

THE BEACON

Wilkes University – Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

The news of today reported by the journalists of tomorrow.

A life of justice: Ruth Bader Ginsburg's legacy

By Genny Frederick
News Staff Writer

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, an esteemed Supreme Court justice, died in her Washington home on Sept. 18.

Ginsburg was the second female justice appointed to the Supreme Court. She died at the age of 87 from complications related to metastatic pancreatic cancer, as reported by the Supreme Court.

Ginsburg served in the Supreme Court since her appointment by then-president Bill Clinton in 1993. She has become an icon for women's rights and has provided judgment in important cases, including *Bush v. Gore* in 2000 and *Obergefell v. Hodges* in 2015.

In recent years, she became a cultural icon with television shows, movies and books celebrating her and her life, including the receipt of the affectionate nickname, "The Notorious R.B.G.," which was coined by authors Irin Carmon and Shana Knizhnik.

Ginsburg has been a trailblazer since before her time in the Supreme Court. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., her parents taught her to value education and independence.

"My mother told me

to be a lady. And for her, that meant be your own person – be independent," explained Ginsburg on the advice given to her as a girl, as stated in a 2018 interview with NPR's Nina Totenberg.

Ginsburg's emphasis on education and independence drew her to attend Cornell University, where she graduated first in her class. Afterward, she attended Harvard University Law School, being one of the nine women accepted into

the 500-person class. She became the first female member of the Harvard Law Review.

Later, she transferred to Columbia University and joined that school's Law Review as well.

While on the Supreme Court, she became known for her dissents, even having a specific 'dissent collar' worn for the occasions where she departed from the general opinion of the court.

"My dissenting opinions, like my briefs, are intended to persuade. And sometimes one must be forceful about saying how wrong the Court's decision is," said Ginsburg in a 2014 interview with The New Republic's Jeffrey Rosen.

Ginsburg's successes did not come without hard times in tow. Since 1999, she fought through numerous cancer diagnoses and lost both her mother and husband to the disease as well.

While Americans across the country pay tribute to Ginsburg, Washington is buzzing with discussions of when a new justice will be appointed, and who that justice will be.

As of Saturday, President Donald Trump announced that he is considering a female Supreme Court Justice to fill the ninth seat, and by next week, he will have a decision.

Since this is an election year and there are less than 50 days until the November election, Trump's ability to appoint a new justice is being questioned by Republicans and Democrats alike.



Wilkes celebrates Constitution Day with "Year of the Vote" and Feminist Alliance festivities

By Emily Cherkaskas
Life, Arts & Entertainment Staff Writer

Wilkes University recently celebrated the anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution. Events were held throughout the day to commemorate the historic anniversary.

According to "Year of the Vote," "Constitution Day is an American federal observance that recognizes the adoption of the U.S. Constitution and those who have become U.S. citizens."

Delegates of the Constitutional Convention gathered together on Sept. 17, 1787, to sign the document in Philadelphia.

"Year of the Vote" is an interdisciplinary group of colleagues from around campus. Heather Sincavage, director of the Sordoni Art Gallery, is responsible for the creation of the "Year of the Vote." She called upon a wide array of colleagues across Wilkes to collaborate on the project.

"We all have different experiences and perspectives – that was important for us to

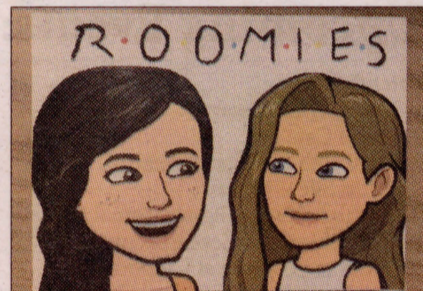
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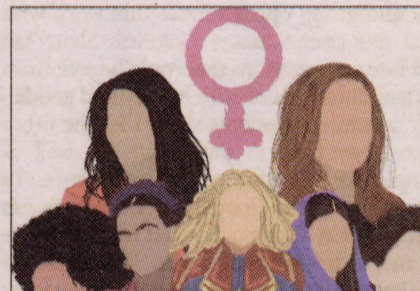
Courtesy of Jon Liebetrau

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The Beacon/Liz Cherkaskas

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News

Have a breaking story or a press release to send? Contact the news editor: Sean.Schmoyer@wilkes.edu

Student Government: Sept. 17 weekly meeting notes

By Maddy Kinard
Staff Writer

Student Government had its fourth online meeting of the semester, where members discussed two motions to recognize clubs and upcoming events.

First, the Friends of Panama club shared a video interview of some students across campus, demonstrating that only a small number of people know about Panamanian culture. The goal of their club is to raise awareness and educate people about their culture, as well as the importance of having their culture represented on campus.

There was a motion to approve the club, and it passed with everyone in favor.

Second, the Stress Management Through Art Therapy group shared more information about the proposed club. Its purpose is to give students a safe place to share their art or use

their art as a therapy tool. The club is open to all students, regardless of their artistic abilities.

They are looking to hold events, such as a pottery night, which will be limited to the members of the club, and then, a mixed media night that will be open to the whole school.

In a passing motion, Stress Management Through Art Therapy was recognized as a club on campus.

Student Government then had a breakdown of class reports.

The sophomore class is looking to have a possible

Halloween costume contest, in which a winner would receive a gift card. They are also selling blue and yellow bracelets from last year.

Juniors may hold a virtual self-care social

with facemasks, tea and possibly yoga. The event would be hosted by Wilkes Adventure Education Coordinator Jill Price. They are planning to sell pop-socket wallets.

Seniors are holding fundraisers for blankets (one for \$20 or two for \$30) and speakers (\$15). Within the coming weeks, they may have a sticker sale. They are also looking to host a Zoom trivia or bingo night, providing chances for students to win giveaway prizes.

Commuter Council is planning virtual giveaways with hoodies, wallets and more over social media. The Multicultural Student Coalition submitted an event for a Black Lives Matter silent protest

that is going to be held on Sept. 25.

On Sept. 17, Programming Board its first movie night of the semester on the greenway, where the first 60 to arrive received a free blanket. RHC is looking to utilize the movie channel more and is planning a possible giveaway of reusable tote bags to alleviate fumbling in the dining hall.

Finally, the Executive Board discussed freshman class elections, which will be coming out next week. Face-to-face classes should have ballots printed out as well.

There will also be a distribution of face masks, which will be put in every resident's mailbox, and the Commuter Council will give theirs out to commuters. As a result, all undergraduate students will have at least one mask from Wilkes University.



Madelynn.Kinard@wilkes.edu
Graphic by Madison Hummer

Beacon Briefs: Upcoming campus events

Compiled by Sean Schmoyer

Racial Justice Vigil

Wilkes Football is planning to host a racial justice vigil on Oct. 1 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ralston Athletic Complex and Schmidt Stadium. Students are encouraged to drive or meet at Evans Hall at 7 p.m. to walk over to the event.

The vigil serves as a peaceful statement of unity against racial and social injustice inequalities for victims of police brutality.

For more information or questions, contact Erica Acosta, the associate director of diversity, at erica.acosta@wilkes.edu or Jonathan Drach, the Colonels' head coach, at jonathan.drach@wilkes.edu.

Taste of Wilkes 2020: Home Edition

The Taste of Wilkes Committee has moved to a new virtual format, which will include a cookbook of recipes, a physical book and a PDF version, as well as a virtual gift basket auction.

Members are calling for the campus community to submit their favorite recipes to be included in the cookbook. The committee is also looking for virtual chefs who will: submit their favorite recipe for inclusion in the cookbook, create a unique name for their

dish and provide a short story about why the dish is special to them.

Find Volunteer Opportunities Through the Civic Engagement Office

The Civic Engagement Office has been working on curating service opportunities and has an ongoing list. Students are encouraged to check back often.

The opportunities are available on a Google Sheet with three tabs to help identify the type of service students may be looking for, including virtual events that are a mix of local and national community partners, face-to-face and group opportunities that work with local non-profits and a Colonel's Share tab that lists organizations that could benefit from student donations of both money and goods.

If interested, students should let the office know they plan to participate, as well as complete a reflection of the experience. To gain access to the Google Sheet, students can check Wilkes Today or contact Megan Boone at megan.boone@wilkes.edu. Students are also encouraged to reach out if they have ideas about service events in the area.

Support the Honors Program at Chipotle on Sept. 30

The Honors Program Student Committee

(HPSC) is hosting a fundraiser at Chipotle from 5 to 9 p.m. on Sept. 30. Thirty-three percent of proceeds will be donated to HPSC.

During that time frame, students can stop by Chipotle and either mention the program or present the flyer to the cashier before checking out. Chipotle will also offer online ordering. If students order online, they should enter the code "J9WH9C9" at the checkout screen.

@wilkesbeacon
Sean.Schmoyer@wilkes.edu

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Want your event featured in the calendar?
Email: TheWilkesBeacon@wilkes.edu

Office of Interfaith supports students beyond their religion

By Sean Schmoyer
News Editor

The university website page for the Office of Interfaith describes itself as “a place where students, faculty and staff of all religious traditions can come together in order to share their religious experiences and what it means to be a person of faith on a college campus in today’s world. Campus Interfaith is here to be an extension of your faith tradition while you are here at Wilkes. We are here to help, support and explore with you new ideas, living experiences, choices and horizons. We are here to help you live up to your full potential.”

Kristin Osipower, the coordinator for Campus Interfaith, oversees the office. As social distancing policies went in place across the community, Osipower began to host watch parties on campus.

“This idea was actually born out of necessity more than anything because a lot of our local churches, they, at least temporarily had suspended services,” said Osipower. “We still want to encourage our students to practice their faith if they want to. We wanted to make it as accessible as possible if they couldn’t necessarily get into the actual churches. So, every weekend in the Miller Room, we host two services, one is a catholic mass from St. Nicks, and the other is Parker Hill, which is

more of an evangelical christian service. The reason why we chose those is because when students come to me looking for churches, they most often ask about catholic masses or a general christian service.”

As local churches and other places of worship begin to reopen, students can rely on the other services the office provides.

A lot of work Osipower does with students is one-on-one, and many of the events planned for the future were already set to be online. As such, the COVID-19 social distancing does not impact the office as much. What it has done is encouraged the office to branch out for more visibility. This is the first year the Interfaith office has had an Instagram.

An event that is being moved online is the Houses of Worship tour, something which students have been able to experience over the years.

Osipower said, “We went to a different church every week. It was a great way to expose students to the faith, but also to get them acclimated to the Wilke-Barre area and to enjoy and appreciate some of the beautiful art and architecture that can be found in our churches.”

The event will now be a virtual scavenger hunt, allowing students to locate, explore and enjoy them on their own.

The next event being offered is a Busy Person’s Retreat, which takes the retreat

experience, but applies it on an individual timeline. Students can listen to speakers, connect with others and fill out reflections. The material will be emailed out, and students will be encouraged to do activities on their own at whatever time.

Service opportunities are a key area that requires university approval. The Giving Tree efforts that occur around the holidays, in which members of the community purchase brand new pajamas for children, is an example. The whole even, and others like it, will have to be thought-out due to social distancing policies and the accelerated schedule.

Hallie Fromm, a P2 pharmacy student in the PharmD/MBA dual degree program, has participated in the House of Worship tour, the Giving Tree effort at Christmas time and volunteered at a Toby Mac concert, all of which were planned by the Office of Interfaith.

Fromm explained, “Kristin (Osipower) is always willing to chat and/or listen and works with an open-door policy. If she is in the office, you are welcome to stop by. It is helpful, as you can just stop in, you do not need to make an appointment. The Office of Interfaith is what made Wilkes a strong option in the college search for me. I had reached out and received a quick reply with the interfaith opportunities on campus and clubs.”

Osipower discussed how the office goes beyond just religion.

“I think people think that is the only reason they need to come to me because they have questions specifically related to faith or spirituality, or a specific religion. Even though I genuinely enjoy those conversations, it is not just about that. It is about giving students another outlet for authentic connection. Sometimes you just have questions, big questions, or you just need somebody to listen to and have a hear-to-heart. You are looking at things and beginning to think differently on a more mature and deeper level, and I am another outlet here on campus for those conversations.”

Osipower identifies that being someone who lives a good life is enhanced by religion but is not solely tied to religion.

“We want to go out and do good and be good and learn about how to positively impact other people. That is what the Interfaith Office is about. It is about bringing people together and sharing and having a positive impact,” said Osipower. “It is a wonderful thing that Wilkes provides for, given that it is a non-religious institution, but they have taken the time to make sure that this particular need for the students is taken care of for the students.”



@wilkesbeacon
Sean.Schmoyer@wilkes.edu

RBG, from frontcover

In 2016, Justice Antonin Scalia died in February, opening up a Supreme Court seat. When President Barack Obama moved to appoint a new justice, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell demanded that any appointment be declared null and void, as a new president was to be elected later that year.

McConnell believed the new president should be the one to appoint the new justice; however, he is not holding the same opinion now, with less than two months until Election Day.

On Sept. 18, he released a statement on Twitter that concluded, “President Trump’s nominee will receive a vote on the floor of the United States Senate.”

