror Story's" various installments, from "Murder House" to now "Double Feature."

The show runs as a horror anthology series focusing on certain times and locations. Each character, whether played by Evan Peters, Sarah Paulson, Frances Conroy, or Jessica Lange, and more, portrays many roles in the minimum of ten episodes.

The newest season, "Double Feature"--which just ended this past fall on FX, but is now streaming on Hulu--focuses more on two storylines. The first half takes place in Isolated Beach Town with a struggling author, while seeing an odd group sucking up the town as he tries to protect his family.

While on the other hand, he has a career to focus on and fill in his writer's block to fill in with his muse with new shows. It has the feeling of Stephen King's novel, *The Shining*, is around the area with also some of a

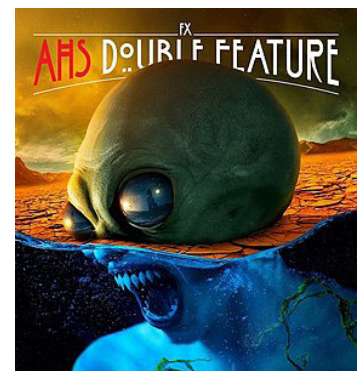
Dracula setting.

The whole beach town being desolated sets the mood as you, the audience, can feel something has been bizarre before the main character has arrived. You feel the off-setting moments as if there is reference to Alfred Hitchcock's "Psycho."

The other half of the season of this anthology is what the show has tackled before in Easter eggs and the world of aliens. This is sort of a mixed bag, as most clues were placed in the 1930s to 1950s with a Twilight Zone-like theme to them. Everyone had questions about what would happen to the lead characters and they gave us just that.

The answers were there with alien encounters, but it could only work if we stayed in the 1930s and 1950s like Season 2, "Asylum," did in 2012.

"Double Feature" is not the worst season, but it is not the best, either. It is a decent season in a show, that will have mixed reviews from many fans.





# 90 SECONDS UNDER THE BLUE UMBRELLA

## TIMELY TOPICS FROM AROUND CAMPUS

YOUSUF IBRAHIM | Contributing Writer | yli5000@psu.edu

**“How do you think the lockdown over the last two years has affected/will affect the team’s performance during the season? Are there any specific drawbacks, or perhaps advantages, that the lockdown may have provided the team?”**



**Danielle Kochka, Head Softball Coach**

“I think the biggest takeaway from the past two years for this team is the very real and tangible knowledge that this sport can be taken away from you in a split second....I think the girls got a glimpse of life without softball, something that most people don’t get to see until their career ends. It was a blessing in disguise for us, because seeing what life without the game was like helped them to appreciate it a bit more. And now, two years later, preparing for this comeback season, they push themselves a bit harder and savored every minute of it.”

**Davon Miller, Head Women’s Basketball Coach**

“I’ve noticed that the lockdown has affected everyone’s performance: student athletes, coaches, referees. For the team, it affected every facet, from the classroom to the court. Getting back into a rhythm in the classroom and home sickness has been the main concern with the students. Ensuring we stay healthy is another concern. This season we started from the beginning and build from there. We’ve got hit hard this season with minor injuries. I would say that’s a disadvantage. The advantage is the group of young ladies we were able to put together. They are resilient, passionate and eager to be on the court.”



**Kenneth Creehan, Head Baseball Coach**

“There have been so many things that have already impacted us negatively, but we cannot focus on it nor can we dwell on it. We have a great group of guys who care about the program and the direction we are heading in tremendously, so we must just keep moving forward in a direction that will allow us to improve to the point that when games are played we are ready to compete with anyone to the best of our abilities. I am very excited what the 2022 season will bring us and how our guys will play and perform. I am very confident we will do very well. ”

**Daryn Freedman, Head Men’s Basketball Coach**

“Though I know the players and I would have liked to have had a season last year, I think we used that to our advantage as I was able to recruit all year and bring in a fantastic recruiting class. Currently, eight of the top 10 players in our rotation are freshman and they are playing very well. Also, the players who were around and practiced all year were able to show great improvement and are also doing very well this season.”





# SPORTS & ATHLETICS



## GOOD YEAR AHEAD PREDICTED FOR PSUGA SPORTS

**CARLIN WHALEN**

Sports Editor

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After having a successful season in fall 2021, Korie Morton-Rozier, director of athletics at Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) sees a bright future for the winter and spring sports to follow.

“I think we are setting ourselves up a good couple years ahead of us with all the new kids we brought in,” Morton-Rozier said.

That comes as a direct result of the Women’s Volleyball team winning the PSUAC championship

for the first time ever and then they went to nationals, where they placed fourth.

The Men’s Soccer team also made a playoff appearance for the first time in a few years, unfortunately losing in the first round.



Looking ahead to winter sports, Morton-Rozier believes that basketball will also be successful in 2022.

“We have a lot of new kids and new athletes that are dedicated,” she said. “Both men and women’s teams are off to a decent start with big wins,” she added, creating signs for a great future. However, “it’s early in the season to determine how well the teams will do.”