Along with McConnell, South Carolina’s Republican Senator Lindsey Graham is also going back on the statement he made in 2016, in which he opposed the appointment of a Supreme Court justice during an election year.

As five of the judges currently serving on the court lean toward conservative views, the opening of the seat held by Ginsburg, a liberal-leaning justice, can create a large imbalance of

party votes in the Supreme Court.

While the potential appointment of another conservative Supreme Court justice

has some Americans concerned, many members on both sides of the Senate are opposed to electing a new justice this close to

the election.

Republican Senators Susan M. Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska both opposed the appointment of a new justice prior to the election, due to the time frame.

“I did not support taking up a nomination eight months before the 2016 election to fill the vacancy created by the passing of Justice Scalia,” said Murkowski, as reported on Sunday by the Anchorage Daily News. “We are now even closer to the 2020 election – less than two months out – and I believe the same standards must apply.”

While discussions carry on about the next Supreme Court justice, Americans, as well as people around the world, are sharing their tributes to RBG on social media, oftentimes using her words.

In 2015, Ginsburg shared with MSNBC’s Carmon that she would like to be remembered as, “Someone who used whatever talent she had to do her work to the very best of her ability, and to help repair tears in her society to make things a little better through the use of whatever ability she has.”

How glad she would be to know that this is how so many people have remembered her.



Genevieve.Frederick@wilkes.edu
Graphic by Zarqua Ansari



The Beacon/Liz Cherinka
Supporters of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg listen to her speak during a 2019 book event.

Musical theatre has record-breaking number of freshmen

By Sara Ross
Asst. News Editor

This fall, the Wilkes Musical Theatre Department had the arrival of 16 first-year students, making the group the largest class to enter the program.

Many of the students have had a love for theatre since they were young, joining productions both in elementary school and in their home communities. They grew up watching classic movies, including "Grease" and "The Sound of Music," further inspiring their passions for singing and performing.

Jay'na Johnson, a first-year musical theatre student, described how fortunate she has been to come in with a group of students who have similar goals and interests. Before starting school, the musical theatre students were already acquainted, as they found each other on social media and established connections.

"We are like a large family, and everyone gets along really well. In the freshman class, we always go to lunch together and hang out in between classes. It's great to have a nice support system, as it has made adjusting to college much easier," explained Johnson.

One of the reasons Johnson decided to come to Wilkes is because she felt she would be able to build better relationships with her professors and peers because of the smaller class sizes. She wanted to pursue a major in musical theatre because it focuses on the three major skills needed to become a performer – singing, dancing and acting.

Jon Liebetrau, director of theatre and

associate professor, has taught at Wilkes for six years and has been a professional actor and director for 35 years. He has been overjoyed watching the theatre program continually grow.

"I have classes with the first-year students, and although it's only been a few weeks of class sessions, I feel like I've gotten to know them very well," said Liebetrau. "I am already impressed with their enthusiasm for, knowledge of and dedication to the profession of theatre."

Liebetrau touched upon how this growth demonstrates the hard work the department has put into building a pre-professional theater-training program, as well as how recruiting students nationally has been successful. The theatre faculty attends theatre conferences around the country to start building relations with high school

students, hoping that they will decide to become a future Wilkes student.

"Prospective musical theatre students are required to audition by presenting two contrasting monologues, two contrasting songs and a dance audition," said Liebetrau.

Another first-year musical theatre major, Jack Flynn, expressed that seeing the musical "Spitfire Grill" this past February sparked his interest in wanting to attend the

of acting students do not get to learn when they are in high school.

He and Johnson have Liebetrau as a professor for these classes, and Liebetrau has been teaching them what they should be aware of when acting in scenes.

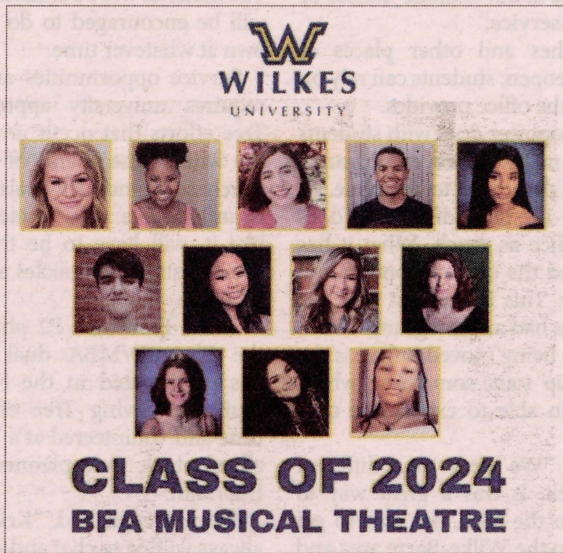
Each of these students has dreams to receive roles not only in Wilkes productions but also on Broadway once they graduate. To Johnson, the most important thing is to be able to do what she loves no matter where her career lands her.

Liebetrau's advice for aspiring theatre artists is to be adaptable, creative and patient. In the theatre world, these traits allow artists to realize the significance of joining and adjusting to a new environment because no production or show is ever the same.

Auditions have already been held for the first two shows of the year. Those shows are the musical production, "God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater!" and a non-musical production called "Good People." Spring 2021 show auditions will be held sometime in November.

Liebetrau revealed the biggest struggle this year is producing theater during a pandemic. It can be difficult performing as an actor or a singer when required to wear a mask.

However, Liebetrau explained, "We are up for the challenge. As the old saying goes, 'The show must go on!'"



Courtesy of Wilkes University Theatre's Facebook
Pictured are some of the Class of 2024, this year's first-year musical theatre students.

university.

"It was one of the best productions I have seen in my life, and it made me want to be a part of shows like that and also the musical theatre program," said Flynn.

Flynn is looking forward to developing his talents as a performer, as he is currently taking the program's entry-level acting courses, which break down different styles



@wilkesbeacon
Sara.Ross@wilkes.edu



Photos courtesy of Jon Liebetrau

Senior musical theatre students Alexander Booth and Katelyn Sincavage on stage at the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center rehearsed two scenes for the upcoming Fall 2020 musical, "God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater!"

Dr. Winkler compiles research on Vitamin K in Tanzania

By Genny Frederick
News Staff Writer

Dr. Linda Winkler, a professor of anthropology in Wilkes' Global Cultures Department, is engaged in a research project studying the use of Vitamin K to reduce rates of infant mortality in Tanzania.

"When I initially researched whether or not we could do the project, somebody said, 'Everybody knows Vitamin K works.' And yes, in the U.S. and Europe, there are examples that Vitamin K works, but then when I went and looked at the research data, there's very little good research data outside of industrial countries," explained Winkler.

In the U.S., Vitamin K is recommended to be administered at birth. This has been a regular practice in hospitals since the 1960s, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The lack of research on Vitamin K outside of the U.S. prevents it from being regularly administered at birth.

Vitamin K is used in the body for blood clotting, but babies do not have an adequate amount stored when they are first born. Severe Vitamin K deficiency can cause a lack of blood clotting, bleeding, osteoporosis and hemorrhaging, as listed by the Harvard School of Public Health. As a result, infants may develop Vitamin K Deficiency Bleeding (VKDB), as well as neonatal hemorrhaging.

VKDB and neonatal hemorrhaging are symptoms Winkler and others within the

research project focused on, as they can lead to brain damage or death.

Winkler's research experiment is atypical, as everyone is offered the benefits of the treatment. In the Nyakahanga Designated Council Hospital, every pregnant mother was explained the benefits of Vitamin K, and then offered Vitamin K for her newborn child. Of the 351 newborns involved in the research, only 70 did not receive Vitamin K treatment because of parental refusal.

Of the babies who did not receive Vitamin K, four returned to seek treatment as a result of hemorrhaging. Only one child was not able to survive the hemorrhaging after being administered the Vitamin K treatment. All 281 other newborns remained healthy. These results point to the usefulness

of Vitamin K for newborns, and this research can span much further than the Nyakahanga Designated Council Hospital.

Winkler described the potential for this project. "The district doctors in this area, as well as the much larger regional doctors and also the political leaders, are really excited about this project because the implications are that if they could show that Vitamin K works in this environment, then it can be used to reduce infant mortality."

In Tanzania, the infant mortality rate as identified by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is 50.3 deaths per every 1,000 live births. For comparison, the CDC cites Pennsylvania's infant death mortality rate at 6.1 deaths per every 1,000 live births.

Reduction of infant mortality is an issue important not only in Tanzania but also on a global scale, as it is one of the United Nations' sustainable development goals.

Winkler continued, "We have all these vaccination programs for polio, diphtheria and tetanus, and they're very important, but it might be that Vitamin K may be just as important in reducing mortality rates. Our hope is that they'll do this study, and that they'll be able then to use it to promote something. It will save the lives of babies in the communities."

This project is as much about giving back as it is about publishing new research.

"There's something quite magical about seeing a baby be born," said Winkler. "You understand why mother's love their babies so much. You see babies die shortly after birth. You see mothers just frantic because their babies are sick. There's just so many of these kinds of experiences, and so it shapes your desire to do this kind of research because, of course, you want to give other people the same opportunities that we have here."

Winkler plans to publish the research findings in African science health journals, as most are free, allowing the information from the project to reach a wider audience.

After 18 years of research within the communities in Tanzania, Winkler points to the community as the motivating factor for research.

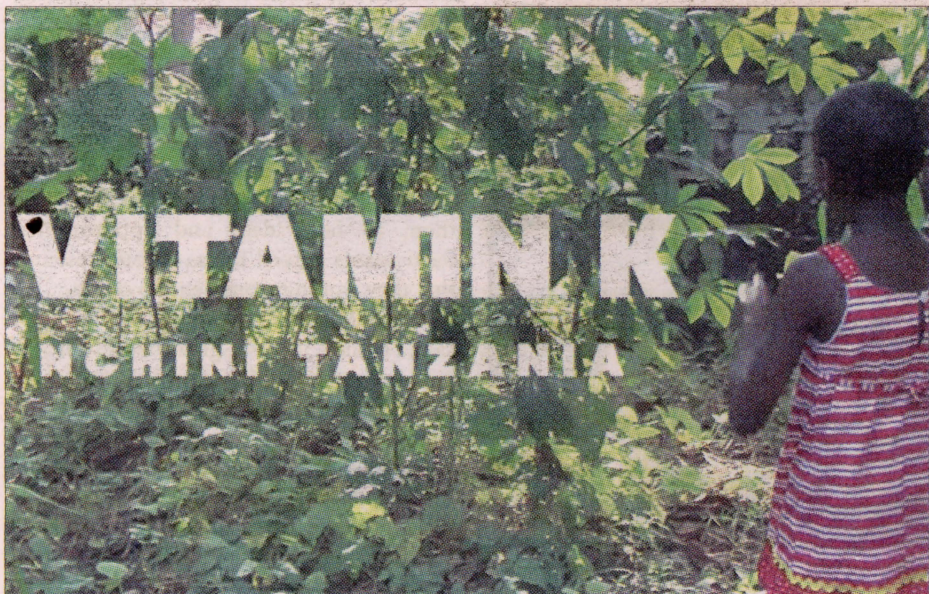
"Projects like this one that I'm doing now, people want to do it, because it benefits the community, and so research projects that benefit the community and not just yourself are extremely valuable."



Pictured is a mother and her baby in Tanzania. Mothers are eager for Vitamin K for their newborns to enhance their chance of survival.



@wilkesbeacon
Genevieve.Frederick@wilkes.edu



A movie filmed in Kiswahili, Tanzania was produced by Dr. Linda Winkler, Chief Engineer Dan Mattern and students Maddie Plumhoff and Madison Hummer '20.



Photos courtesy of Linda Winkler

The Nyakahanga Designated Council Hospital in Tanzania, where mothers were explained the benefits of Vitamin K for their newborn children.

Jay S. Sidhu got down-to-business in welcome webinar

By Genny Frederick
Staff Writer

On Sept. 14, over a hundred students and faculty of the Jay S. Sidhu School of Business and Leadership were treated to a welcome into the new semester by the namesake of their program, Jay S. Sidhu, in which he discussed leadership, inequality and students' future success.

Along with the talk from Sidhu, the new professional development web series was announced for this fall.

Bridget Turel, the director of professional development and external engagement in the Sidhu School of Business and Leadership, began the workshop with pleasantries and the introduction of Dr. Abel Adekola and Sidhu, who were the key speakers of the day.

Adekola, the dean of the Sidhu School of Business and Leadership, opened his talk by confronting the school year in the face of the pandemic. "I wholeheartedly welcome all of you to the fall academic gathering of 2020, a fall gathering like no other in the history of Wilkes University."

Adekola went on to point out that resiliency and positivity were crucial to outlasting COVID-19. "Tough times don't last but tough people do," a sentiment that resonated throughout the rest of the meeting.

He then introduced Sidhu, who is currently chair and CEO of Customers Bancorp, Customers Bank and BankMobile, which is a division of Customers Bank and BankMobile Technologies.

Sidhu began with a memory of the first time he came to Wilkes-Barre. "It was the Friday before Labor Day weekend, and I ended up in Wilkes-Barre on a Martz bus from New York City, and everything was closed. I had about \$10 in my pocket, and the first day I spent was at a homeless shelter."

This story echoed the sentiment Adekola made – tough people will last despite the tough times they face; however, it is not just 'toughness' that brings people success.

Sidhu discussed the three skill sets for leadership and success: an IQ skill set, an emotional intelligence skill set and the ability to take advantage of opportunities.

He described the IQ skills set as, "Everything you've developed in high school, in college and in the Sidhu School of Business. Everything is preparing you to

"You are not a brick structure. You know in the past they used to say, 'Let's not change. Let's not rock the boat.' Well, right now, if you won't rock the boat, you're going to be thrown out of the boat. It's that sort of a thing. So, if the boat is rocking, you better start rocking with it."

– Jay S. Sidhu

use your intelligence – to be a productive member of the workforce."

However, intelligence can only go so far. Sidhu discussed emotional intelligence, as an important characteristic of leadership.

Sidhu noted that at Wilkes, and even Princeton and Yale, classes about happiness are the most popular.

"The classes talk about emotional maturity, and it talks about emotional balance in a rapidly changing environment.

"The happiest people I know are always evaluating and improving themselves, and unhappy people are usually evaluating and judging other people."

Sidhu believes that students are perfectly set-up to achieve what he believes is the third quality of a leader – the ability to take advantage of opportunities. He believes

that education, healthcare and leisure are all at the cusp of being revolutionized with growing technology, and if students look for these opportunities, they can succeed.

In addition to leadership and successes, Sidhu also discussed Gen-Z and millennials as the largest generation with the power to change the problems in America and the world.

"Diversity is becoming a strength for America, but we have discrimination. Because you are the future leaders, you've got to demand equal rights for everybody and equal opportunity for all, especially women. There is a need for America to flourish, and you have that opportunity."

Sidhu concluded with, "The future is here for you to grab. Our challenges in our country are up to you to cure. And like the

dean said, 'Tough times don't last but tough people do.' Good luck to you, and be healthy, be safe and, most importantly, be happy."

After Sidhu's presentation, students were invited to ask questions. One of Sidhu's responses highlighted the adaptability students must have as they enter post-graduate life.

"You are not a brick structure. You know in the past, they used to say, 'Let's not change. Let's not rock the boat.' Well, right now, if you won't rock the boat, you're going to be thrown out of the boat. It's that sort of a thing. So, if the boat is rocking, you better start rocking with it."

The last part of the workshop included the announcement of a series of workshops to be offered this fall as an alternative to the Sidhu School of Business' usual plans.

In past years, students would visit businesses and industries as a way to increase student engagement, student professional development and employer exposure, but new plans had to be drawn this year.

Turel explained, "Professional development has really developed a way to continue to engage our students and support all of you during this time with developmental opportunities, small panels of industry professionals and leaders to help advance you and to help give opportunities and training in specific areas."

Ten of these online workshops will be offered to students of the Sidhu School of Business and Leadership throughout the fall semester.

More than 50 percent of the participants in the workshop were seniors, and according to the poll distributed at the end of the workshop, most of the students found the workshop to be beneficial to their personal and professional development, as it exposed them to new ideas and opportunities. Participants agreed it was a good resource that they would recommend to others.

Megan Magoon, a senior marketing major said, "I think it was a great opportunity to hear insight from Mr. Sidhu on overcoming adversity in times like this with COVID-19. It was said, 'Tough times don't last but tough people do,' and I felt that was something that resonated with all of us as we continue to adapt to the uncertainty in our world and the future upon graduation."



Photo courtesy of the Sidhu School of Business

Over a hundred students and faculty were in attendance at the Sidhu School of Business and Leadership's welcome Zoom session. Students and faculty joined in for the "Sidhu School Wave" before signing off.



@wilkesbeacon
Genevieve.Frederick@wilkes.edu

Life, Arts & Entertainment

Have any restaurants that should be reviewed or artists to be featured? Contact life, arts and entertainment editor: Maria.DiBuo@wilkes.edu

Multicultural Student Coalition set to hold silent protest

Calling attention to the BLM Movement beyond a hashtag on Sept. 25

By Judah Lyles
Staff Writer

In light of the current political and social climate, Wilkes University's Multicultural Student Coalition (MSC) wants to give each and every member of the Wilkes community an opportunity to use their voice.

On Sept. 25, the MSC will host a silent Black Lives Matter protest in order to give everyone an opportunity to show their support and learn more about the struggles of the Black community.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the MSC had to get creative by giving the community ways to get involved. A few ways to do so are by wearing all black to show support of the Black Lives Matter Movement, making signs and standing in designated protest spots around campus.

Organizers of the silent protest, Morgan Burton and Brianna Rowland, were motivated by the hope of bringing change and awareness to the Wilkes-Barre community, as well as to campus.

"I want people who are interested to know that this is important — it isn't just a trend or the next trending hashtag on

"Although Wilkes is a predominately white institution, I believe hosting events like this remind everyone that diversity is a pillar of our university. Colonels need to support our Black community now more than ever, as we are under attack."

– Morgan Burton

Twitter," said Rowland, MSC president. "This affects real human beings, real people, with real families and lives. Take this seriously. Just because you aren't personally affected by it does not mean you should pretend it isn't happening."

Organizers urge participants to fully cooperate with guidelines put in place. In addition, a spreadsheet has been created for those interested in participating to sign up for different time slots. This way, only two to three people will be in one area at a time, which will reduce crowding. Masks will also be enforced during the protest.

The MSC is also offering art supplies for those wishing to make signs for the protest. Students in need of art supplies should send a request to msc.wilkes.edu, where they will then receive a confirmation email that will allow them to use the items from the Club Hub. In addition, students can also submit poster designs to be printed, which will then be placed around campus. In order to do so, students should submit designs by Sept. 23 at noon.

Katie Ermeus, a freshman at Wilkes, echoed the sentiments of organizers

Burton and Rowland, and stressed the importance of unifying as a community on campus to stand behind Black voices.

"I will be actively participating in the silent protest on Sept. 25," said Ermeus. "Any chance I get to take a positive stand in our community against the terrors that we face in the Black community and beyond is something that I try my best to be a part of."

For both organizers and Ermeus, community is a central theme of the silent protest.

"I think this event shows the university's stance on the Black Lives Matter Movement and support for our Black community on campus," explained Burton. "Although Wilkes is a predominantly white institution, I believe hosting events like this remind everyone that diversity is a pillar of our university. Colonels need to support our Black community now more than ever, as we are constantly under attack."

For more information, please contact Rowland at brianna.rowland@wilkes.edu or msc@wilkes.edu.

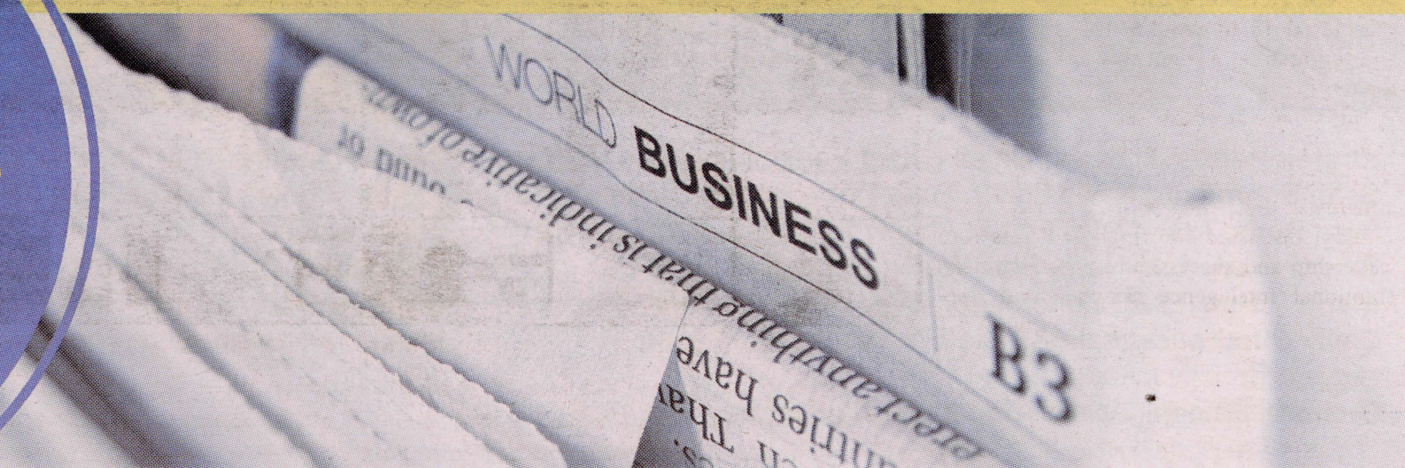


@wilkesbeacon
Judah.Lyles@wilkes.edu

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Join The Beacon.**



The moody foodie's Ritz cracker crusted chicken breast strips

By Anna Culver
Staff Writer

A cheap and easy meal that can be paired with spaghetti: Ritz Cracker Chicken. The average cost is about \$15.

Ingredients:

- 1) One Chicken Breast (Boneless & Skinless)
- 2) Two Eggs
- 3) One sleeve of Ritz Crackers
- 4) Vegetable Oil

Instructions:

Take Ritz crackers and put them in a Ziplock plastic freezer bag. Then, crush the Ritz crackers. This is a lot easier with a rolling pin, if you have one. Once they are finely crushed, place them into a bowl.

Crack two eggs into another bowl and scramble them.

Cut the chicken into small strips, and place each strip first into the eggs first, and then into the crackers. Make sure

the strips are covered completely with cracker pieces.

Heat some vegetable oil in a frying pan, and place the chicken strips into the pan.

Fry the chicken strips until the cracker-crust is golden brown on both sides, or until the chicken is no longer pink inside.

Then, place these pieces on a plate with a paper towel to gather the leftover oil, and they are ready to be eaten. Enjoy!

Variations:

This recipe can be altered to make Chicken Parmesan bites as well. For that, you are going to need tomato sauce and your choice of cheese.

Warning Food
Allergy: Eggs



The Beacon/Anna Culver

Take a sleeve of Ritz crackers and create a flavorful crusted chicken. Add pasta and sauce on the side to complete the meal.



Anna.Culver@wilkes.edu
Graphics by Anna Culver





BEACON BUMPS

Each week, the Wilkes Beacon staff adds a song to their Beacon Bumps playlist. Look below for this week's list of songs.

Kirsten Peters, Editor-in-Chief: [Sweet Serendipity](#) - [Lee DeWyze](#)
Sean Schmoyer, News Editor: [Fake Fine](#) - [Robert Grace](#)
Sara Ross, Asst. News Editor: [Almost Maybes](#) - [Jordan Davis](#)
Genny Frederick, News Staff Writer: [Not to Self](#) - [J. Cole](#)
Maria DiBuo, LA&E Editor: [Lazy River Dead](#) - [Grateful Dead](#)
Emily Cherkaskas, LA&E Staff Writer: [Bad Romance](#) - [Halestorm](#)
Breanna Ebisch, Opinion Editor: [Falling For You](#) - [The 1975](#)

Zarqua Ansari, Asst. Opinion Editor: [Haunt Me](#) - [Samsa](#)
Jordan Daniel, Opinion Staff Writer: [After Hours](#) - [The Weeknd](#)
Dylan Mehl, Co-Sports Editor: [Blind](#) - [DaBaby](#)
Ariel Reed, Co-Sports Editor: [Someone to You](#) - [Banners](#)
Chris Gowarty, Sports Staff Writer: [Gorgeous](#) - [Kanye West](#)
Steffen Horwath, Staff Photographer: [Real Peach](#) - [Henry Jamison](#)

CONSTITUTION, from front

pull in together for the ‘Year of the Vote,’ said Sincavage, recalling the creation of the project.

The first event of the day featured a reading of various speeches on 90.7 WCLH at 11 a.m. For Sincavage, ‘It was a moving hour.’

Dr. Mia Briceno, associate professor of communication studies, and Kristen Rock, WCLH’s station manager, organized the reading. They, along with Feminist Alliance members Ashlynn Allison, a junior mechanical engineering major; Kayla Eller, a senior biology and environmental science major; and Trey Giles, a sophomore psychology and pre-med student, participated in the readings.

The group read Frederick Douglass’s speech, ‘Declaration of Sentiments,’ Sojourner Truth’s speech, ‘Ain’t I a Woman’ and Maya Angelou’s poem, ‘To Form a More Perfect Union.’

Giles, who is the vice president of the Feminist Alliance, read ‘Declaration of Sentiments.’ For him, contributing to the reading was a valuable experience.

‘This is important especially now, before the election, to acknowledge Constitution Day,’ Giles said. ‘There is so much turmoil everywhere in the world right now. It is important for people to step up for themselves.’

For the second aspect of the event, an interactive exhibit was placed in the lobby of the Sordoni Art Gallery, titled ‘This is what a feminist look(ed) like.’

The exhibit featured four different mannequins dressed up in historic and modern outfits to represent the current fashion styles during the four different waves of feminism that have occurred around the world since the 19th century. Feminist Alliance and ‘Year of the Vote’ members discovered a correlation in between different fashion styles that were in

sync with women’s rights movements.