One thing fall sports had to contend with and winter and spring sports will also need to continue is to abide by University COVID-19 protocols. Masks will need to be worn during practice and play.

Morton Rozier said that it is not a favorite

activity for the players.

“Nobody enjoys wearing them, but if it keeps our kids safe and it keeps them playing, they will do it,” she said.

Also, in order for PSUGA players and coaches to keep athletes safe, they set in place multiple safety precautions like police presence, minimizing the interactions between teams off the playing fields, and having a full-time trainer from UPMC.



# GREATER ALLEGHENY TIED FOR 1ST IN CHANCELLOR'S CUP

The following article was compiled from [AthleicsGA.com](http://AthleicsGA.com) on Dec. 14

UNIVERSITY PARK, PA. -

Penn State Brandywine and Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) are tied atop the Fall 2021 PSUAC Chancellor's Cup standings after an eventful season. Four different campuses were crowned champions across the PSUAC (Penn State University Athletic Conference), including in golf, men's and women's soccer, and volleyball.

Brandywine, which has been a perennial contender for the Chancellor's Cup, picked up its championship in men's soccer and sits atop the standings with 25.5 points.



PSUGA, with a championship in volleyball, is tied with its eastern counterparts after a fourth place finish in golf and a quarterfinal loss in men's soccer.

The Chancellor's Cup awards points based upon team finish in PSUAC sponsored sports of golf, men's and women's soccer, volleyball, men's and women's basketball,

baseball, and softball. The year-end award is meant to recognize programs with broad-based success in their athletic departments.

## 2021 FALL CHANCELLOR'S

CAMPUS	POINT TOTAL
BRANDYWINE	25.5
GREATER ALLEGHENY	25.5
YORK	23.5
MONT ALTO	23
LEHIGH VALLEY	20.5
SCHUYLKILL	17
FAYETTE	14.5

## CUP STANDINGS



CAMPUS	POINT TOTAL
BEAVER	14
HAZLETON	13.5
SCRANTON	12.5
NEW KENSINGTON	10
DUBOIS	9.5
WILKES-BARRE	8.5
SHENANGO	4.5

# HOPE STAYS ALIVE AT HEINZ FIELD WITH STEELERS VICTORY OVER TITANS, 13-19

**NATHAN REGA**

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Despite another slow start in the first half, the Pittsburgh Steelers managed to keep their playoff hopes alive another week, defeating the Tennessee Titans 13-19 at Heinz Field.

Down 13-3 at half-time, the Steelers went on to score 16 unanswered points thanks to a one-yard rushing touchdown from Quarterback, Ben Roethlisberger, in the third quarter and three successful field goals from the ever-reliable Kicker, Chris Boswell.

Of course, Boswell's points in the second half are a product of three forced turnovers from the Steelers' defense. The first came when Cornerback, Joe Haden, recovered the ball from Cornerback, Cam Sutton's, forced fumble on Titan Wide Receiver, Racey McMath. The second, an interception made by Linebacker, Joe Schorbert, off a tipped pass from Outside Linebacker, Taco Charlton.

The third came from Outside Linebacker, T. J. Watt's, recovery of Titan Quarterback, Ryan Tannehill, setting Boswell up for the 48-yarder that set the score to 13-19.



*Cornerback Joe Haden recovers a fumble at Heinz Field, forcing a turnover for the Tennessee Titans  
Photo courtesy Karl Roser, Pittsburgh Steelers*

In the final minutes of play, the Titans' offense made a drive to the Steelers' 16-yard line. However, Pittsburgh's defense shut down any hopes for a late game Titans' comeback. First, Tannehill was sacked by Outside Linebacker, Derrek Tuszka, on second-down and the Titans were unable to convert on third-down.

Finally, Haden came in clutch with a game saving stop on Titans Wide Receiver, Nick Westbrook-Ikhine, who was inches away from picking up the yard the Titans needed on fourth-down.

"We knew coming into

this game that we don't have too much room for error at all," Haden stated in the post-game press conference.

"The good part is that we still kind of control our own destiny, so we don't want to be worried about what other teams have to do. We know we have to go in each stadium and come up with a victory if we even want to be in the talks. So, we had to go out there and win this one and then the same thing next week against Kansas City," Haden added.

Little room for error indeed, with only three regular season games left for the Steelers, whose current record stands at

7-6-1. The final three games start on the road this Sunday when the Steelers face off against the Kansas City Chiefs.

The final two matchups are against AFC North division rivals, first with a Monday Night Football home game against the Cleveland Browns on Jan. 3 and ending on Jan. 9 against the Ravens in Baltimore.



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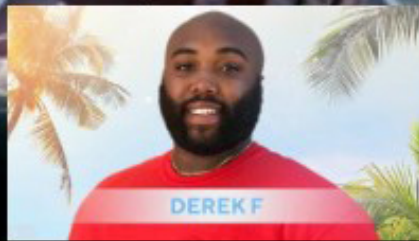


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