Additionally, students and faculty were encouraged to write a message or response on a note and pin it to one of the mannequins. ‘Year of the Vote’ featured many messages on social media.

The first mannequin, donned in a conservative and traditional outfit, represented the first wave of feminism and the first steps taken for gender equality. In this era, during the 19th century, women fought for suffrage and legal issues, which secured their right to vote.

The second wave of feminism is represented by a more casual and practical outfit to represent the stereotypical housewife. Beginning in the 20th century, specifically the 1960s, women were fighting to end discrimination based on gender. A historic protest took place as the 1975 Women’s Day March; some victories during the era include The Equal Pay Act of 1963.

The third mannequin featured a more revealing and punk-style outfit to mark the third wave of feminism, including a graphic shirt that says in all capital letters, ‘ASK ME ABOUT MY RADICAL FEMINIST AGENDA.’ According to ‘Year of the Vote,’ the third wave of feminism focused on ‘bodily autonomy while broadening their goals towards sex-positivity, abolishing gender-role stereotypes and expanding feminism to diverse racial and cultural identities.’

The fourth wave of feminism is represented by a pantsuit-clad mannequin. Fourth wave feminism, which our era is currently going through, focuses on ‘fighting for everyone through intersectionality’ and unifying all women while eliminating gender stereotypes.

The fourth mannequin also had a message from an anonymous contributor on its lapel:



Photos: The Beacon/Emily Cherkaskas

Trey Giles, vice president of the Feminist Alliance, read Frederick Douglass’ ‘Declaration of Sentiments’ over 90.7 WCLH.

‘Let us all find the very best in all of us, as we each have something unique and powerful to offer.’

Later in the day, ‘Year of the Vote’ held a Zoom webinar lecture that featured Sincavage; Dr. Amy Sopcak-Joseph, assistant professor of history; and Dr. Andreea Maierean, assistant professor of political science. At 6 p.m., the panelists discussed the efforts of women’s fight for equal rights on an international scale.

Sopcak-Joseph, who studies how media shapes gender, lectured on American women’s fight for their rights.

According to Sopcak-Joseph, the fight had started soon after the Constitution was ratified. Since the document was vague about who could vote and own property, states were left to make their own decisions in their individual constitutions.

Starting in the 19th century, the debate surrounding women was, according to Sopcak-Joseph, ‘Could women be political? Should women be political?’

As the era went on, Americans, including women, were raised to be active in current events. Because of this, women found the drive to have direct action in politics and the workplace. Women soon volunteered to assist in charities, working with the poor, supporting the abolition of slavery and speaking out in the public.

Along with contributing to public charity, women also protested at the White House, went through hunger strikes and were jailed. After garnering enough support, the 19th Amendment was passed, giving women the right to vote.

After Sopcak-Joseph concluded her lecture, Maierean proceeded to lecture on the women’s suffrage movement on a global scale.

Maierean included the movements that took place in various continents — countries included Canada, Argentina, Brazil, France, Poland, India, Saudi Arabia, Liberia, Australia and New Zealand. All countries encouraged the idea of equal rights. She also noted the fact that while some countries fought based on their own ideas, many were inspired by others to create a movement.

She recalled that, despite these movements happening generally around the same time, women fought in various manners. While some countries like the United States fought and protested forcefully and unwaveringly, other nations like Canada, Brazil and France progressed gradually through peaceful protests and small victories.


In her conclusion, Maierean also acknowledged how important it is to register to vote in today’s society — 100 years after women achieved the right to vote.

With the conclusion of Constitution Day, ‘Year of the Vote’ is planning more events throughout the semester. Members will hold a Zoom roundtable discussion on Oct. 5, with the subject being ‘Gender, Politics, & Power Since the 19th Amendment.’

The project hopes to encourage the public to become more involved with voting for equal rights.



Four different mannequins were placed in the Sordoni Art Gallery to represent the four waves of feminism that have taken place since the 19th century.

 @wilkesbeacon
Emily.Cherkaskas@wilkes.edu

Liz's Craft Corner: Friends-themed roommate Bitmoji decor

By Liz Cherinka
Staff Writer

Dorm room decor is essential for making a small room feel like home, especially since more time is spent in a dorm room nowadays in order to go maskless.

For those with a roommate, or even a few roommates, this DIY decoration can spice up the space and make it uniquely designed and personal.

This DIY decoration is a Bitmoji roomies sign, bringing in some fun elements of a Bitmoji, and also the title font of the sitcom Friends – because a roommate is likely a very close friend, and now technically, part of the family unit.

The decoration can make a perfect door hanger, wall sign or a decorative piece on a dresser. It takes about 15 minutes to create and is affordable.

The supplies needed are one canvas of any size, although it does not have to be large (the one in the picture is 8-by-6 inches), printed pictures of the Bitmojis of the roommates, Mod Podge, one medium sized or foam paint brush, one small tip paint brush and black, red, yellow and blue acrylic paint.

Any of these materials can be purchased at any craft store, including Joann Fabrics, Michaels, Amazon or even the Dollar Tree. The pictures can be printed for a few cents at any store that prints photos, such as CVS, Walgreens or Walmart.

First, gather the Bitmojis for the decoration. The simplest way to do this is to go on Snapchat. Click on the name to send a photo to the roommate, take a black picture and find the Bitmoji you would like to use. This is the creative part, as the Bitmoji can be posed, smiling or have an object in its hand. Once the Bitmoji is chosen, zoom in until it takes up about the whole screen without being cut off.

Sizing is completely up to preference. The picture will be printed as a 4-by-6, so if the Bitmoji is going to take up the whole canvas, make it large on the screen. If it is only taking up a portion, or there are multiple Bitmojis on a small canvas, then make them smaller on the screen. For an

example, refer to the sizing difference in both of the examples.

Now, it is time to print the photos. When they are sent to print, there might be an error saying “low resolution,” but this is just because the Bitmoji is zoomed. This will not be noticeable for the decoration.

To start making the DIY, cut the printed Bitmoji photos out around the edge. Place them on the canvas to get an estimate for size, and trim them to fit. Depending on the canvas size, leave about an inch and a half to two inches of space on top for the “roomies” logo.


Then, put Mod Podge all over the back of the photo using the medium sized paint brush or the foam paint brush, and place it carefully on the canvas. Do this for every photo in whichever position you choose, and make sure to be creative with this part. In the example, the photos are placed in both corners of the canvas and are against the edges.

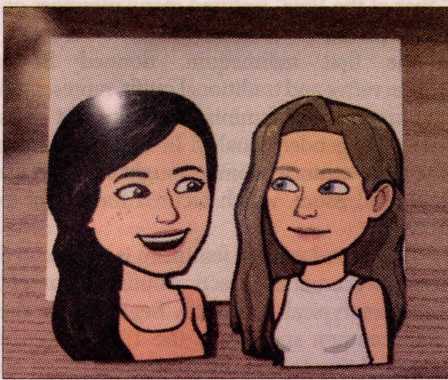
Allow time to dry, and then it is time to do the “hard” part. Write “ROOMIES” on the top of the canvas using pencil. The goal is to write this in the Friends title font. This can be found in a simple internet search and it will be pretty easy to distinguish once the dots are drawn anyway.

After “roomies” is written, it is time to paint over the pencil. Trace over the pencil with black paint using the small tip paint brush.

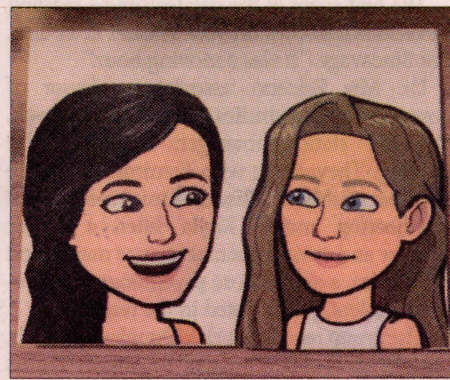
Then, add a small dot of paint in between each letter using the same brush. The sequence of colors is red, yellow, blue, red, yellow, blue. This is where the Friends logo becomes apparent.

Allow some time for the paint to dry, and then it is done. Put it anywhere to show off your cute Bitmojis and DIY skills.

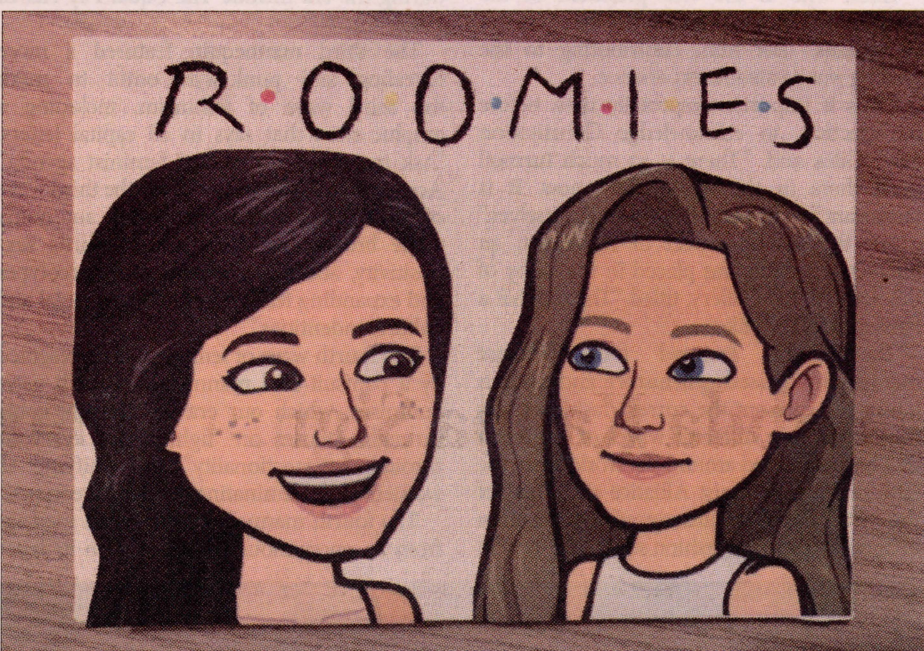
 Elizabeth.Cherinka@wilkes.edu
Graphic by Anna Culver



Step 1: Adjust Bitmojis to the canvas before applying.



Step 2: Attach Bitmojis to the canvas with Mod Podge.



Step 3: Trace “ROOMIES” with a pencil above the Bitmojis. Then, paint over the word, and place colored dots in between the letters.



Step 4: Let dry. Once completed, show off to friends!

Photos: The Beacon/Liz Cherinka

Axelrad excited for future plans after campaign ends

How the printing business in Wilkes-Barre has adjusted to COVID-19

By Maria DiBuo

Life, Arts & Entertainment Editor

Drumroll...8,555 shirts sold, over \$80,000 raised and 285 businesses participating — that's just some of what Axelrad Screen Printing's "Shirt Off Our Backs" movement has accomplished in the span of two months.

The premise of the movement was simple — Axelrad designers worked with businesses to create unique shirt designs for their establishment. Some featured store mascots, like sharks sporting a mask, while others opted to keep shirts simple, featuring a standard logo.

Shirts were then put into an online store where individuals could purchase one for \$15, with \$10 from every shirt going to the local business displayed on the tee. While the campaign concluded on June 6, business for the company has been steady, with plans of expanding in the near future.

"Our industry has never been steady,

where you even just feel the same week by week. Ever since COVID, it's kind of just been a steady level of hectic," said Tyler Rice, a graphic designer at Axelrad. "It's definitely different for us."

While the summer is typically a busy and fast-paced time for Axelrad employees, the need for merchandise for fall sports and concert tours has decreased.

Despite this, Axelrad has seen an influx in sales of masks and restaurant apparel. According to Rice, there's also a good chance of the company relocating from its North Pennsylvania Avenue location in Wilkes-Barre in early 2021.

"We purchased a building a couple miles down the road from where we're currently at, so we'll be expanding to a larger facility, which we're obviously very excited about," explained Rice.

In addition, Rice spoke of taking on more employees to help with the growing business — an optimistic sign for those in the Wyoming Valley affected

by the growing unemployment rate in Pennsylvania, which is currently over 13 percent, according to a report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics from June of this year.

As for employees at Axelrad, things couldn't be better. In fact, many employees at Axelrad enjoy their jobs, taking pride in their work and stating the close bond between those employed by the company makes working there that much better.

"I actually really like it. I actually want to wake up in the morning and go to work," said JT Pavidus, a screen printer at the business. "It's a super tight-knit community, and I'm glad to be a part of it."

Those in the local community are also fond of the business, ranking Axelrad at five stars on its Google rating, praising the screen printing company for its friendly atmosphere and hard-working team members.

As a whole, Axelrad is extremely grateful for those in the Wyoming Valley, especially

individuals who supported the "Shirt Off Our Backs" movement. For Rice, reaching the goal of the campaign was something those at the business will forever be proud of, and doing so would not have been possible without the support of the community.

Looking toward the future, the company hopes for a return from the new-normal seen in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic in the coming year, as their business continues to grow. They also look forward to the continued support of those in the area and beyond.

"We're just hoping that 2021 brings back some form of normalcy, and we're just getting ready for that possible influx," said Rice. "I think that once the world goes back to normal, everyone's going to be pretty excited, and they're going to need some shirts."



@wilkesbeacon

Maria.DiBuo@wilkes.edu

Lambda Kappa Sigma Alpha Phi to host virtual 5K event

By Liz Cherinka

Staff Writer

The Wilkes University chapter of Lambda Kappa Sigma, Alpha Phi, will host a virtual 5K run/walk from Sept. 20 to Sept. 27.

Lambda Kappa Sigma is a professional pharmacy fraternity which provides "lifelong opportunities for women in pharmacy school through professional excellence and personal growth," according to Michelle Gronski, professional chair of Alpha Phi and Project Hope chair.

"The Alpha Phi chapter donates a lot to local community charities by volunteering or donating money," said Gronski. "The Alpha Phi chapter also provides its members with lots of opportunities to professionally grow as a pharmacist."

Proceeds of the virtual 5K run/walk will benefit Project Hope, a global health and humanitarian relief organization.

"Since this 5K run/walk is virtual, we have the opportunity to raise a lot of money that we can donate to the national

LKS philanthropy, Project Hope," said Deanna Fox, president of Alpha Phi.

Project Hope provides health care and training for health care workers in situations like disaster, infectious diseases and maternal and neonatal health. It also works to "empower health care workers," as stated by projecthope.org. The organization recognizes the need for a growing number of healthcare workers, so they are working to increase those numbers.

"This organization means a lot to our chapter, so we wanted to give back to them in some way, especially because they are helping so many health care workers during this tough time," said Gronski.

Alpha Phi has been planning a 5K event since last year, but due to COVID-19 restrictions, their run/walk could not be in-person. As a result, they opted for a virtual version.

Despite the transition from face-to-face, Fox noted, "We are very excited about this virtual event because it is a safe and healthy way for us to raise money for our philanthropy without having to be in-

person together."

Alpha Phi is still happy to be able to be able to have an event, even if it does have to be virtual.

"We thought hosting a virtual 5K would involve the community and people from all over to keep active during this time when so many people are sedentary," said Gronski.

Anyone across the country is welcome to participate, and Alpha Phi hopes that people in the Wilkes University community and outside do participate to help raise money for Project Hope.

"My expectations for this event are to get as many LKS members and non-LKS members as possible across the country to participate in the 5K run/walk," said Fox. "We have advertised for this event to all of the LKS chapters in the country. A lot of these chapters have also advertised our run/walk on their social media accounts. We are hoping for a great turn out, as we have gotten a lot of attention from our social media posts."

Anyone is welcome to register, with tickets costing \$10 each. Participants are

asked to submit their times for a prize, with first place winning a \$100 gift card and second place winning a \$75 gift card. The other prize is a "spirit prize," and the award is a \$50 gift card.

The 5K has a tie-dye theme, meaning one should dress up in their best tie dye outfit. The spirit prize winner will be chosen raffle-style.

"Our tie-dye theme was inspired by a recruitment event that we were planning on having. We unfortunately had to cancel this event, but we figured that we could use this idea to theme our run/walk and still allow people to have the opportunity to tie dye a shirt on their own," said Fox.

Those who wish to participate can send run times and pictures to lks.alphaphi@gmail.com, as well as post their tie dye outfit and tag @lks_alphaphi on Instagram.

The Wilkes University community, as well as any friends or family, are welcomed to register.



@wilkesbeacon

Elizabeth.Cherinka@wilkes.edu

VIRTUAL CLUB DAY 2020: REPRESENTING THE NEW AND OLD CLUBS OF WILKES UNIVERSITY

By Sean Schmoyer
News Editor

Sept. 18 marked Wilkes University's first virtual club day. Students were able to access numerous Zoom calls that were held in 30-minute increments from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Presence served as a center hub for students to access the links, as well as to learn more about the clubs that caught their attention.

Club Day saw over 40 clubs and student organizations attend and present to interested students. The clubs were split into eight sections: Mega Councils, Engineering and Science, Business and Pharmacy, Communications, Social Services and Campus Resources, Club Sports and Campus Resources, Faith and Diversity and, lastly, Special Interests.

Four of the 40 clubs are highlighted below. The selection process took into account if clubs were new or how active their presence is on campus.

Multicultural Student Coalition (MSC)

Returning students may already be aware of the Multicultural Student Coalition. Despite social distancing policies, MSC has been able to remain active across campus and



The Multicultural Student Coalition's goal is to spread diversity and cultural awareness. MSC will be hosting a BLM Silent Protest on Sept. 25 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

in the community.

President Brianna Rowland, a musical theatre major with a minor in hospitality, described what MSC is and how it engages students and the community.

"The Multicultural Student Coalition is a group of students dedicated to spreading diversity here on campus and in the Wilkes-Barre community," said Rowland. "We look to educate students on diversity, social and institutionalized injustice. Ultimately, we want everyone to feel at home and safe on Wilkes University's campus, no matter where they are from."

Rowland also expressed why MSC is needed on campus, "Our club is important because there are many students from many different backgrounds that come to our campus. We want them to be able to have a space where people can relate to them, and where students can educate each other about cultural differences. We are all about sharing our knowledge and educating our peers."

MSC will be hosting a Black Lives Matter Silent Protest on Sept. 25 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

"This event is to educate our community and our peers about cultural awareness and social justice-related conversations," said

Rowland. "We would like to use this time to make an impact. The impact we can make not only on campus but in our Wilkes-Barre community can help move the conversation forward about systematic racism and racial injustice."

Other events are being planned slowly and on a one-at-a-time basis in case students are sent home this semester due to COVID-19. The club is hoping to host a trivia night during the semester, whether it be held virtually or in-person.

Currently, MSC has 78 members, though they admit not all members are active. The hope is that all members will attend the silent protest.

When it comes to their events, Rowland has goals she's striving to accomplish.

"We hope to engage everyone on campus,"

said Rowland. "This club isn't exclusive to people of color – this is a club where people can share their culture without any judgement. We welcome any and everyone from all walks of life."

Club Day was a success for the established club. MSC focused on a presentation with pictures of their events. Their E-board shared social media accounts, such as their Instagram @wilkes_msc.

"I am most excited about meeting the new first-year students," said Rowland. "I've met a few so far, and they are all willing to get involved. I am also excited to brainstorm and find creative ways to get our campus involved while keeping COVID-19 precautions in mind. I am also excited, but a little sad, to find the next E-board that will be taking our positions."

Students interested in joining MSC should reach out to Rowland by email at brianna.rowland@wilkes.edu or through the club's email at msc@wilkes.edu. Students can also contact the club through their social media accounts.

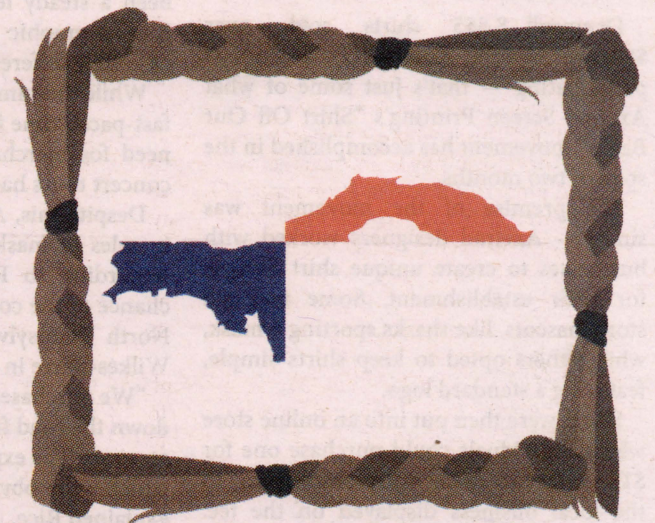
Friends of Panama

In attendance for the virtual club day was one of the newest clubs on campus, Friends of Panama. The club recently gained Student Government (SG) recognition on Sept. 15.

Friends of Panama seeks to share Panama's culture by engaging with the campus and local community. The hope is to allow people from different backgrounds to communicate and get to know each other through their events.

Jesus Rios, the club's president and a sophomore management major, highlighted the club's goals.

"Friends of Panama, is a new family on campus," said Rios. "We would like to show people our culture, our food and our traditions, like dancing, singing and more. We would like to start some projects like Spanish Conversation Partner to help people who want to learn or improve the language with a native speaker as a mentor. One of



Recently, Friends of Panama, a club created by sophomore Jesus Rios, earned Student Government recognition. The club focuses on representing Panama's culture, language, food and dancing.

our goals is that people can learn much more about our culture as we learn more about theirs and all this while enjoying different activities together."

The club has already planned events for both the current semester and the spring semester with the hopes that social distancing policies ease up and allow for larger face-to-face events.

This semester, Friends of Panama plans to start their Spanish Conversation Partner project. The project will consist of a 30-minute conversation between a Panamanian tutor who is a native Spanish speaker and the students who are looking to learn or improve their skills in the language.

Another event the club looks to host is Mask Painting Day.

"We are also working on a Mask Painting Day, where following safety and protection measures, we can meet in a recreational activity and paint our masks with different designs," said Rios.

Finally, the club is looking to host an event where students will have the opportunity to explore and taste the food of different groups, though due to the social distancing policies, the club may look to host such an event in the spring.

Rios' inspiration for the club dates back to Spring 2020, where a conversation between friends served as the catalyst for making the

idea a reality.

“On one occasion when I was talking with two of my friends, Ruben and Gabriel, I told them what was the latest news at that time. It was about a new group of Panamanian students who had just arrived at Wilkes (IFARHU 4), and what this represented. We became the largest international student population in the university, with over 80 students,” said Rios. “That made me think and ask myself: How could the community know more of us, how could they know who we are and where we come from or about our culture? This is where it all began.”

After consulting individuals across campus and preparing a presentation for SG, the club received approval three days before Club Day.

As of the evening after Club Day, more than 30 people had signed up for the club. Rios expects that number to almost triple in the coming days after sending out 90 invitations for others to join.

When it comes to Club Day as an event, Rios said, “It was a good opportunity to introduce the club, although we hope to continue promoting the club with everyone we can. Everyone is totally welcome.”

Rios is most excited about the opportunity to promote Panamanian culture.

“Sharing about culture is sharing about who we are and what we represent, and it is an excellent way to foster diversity, respect and interaction among all as a great family that we all are here at Wilkes University,” said Rios.

Overall, the club hopes to share as much as possible, not just about Panamanian culture but about the culture of all students who join

the club. Rios expressed that he wants the club to create spaces where everyone from all over the world, of any belief, culture or religion can develop and broaden their knowledge of each other.

Friends of Panama was included in the Faith and Diversity category for clubs during Club Day. A recording has been made available of the Zoom session for students to watch their presentation. Students looking to join can contact Rios at jesus.rioserrano@wilkes.edu.

Stress Management Through Art Therapy

In addition to Friends of Panama, the Stress Management Through Art Therapy Club is another new club on campus that received SG recognition at the Sept. 15 meeting. The club presented for Club Day under the Special Interests category.

“Our mission is to give students an outlet to relieve stress in a healthy way,” said Courtney Dolan, the club’s president and a junior nursing major. “We want to be a safe place for any student, no matter what their artistic ability. We would rather focus on the fun and stress-relieving abilities of the art, rather than the quality of it. I think right now, life in general is very stressful for everyone, especially college students, so I thought it would be a great idea to have this club open for all of our students.

For years, Dolan has been using arts and crafts to relieve stress. She thought it would be beneficial to share the idea with other students and help them by providing a creative outlet.

Dolan and the other members of the club are not letting COVID-19 and the social distancing policies stop them from hosting events.

“We already have two events planned, one for just members and one for everyone,” said Dolan. “We don’t have any dates planned since we are awaiting approval, but one is a pottery night for just the club members, and the other is a mixed media night that we are hoping to have for the whole school. The mixed media night is one that we will have all types of things for people to do, such as magazines to cut pictures out of or paint or markers ... I think it would be a really fun night for everyone to get together.”

Once campus returns to normal, the club hopes to do paint or craft nights for larger groups of students.

To date, the club has

a total of 23 members and expects to hear from interested students who reach out after Club Day.

Dolan’s plans are to see more students join and continue the club for years. She also wants to have events for the school that will not only allow students to come and relieve their stress but to also allow them to hangout and have a good night.

“We are hoping that everyone on campus will get some use out of our club/events. Maybe in the future we can team up with another club to create bigger and better events that a larger population can join in on,” said Dolan.

Students interested in joining the Stress Management Through Art Therapy Club can contact Dolan at courtney.dolan@wilkes.edu.

Society of Student Nurses (SSN)

Recently recognized as an SG-approved club, the Society of Student Nurses took advantage of Club Day. SSN presented under the category of Engineering and Science.

“The Society of Student Nurses is a nursing society that strives to give back to the community, explore special interests in nursing and represent the Passan School of Nursing,” said President Alanah Guerrero, a senior nursing major. “The Society plays an important role here on campus for both the nursing students, as well as the campus community as a whole. We value the student experience, so we are always looking for students to lead community service opportunities, host fun interactive events or spearhead a fundraiser. We are a sounding board for students to come together and share their unique experiences in nursing school with one another.”

SSN plans to use their platform as health educators to advocate on various health-related topics, such as suicide awareness, substance use disorders, breast cancer awareness and so on.

Guerrero also expressed her excitement for SSN’s mentor/mentee matches and stated that the society has more planned, but that she wanted to keep the best ideas a surprise for the time being.

Currently, SSN contains a variety of students from first-years to accelerated students. There are around 60 members in total, who participate whenever they can in



Under the Engineering and Science category, the Society of Student Nurses presented for Club Day. The club aims to give back to the community, offer beneficial student experiences, partake in community service, be a voice on various health-related topics and represent the Passan School of Nursing.

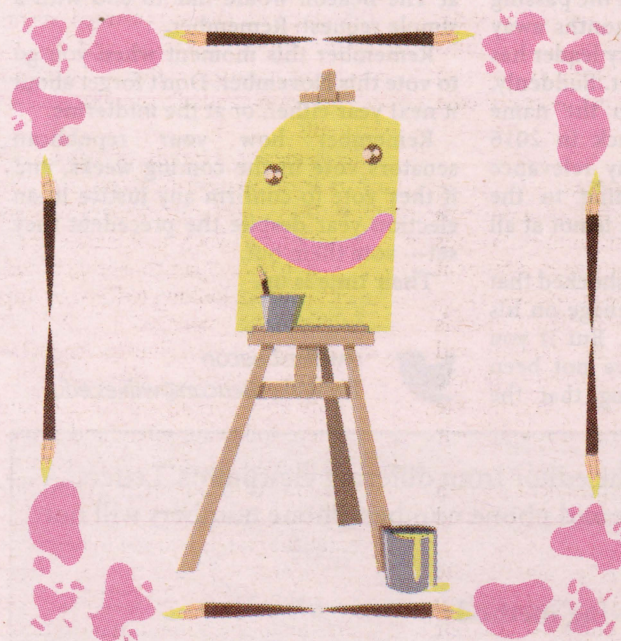
events and service opportunities.

According to Guerrero, Club Day was great, and it generated more interest for the society, even after they hosted their interest meeting two weeks ago.


“Every member who joins is always exciting for us,” said Guerrero. “We are most excited to be able to come together as a club as a whole this semester. Unfortunately last semester, the day we were recognized as a Student Government Club was the day we were sent home. Being sent home did not stop us from meeting, voting or even hosting virtual events.”

The society hopes to engage various campus members with their events. By working with Civic Engagement, the School of Pharmacy and Student Development, they want to engage with not only nursing students, but with other students as well.

“I would like to thank my Executive Board of Jasleen Kaur, Faatima Loughney, Mackenzie Koharski, Emilee Barnhardt, Diana Johnson and our advisor, Mrs. Jodi Olinginski,” said Guerrero. “Their unwavering support is really what brought this club to life. Thank you to all of our members for wanting to make a change on campus and in the lives of many.”



Stress Management Through Art Therapy is another new club on campus. Its purpose is to allow students to create art as a form of stress relief in a safe environment.

 @wilkesbeacon
Sean.Schmoyer@wilkes.edu

Page Design/Layout: Mia Walker
Mia.Walker@wilkes.edu

Opinion

Have an opinion or want to write a guest column? Contact the opinion editor: Breanna.Ebisch@wilkes.edu

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2020-21

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Media & Communication Center
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Our Voice

Each week, The Beacon's editorial board will take a stance on a current issue.

Moscow Mitch up to the same old same old again

On Sept. 18, the Supreme Court announced that Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg had died "due to complications of metastatic pancreatic cancer." Ginsburg's death represents the end of an era for the Supreme Court, and her passing threatens to irrevocably politicize the highest court in the land, despite her "most fervent wish to not be replaced until a new president is installed." We here at The Beacon, like many other Americans, mourn her passing.

But before her body was even cold, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell released a statement about Ginsburg's life and her now-vacant seat, ultimately concluding that "President Trump's nominee will receive a vote on the floor of the United States Senate."

And like many other Americans, we are outraged at not just the blatant political hypocrisy in the majority leader's decision, but also at the lack of deference for Ginsburg's final wish and the Supreme Court's existence as an inherently non-political institution.

On March 16, 2016, President Obama nominated Merrick Garland to fill the vacancy left by Justice Antonin Scalia's unexpected passing. However, instead of going through the formal process as it would for a Supreme Court nominee, the republican-controlled Senate, as led by McConnell, abdicated its responsibilities

to the American people by refusing to hold a vote. The rationale? "The American people should have a say in the court's direction."

As we know from the results of the 2016 election, this insane dereliction of duty to the American people paid off for those senate republicans the following year, when Neil Gorsuch was nominated and confirmed. But that nomination did not come without a cost - the tumultuous nomination process required the 'nuclear option' to be invoked, permanently changing the number of votes needed to confirm a Supreme Court nomination from a three-fifths vote to a majority vote.

But McConnell did not just refuse to play by the rules in 2016, he also made them up in a last-ditch political hail mary for voters that year. Now with the passing of Ginsburg less than two months away from the election, the majority leader has had a sudden change of heart. Suddenly, the precedent he created in the name of the American people back in 2016 does not appear to have any relevance whatsoever. In fact, according to the majority leader, the situation is not at all the same.

Of course, nobody is truly shocked that the majority leader would renege on his newly-established precedent. But if you were, then perhaps you have not been paying attention to anything that the

current administration has been doing over the last four years.

Because after all, what use are abstract concepts like morals or values? You can't use those to "stick it to the libs." But what you can use is a golden opportunity to appoint a third conservative justice to the Supreme Court to do just that.

And at the end of the day, we here at The Beacon know that it is an incredible long shot for senate democrats to successfully block the confirmation of a new justice. And even if they do block this confirmation, there is nothing stopping senate republicans from simply trying again after election day, when vulnerable (or defeated) senators can simply switch their vote.

With these grim facts in mind, we here at The Beacon would like to end with a simple request: Remember.

Remember this moment when you go to vote this November. Don't forget about it next year either, or at the midterms.

Remember how your republican senators vote in the coming weeks, and if they vote to confirm any justice in an election year despite the precedent they set— vote them out.

Their time is up.



@wilkesbeacon

TheWilkesBeacon@wilkes.edu

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Phone: (570) 408-5903 (Voicemail: 30 seconds or less, please.)

Mail: 84 West South Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18766 Attn: *The Beacon*

President Trump threatens diverse Gen-Z with TikTok ban

By Zarqua Ansari
Asst. Opinion Editor

I'm a Muslim girl. An immigrant, no less. I wear a hijab, and I have been since I was 12. The connotations of this action are considered quite sinister by most nations. As a result, I am used to being racially profiled.

Airports are a nightmare. I'm tired and groggy after a 17-hour flight from India to America. I miss sleeping on a mattress in a permanent bed, the non-squat toilets in the bathroom, and the lack of noise pollution. Instead, TSA has a "random" security check in place for me.

I complain the whole time they are patting me down. This only makes them more suspicious, but I can't help it. I watch countless lines of other people my age, even at 12, walk on by. All of them don the same expression — wary caution. It's remarkable that as a child, I was considered a threat because I cover my hair.

In 2014, The Intercept wrote about the NSA and FBI. There was a covert monitoring of the emails of prominent Muslim-Americans. The American Civil Liberties Union even says that racial profiling of Muslims has become government policy. Almost all of the brown artists in America have discussed being profiled in their music.

For example, Abhi the Nomad has a song entitled, "TSA X NSA," where he discusses the ignorance of people. Samsa and Thiago's song, "Burfi," discusses the same unfortunate message. The harsh reality of America is that being flavored means you're being watched.

All this goes to say that brown folks are aware they are being watched. We complain about it in the media and with each other, but nothing happens past a strongly worded article that disappears into the plethora of Kardashian lip and butt fillers.

President Donald Trump threatened to ban TikTok on account of it being owned by the Chinese Internet company ByteDance. He seems to think that the app poses a national security threat because of its Chinese ties. This baseless claim underlines Trump's and his administration's belief that Americans shouldn't download the app if they don't want their private information to fall "in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party."

Cue the collective laughter from the brown folks.

In a nation where brown folks have been openly surveilled since 9/11, it is laughable for the president to take action against a global tech company he simply believes to be collecting data.

This matter also doesn't take the whole Facebook scandal from 2014 into account, where there was evidence of 87 million users being affected, according to The New York Times. The reason Facebook is still around and TikTok is getting banned is simply due to the primary users of social media. Facebook is full of older people, but TikTok is full of young adults.

Following the threat of banning TikTok, a company spokesperson said, "TikTok is led by an American CEO, with hundreds of employees and key leaders across safety, security, product and public policy here in the U.S. We have never provided user data to the Chinese government nor would we do so if asked."

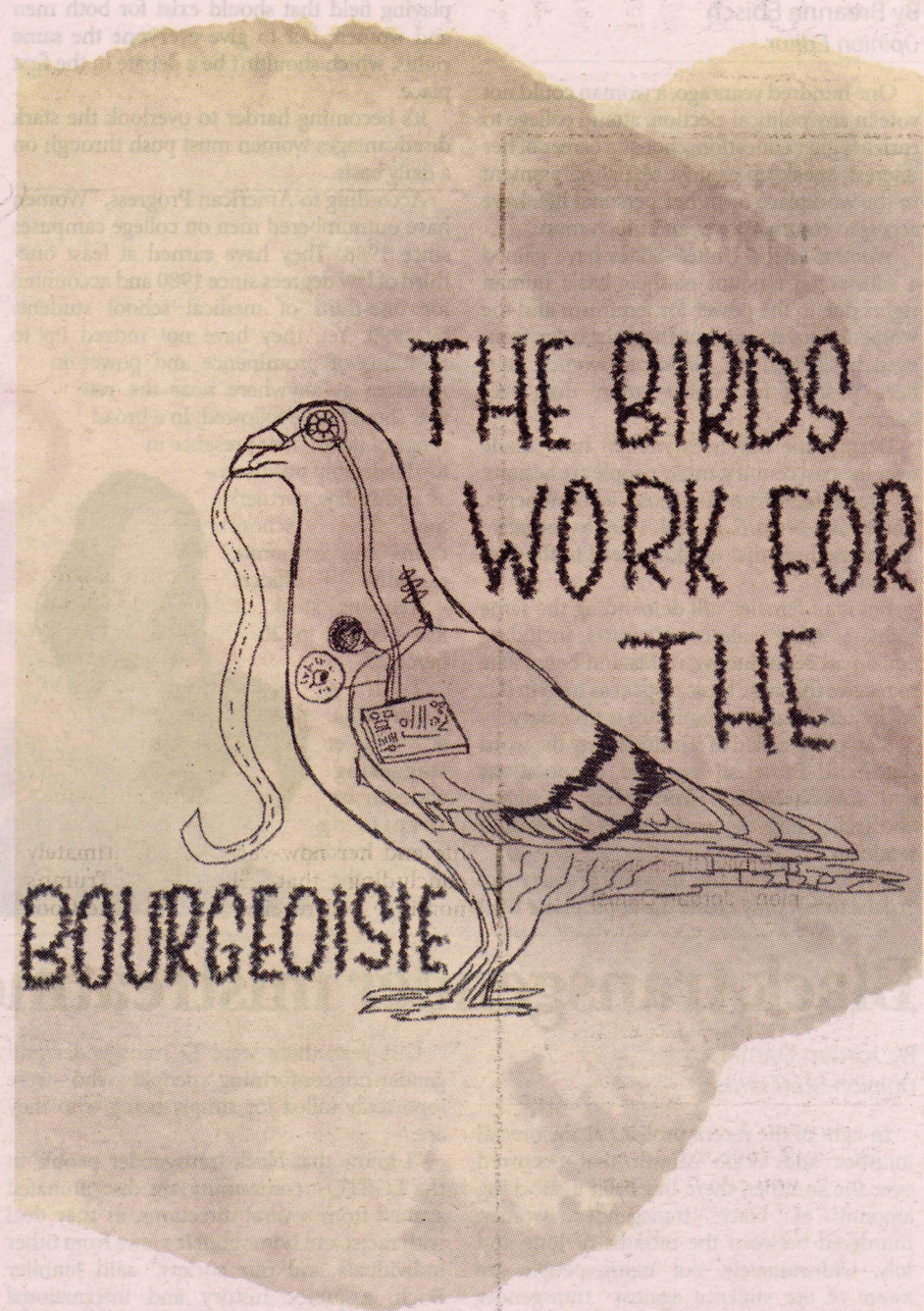
Trump's initial move utilizes the International Emergency Economic Powers Act which, according to the New York Times, in past administrations has been used to punish foreign governments, not to ban an app designated for young adults. Trump has publicly blamed China for COVID-19, and banning TikTok can be seen as an extension of his "punishment" of China.

The move is a laughable testimony to the Trump administration's lack of problem prioritization. In a time where the world is under a global pandemic, America is on the brink of a race war and the west coast is aflame, the least of the government's concerns should be what a bunch of kids are doing on their phones.

TikTok has been banned in India already, setting a precedent for other countries to follow suit. However, the cited reason for banning the app, "Stealing and surreptitiously transmitting users' data in an unauthorised manner," may not be the actual reason. The move to ban the app followed escalating tensions along the disputed border between the two nations, according to BBC.

People took to Twitter to express their annoyance at Trump's decision to ban the app. Some users call Trump a "sore loser" for getting upset that the app was able to coordinate an event that sabotaged Trump's rally in Tulsa, Okla., earlier this year.

TikTok offers people, mostly those aged 16 to 24, a platform on which they can express themselves freely. A lot of information is being exchanged on political issues, sparking younger generations to become more involved.



Among the political advocacy, footage of the BLM Movement made rounds on the app.

TikTok is a safe space community that raises awareness about many issues. Personally, my own "For You Page" has been sprinkled with knowledge I never thought I would get my hands on, much less in as personal a way as TikTok allows me to have.

TikTok tailors itself to blind people, deaf people, selective mute people, PTSD victims, rape and sexual assault victims, the kink community, Muslims, LGBTQA+

folks, immigrants and anyone in between.

An app that displays so much diversity and gives people the opportunity to be heard should be encouraged in a nation dubbed "the melting pot." I hope for Trump's own sake that he and the Trump administration can lower their egos to a manageable level before they fall into the pit of angry teens that managed to bully him into a bunker.



Zarqua.Ansari@wilkes.edu
Graphic by Zarqua Ansari

It's time to stop being afraid of the F-word and its meaning

By Breanna Ebisch
Opinion Editor

One hundred years ago, a woman could not vote in any political election, attend college to earn a higher education, choose a career of her interest, speak up against sexual harassment in the workplace or in her personal life, have access to contraceptives and much more.

Women in the United States have gained a substantial amount of their basic human rights due to the power for feminism and the women's movement, but the fight is far from over. In 2020 alone, American women have been pushing for equality more than ever before.

Despite the advances women have made over the past century, many people are hesitant to credit feminism for those achievements. The scary F-word is still seen as negative and something that we don't need in the 21st century.

But with females still demanding the same rights as their male counterparts, including equal pay, reproductive rights and being able to receive the same basic respect as men in our society, it's clear that feminism is necessary.

Stop being afraid of feminism. Say the word out loud. Erase all negative connotations and misconceptions from your thoughts, and realize how the world needs the work of feminists.

The beliefs that the movement carry are crucial to not only create the appropriate level

playing field that should exist for both men and women, but to give everyone the same rights, which shouldn't be a debate in the first place.

It's becoming harder to overlook the stark disadvantages women must push through on a daily basis.

According to American Progress, "Women have outnumbered men on college campuses since 1988. They have earned at least one-third of law degrees since 1980 and accounted for one-third of medical school students by 1990. Yet, they have not moved up to positions of prominence and power in America at anywhere near the rate that should have followed. In a broad range of fields, their presence in top leadership positions – as equity law partners, medical school deans and corporate executive officers – remains stuck at five percent to 20 percent."

The numbers are staggering and can be surprising when looking at the

representation of women with careers across the board.

The gender wage gap and difficulty to advance to higher positions in any job is only one of the problems that plague women constantly. From sustaining the ability to get a safe, legal abortion to being able to speak up against sexual/domestic violence, there are countless issues that are being addressed and backed by feminism, which are all important.

According to Politico, "The biggest challenge facing women in the United States today is patriarchy. This is especially evident in the realm of politics. Regardless of a woman's experience, education or abilities, the patriarchal nature of U.S. society

fosters the perception that women are less qualified and less competent than men. What patriarchy has done is convince people that a strong and intelligent woman represents a problem;

a disruption to the social order rather than an integral part of it."

Almost every system in place within

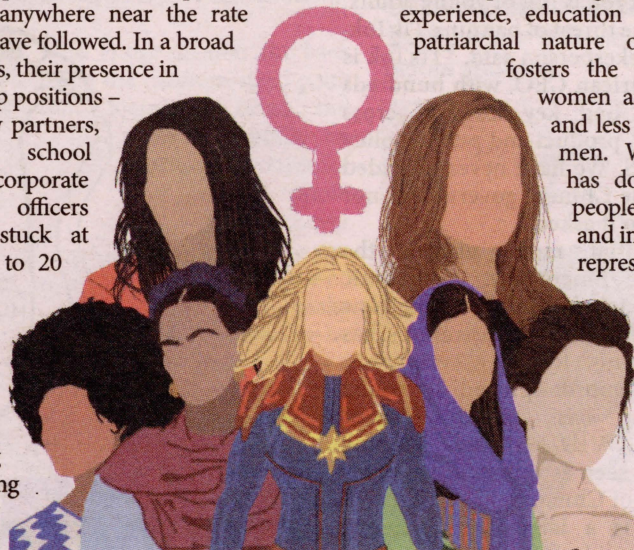
our society and government is ruled by the patriarchy, and this drastically affects women and their everyday lives. The Equal Rights Amendment has yet to be signed into law because of this, and the basis of the amendment is simply to provide legal equality of the sexes and to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex.

Something this simple cannot become a reality because a strong portion of the American population believes that women don't deserve the same rights as men. Many also refer to feminism as a movement that aims to put women at a greater advantage or above men, so the real "fear" that comes with feminism, or meeting someone who is a feminist, is simply men being scared that they will lose their privilege.

The fact that women's rights to equality rely on this silly proposition is simply ridiculous.

Although advancements have been made over centuries of hard work and fighting, there are miles to go in terms of women truly being equal to their male counterparts in every way and also being acknowledged as human beings.

Women's rights are human rights, and we need feminism to change the world in order to create the future that is necessary for women not only in the United States but around the world.



Breanna.Ebsich@wilkes.edu
Graphic by Zarqua Ansari

Black transgender mistreatment is overlooked but startling

By Jordan Daniel
Opinion Staff Writer

In light of the recent protests against racial injustice and Pride Month that occurred over the summer, there has been a shocking amount of black transgender women murdered between the months of June and July. Unfortunately, not many people are aware of the violence against transgender individuals, as it is a taboo topic in our society.

According to them.us, an LGBTQ+ online community platform, a few days before Pride Month came to an end, six black transgender women were found dead in a brutal nine-day stretch. The victims were Brayla Stone, Merci Mack, Shakiie Peters, Draya McCarty, Tatiana Hall and Bree Black. These victims, plus the other transgender women that have been murdered this year, record a total of 22 meaningless, violent deaths.

"If this rapid pace continues through the year, 2020 will set a record for violence against the transgender community," said Devin Norelle in a July 14 article on them.us.

Last year, there were 27 transgender and gender-nonconforming people who were reportedly killed for simply being who they are.

"I know that black transgender people in the LGBTQ+ community are discriminated against from several directions, as they deal with racist and homophobic views from other individuals and our society," said Jennifer Boch, a junior history and international relations major. "Transgender individuals are often the 'easiest' targets for such attacks because of how scrutinized physical appearance, especially gender appearance, is in our society. Every individual in the LGBTQ+ community is unique, so I do not want to generalize, but for some individuals, it is easier to 'fly under the radar.'"

Some are knowledgeable about the discrimination and violence toward the Black members of the LGBTQ+ community. This is due to the fact that when these recent deaths occurred many influencers, who are either part of the community or allies, tweeted about the murders or shared posts on their

Instagram stories to get the message out. However, this issue has not been of interest in the traditional news media.

"The media does not cover the topic enough," said Kaz Charles, a first-year theatre major. "They avoid it because it is taboo. Because of racism, the media barely covers black stories unless they are tragedies or causing uproar. The fear that is still connected to trans individuals makes the media fear losing ratings. Overall, the media is a business, and unless they think they will get a ton of views, they won't put out the story."

The news media is not doing a good enough job on covering such an important issue; however, many social media users are using their platforms to get the message out there.

After viewing influencers' posts, general Twitter users used hashtags with the six victims' names, as well as the hashtags #StopKillingTransWomen and #BlackTransLivesMatter. Meanwhile, general Instagram users shared posts from other influencers and LGBTQ+ related accounts, which were originally getting the message out

about the terrible and saddening news.

"I don't think anyone is doing enough to stop the mistreatment of black transgender people," said Lizzy Antes, a sophomore nursing major. "I think this is largely due to our own president, Donald Trump, fueling transphobic and racist beliefs. It causes people to not speak out as much about black trans lives because they don't want to get in arguments with Trump about supporting family and friends in the community."

Although there are some trying to gain the world's attention on this matter, others feel like their efforts are not enough and that more needs to be done by everyone. More people need to speak up about this issue and voice their opinions, so our society can stop targeting and hating those who just want to be accepted as themselves. Because, frankly, being yourself is not a reason for someone to be murdered.



@wilkesbeacon
Jordan.Daniel@wilkes.edu

Lone Star State juggles donkeys, elephants prior to election

By Liam Flynn
Staff Writer

The Republican presidential candidate has claimed victory in the state of Texas in every general election since 1980, starting with Ronald Reagan.

Analysts suggest that the rebirth of the Republican Party in Texas among white conservatives can be traced to 1952, when Democratic Governor Allan Shivers clashed with the Truman administration over the federal claim on the Tidelands. Shivers worked to help General Dwight D. Eisenhower, a Texas native, to carry the state.

Generally, Eisenhower was highly respected due to his role as Commander of the Allies in World War II, and he was popular nationally, winning the election.

Beginning in the late 1960s, Republican strength increased in Texas, particularly among residents of the expanding “country club suburbs” around Dallas and Houston. To Congress, the election of Republicans such as John Tower and George H. W. Bush in 1961 and 1966, respectively, reflected this trend.

Nationally, outside of the South, Democrats supported the Civil Rights Movement and achieved important passage of federal legislation in the mid-1960s. In the South, however, Democratic leaders had opposed changes to bring about black voting or desegregated schools and public facilities, and in many places, exercised resistance.

Following passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, white southern voters began to align with the Republican Party. A movement accelerated after the next year, when Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, providing for federal enforcement of minorities’ constitutional right to vote. Voter registration and turnout increased among Blacks and Latinos in Texas and other states.

Tower’s 1961 election to the U.S. Senate made him the first statewide GOP officeholder since Reconstruction and the disenfranchisement of Black Republicans. Republican Governor Bill Clements and Senator Phil Gramm were elected after him. Republicans became increasingly dominant in national elections in white-majority Texas.

The last Democratic presidential candidate to win the state was Jimmy Carter in 1976. Previously, a Democrat had to win Texas in order to win the White House, but in the 1992 election, Bill Clinton won the Oval Office while losing Texas electoral votes. This result significantly reduced the

power of Texas Democrats at the national level, as party leaders believed the state had become unwinnable.

Because of this, the GOP has always considered this state as a guarantee to secure those 38 electoral votes, which is the second-highest state total behind California, which has 55. With that being said, Donald Trump, current president, won Texas by less than nine percent of the vote in 2016.

While this number seems like a comfortable enough margin to have confidence in this

November’s election, it is the lowest margin of victory by a Republican in Texas since 2000.

It is concerning for the GOP that it only won this “gimmie” state by nine percent in a race that seemed largely lopsided in the nationwide delegate count. The margin of victory is certainly going downward from the 23 percent Republican lead that Republican George W. Bush had over Democrat Al Gore in 2004.

In 2018, Ted Cruz, the incumbent Republican senator from the Lone Star State, defeated Beto O’Rourke, the Democratic challenger by only a 2.6 percent margin. The maverick campaign, with O’Rourke’s tour of all 254 Texas counties and \$70 million in campaign contributions, received enormous national attention as a political underdog story.

O’Rourke exposed a blue spine in Texas politics that could remake the state’s congressional delegation and affect Trump’s re-election prospects in 2020. By making a commendable showing in the 21 counties along the Interstate 35 corridor from Laredo to the Oklahoma border, the U.S. Senate candidate from El Paso defied 30 years of political history in the Lone Star State.

O’Rourke didn’t just become the first Democratic Senate candidate in Texas to win the majority of votes along the corridor since the 1980s, instead

throughout his presidency. The latest Quinnipiac University poll put his rating at -1. All other elected Texas Republican officials had at least a +8 net approval rating. This poll comes on top of the 2018 exit poll that gave Trump a +1 net approval rating, and the midterm electorate in Texas is likely more Republican leaning than a 2020 presidential electorate will be. Trump won the state by nine in 2016.

If the 2020 election were held today, and it were solely a referendum on Trump, Texas would be a toss-up.

Traditionally, Texas has been more Republican than the nation as a whole. In 2014, for example, Democratic President Barack Obama’s net approval rating was 18 points worse in Texas than his national rating. In 2018, Trump, a Republican, was just 10 points higher in Texas. In other words, there was an 8-point shift toward the Democrats, on this measure, compared to the nation as a whole in just four years. This followed the 2016 presidential race being the closest in the state since the 1990s.

Trump’s unusually low approval rating in 2018 created the environment in which Cruz won re-election by less than three points. It was the worst Republican performance in a Senate race in the state since 1988. In 2012, Cruz won his first term by 16 points. This 13-point pro-Democratic shift occurred even though Cruz was an incumbent and the national environment shifted by less than five points toward the Democrats.

The latest polling for the 2020 general election suggests the race for the presidency in the state of Texas is a dead heat between Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden. The polling from New CBS News/YouGov have Trump at 46 percent to Biden’s 45 percent, a result well within any margin of error.

The fact that the polling is close in Texas should be a four-alarm fire for Team Trump. The electoral map makes it plain as day: If they’ve got even a hint of trouble in Texas, then they’ve got way bigger problems in a lot of other states that are even more telling as presidential bellwethers.

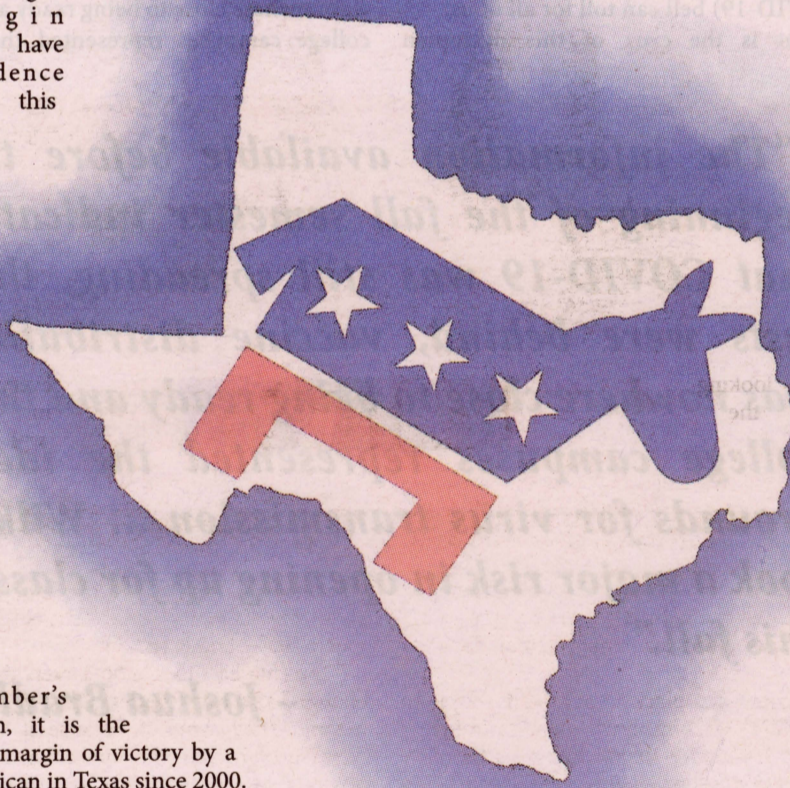
If Trump loses Texas and its seismic 38 electoral votes – a state he won by a hefty nine points in 2016 – then, it’s all over.

The blue wave is coming.

pounded Cruz along the route, flipping counties that had not voted for a Democrat for statewide office since Ann Richards first ran for governor in 1990.

Even in the counties O’Rourke lost, his defeats were often much narrower than those of past Democratic candidates. For a state that the GOP only won in the 2016 general election by nine percent; this looks very good for the Democratic Party.

Trump’s net approval rating (approval minus disapproval) among registered voters has been slightly negative in Texas



Liam.Flynn@wilkes.edu
Graphic by Zarqua Ansari

Open colleges and COVID-19: “It’s just good business”

By William Billingsley
Staff Writer

On Sept. 17 at 6 p.m., Wilkes University announced through its COVID-19 Dashboard that the university had 29 cumulative cases of COVID-19. I thought that was a rather peculiar statistic – only 29 cases of the worldwide pandemic that has so fundamentally shifted our everyday lives here on campus?

Now, if we were to compare our own statistics with that of other universities, we would probably look pretty good, all things considered. In fact, there was an article on Sept. 1 in The Citizens’ Voice that played up the “success” of both Wilkes and King’s in having a lower number of cases compared to other universities across the country. So then, my first question is: Can 29 student cases really be considered a success?

I don’t think so.

Truth be told, I am something of an optimistic realist when it comes to how I view the world. But few things are quite as surreal as holding the view that the ideal number of COVID-19 cases on campus is actually zero, instead of whatever arbitrary number Wilkes has decided will be their breaking point (and when they send everyone home again).

But let’s take a closer look at these numbers. As with all statistics, the famous adage of ‘lies, damned lies and statistics’ is, of course, relevant here. A common response to seeing our 29 cumulative cases, 17 of which were active at the time of writing, might be some groundbreaking conclusion about how having some cases is simply an inevitability of coming back to Wilkes in the middle of a pandemic, but it is exactly this thought process that I want to examine.

To date, the COVID-19 pandemic has killed almost 200,000 Americans. For comparison’s sake, Wilkes-Barre has an estimated population of 40,000. This pandemic has, and will continue to, ravage Americans across the country until appropriate measures are finally taken. Until then, the scores of half-measures and lax enforcement are not doing anybody any favors.

And to be fair, COVID-19’s mortality rates do disproportionately affect older people. As a result, some decision-makers

have erroneously concluded that it is only the older members of society at risk; however, I think an excerpt from John Donne’s poem, “For Whom the Bell Tolls,” is a rather fitting response:

“Therefore, send not to know

For whom the bell tolls,

It tolls for thee.”

The premise that I am getting at is rather straightforward: No age group is immune to COVID-19. The mortality rates for young adults are low, but a low mortality rate is not the same thing as a mortality rate of zero. As almost 200,000 Americans have already experienced, the (COVID-19) bell can toll for all of us.

That is the crux of this dystopian

their health matter?

But, of course, I ask these questions rhetorically because the university has come to an uncomfortably familiar conclusion – that our lives are worth that roll of the dice. With the university already in dire financial straits, Wilkes simply could not survive another semester without students paying room and board. But if you roll a hundred-sided die enough times, you eventually roll a one.

“The information available before the beginning of the fall semester indicated that COVID-19 was still spreading, that tests were behind, vaccine distribution was nowhere close to being ready and that college campuses represented the ideal

a great decision on the university’s part. After all, it shows that the university is looking out for its students, right? But to what extent is that true?

There are still face-to-face classes, and as I established earlier, the university has opted to openly gamble with the lives of its students, faculty and staff in the pursuit of revenue.

Megan Kocher, a senior political science and history student, said, “The university is not only risking the lives of students and faculty, but the families of all of us who have to go home each day after school ... I wonder how many cases will warrant closing, or will we wait for someone to die first?”

According to the Dashboard, there are almost 900 courses, with 448 of them being face-to-face classes. On a first glance at a misleading pie chart, this looks great. While the other half are some arcane combination of varying course modalities, this begs the question: Why aren’t all of our classes online?

“I wanted to come back and try to have as close to a normal senior year as possible,” said Cooper Chaffee, a senior secondary education and history major. “I wanted to be able to play basketball and do classes in-person.”

However, he also added that he was “skeptical that we could keep the cases low,” and that classes should be moved online if cases continue to rise.

In the end though, I do understand why the university is one among hundreds of others to reopen for the semester as if nothing had happened. Pandemics tend to be rather difficult events to budget for, and the show must go on for the budget’s sake.

But at every stage of the university’s planning process for this semester, I am left wondering: Where did they draw the line?

The university is making an extraordinary gamble – that none of their students, faculty and staff (and all of their families) will ultimately succumb to COVID-19. And if that bell should come to toll for a member of the Wilkes community, what will the university say then?

“The information available before the beginning of the fall semester indicated that COVID-19 was still spreading, that tests were behind, vaccine distribution was nowhere close to being ready and that college campuses represented the ideal grounds for virus transmission ... Wilkes took a major risk in opening up for classes this fall.”

– Joshua Bradley

problem. Evidently, many schools across the country are of the opinion that a low mortality rate is an acceptable degree of risk for reopening this semester. While some criticism has been directed at these universities for charging full tuition despite many going to various levels of online instruction, that has generally been the extent of criticism.

It would seem, then, that we attend a university that considers our low mortality rates to be an acceptable risk in the pursuit for profit – how reassuring.

Students are not the only people at risk. What about the faculty and staff? What about the families of all involved? Does

grounds for virus transmission...Wilkes took a major risk in opening up for classes this fall, and I’m not sure that it paid off,” said Joshua Bradley ‘20, a recent graduate who majored in political science and international studies and is pursuing a master’s degree at Georgetown University.

My pointed mention of Wilkes is not to say that we are the only institution doing face-to-face learning in these trying times, as we are far from it. Furthermore, Wilkes has been rather up-front about how many courses have been modified to include some form of online instruction to help further reduce transmission rates.

At first blush, this might appear to be



@wilkesbeacon

William.Billingsley@wilkes.edu

Sports

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NBA Finals Analysis: The journey to a championship

By Dylan Mehl
Co-Sports Editor

An NBA season that has been filled with many twists and turns is down to its final four teams. The Celtics, Heat, Lakers and Nuggets are all battling it out to crown a champion.

In the Eastern Conference, it is down to No. 3 Boston Celtics against No. 5 Miami Heat.

This is an especially unlikely matchup, as it is the first time in NBA history that a one or two seed is not in the Eastern Conference Finals since 1969, as per NBA.com.

The underdog team of the Miami Heat find themselves back in the conference finals for the first time since the departure of LeBron James. Behind the leadership of Jimmy Butler, the deep Miami roster is a mere four games away from an NBA Finals appearance.

Butler joined The Heat this offseason after leaving the 76ers, and he's proven to be the veteran leader the team needs.

In the first round, Miami made easy work of the Indiana Pacers, sweeping them in four games to make it to the second round. Up next for the Heat was the team with the best record in the league, and the one-seed in the east, the Milwaukee Bucks. Surprisingly, the Heat upset the Bucks in an easy five game series.

"We're waiting to see who we get out of Toronto and Boston ... It's 0-0 now, we got eight more (wins) to get," said Butler after Miami's game five closeout win.

The Miami Heat's opponent ended up being the Boston Celtics. In Boston's first-round matchup, they quickly took care of business versus the 76ers in just four games.

Boston, like Miami, is a deep team, as they have four players in their current lineup averaging over 10 points per game, and two of them, Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown, are averaging over 20. As young players, 22 and 23-years-old respectively, Tatum and Brown have earned their recognition as Boston's rising stars after being first-round draft picks in back-to-

back years.

The Celtics beat the Heat in two of the three games played in the regular season, per ESPN. However, as of the writing of this article, the Heat have secured a 1-0 lead in this series, beating the Celtics in overtime by a score of 117-114. For Miami, Goran Dragic led the way for the team with 29 points.

If game one was any indication of how the rest of this series is going to unfold, then the series is going to be competitive.

"It's going to be a gritty matchup ... If I had to put it in layman's terms, this is going to be a bar fight," said Paul Pierce, former NBA player and current ESPN NBA analyst.

Some keys for victory, for both teams, starts with three-point shooting. Both teams have been great three-point shooting teams this postseason. Duncan Robinson, Tyler Herro, Jae Crowder, Marcus Smart and Brown have been shooting exceptionally well. The Heat will certainly have to rely on their bruiser-mentality behind Butler, whereas Boston will be relying on their emerging stars, Tatum and Brown, in tandem with veteran Kemba Walker.

In the West, No. 1 Los Angeles Lakers are facing No. 3 Denver Nuggets.

This matchup was unlikely, as it seemed the Clippers and Lakers were set to meet in the Western Conference finals.

"I'm shocked," said Chris Broussard, Fox Sports NBA analyst. "Honestly, I'm shocked. Obviously, I thought the Clippers were the best team in the league."

For Denver, this win is instrumental, as they advance to the conference finals to take on the Lakers. Denver has come back from being down 3-1 in back-to-back series and has proven themselves.

In the crucial game seven versus the Clippers, guard Jamal Murray had 40 points for Denver while center Nikola Jokic had a triple-double with 16 points, 22 rebounds and 13 assists to propel the Nuggets to victory. Jokic, Denver's all-NBA star, and Murray, their young phenom, have fueled Denver's playoff push.

"They gotta worry about us too," said

Murray after the Nuggets' game seven win, alluding to the fact many will already have them counted out versus the Lakers.

The Lakers find themselves well rested after dispatching the Houston Rockets in a five-game series. For Los Angeles, this is their first time in the conference finals since 2010, when the late Kobe Bryant was the leader of the team.

James now finds himself eight wins away from his fourth NBA championship. This opportunity is a major factor in why Anthony Davis fought to team up with James, knowing the two would be competing for rings.

While it is not the Clippers, the Lakers will have to take Denver seriously, as the Nuggets have proven multiple times this postseason that if you give them a chance, they will take it and run with it. Both teams will certainly be looking to slow down the other team's high-powered offensive stars.

In the regular season, the Lakers took this matchup, winning three of the four games over Denver. James and Davis both averaged over 28 points in this matchup for the Lakers. While the Nuggets' Murray led the team in scoring against the Lakers this season with only 18.5 points per game.

Keys for a Nugget victory would certainly be to make players on the Lakers, other than James and Davis, beat them, as Los Angeles is not regarded as a deep team.

Denver will also need consistent scoring from Murray and Jokic. In addition a third option, such as Michael Porter Jr., would be needed.

Los Angeles will look to ride on the back of James and Davis, but they will need consistent production and shooting from the team's role players: Rajon Rondo, Kyle Kuzma and Danny Green.

Defensively, the Lakers will be looking to stop the offensive show of Murray, and possibly implement the trap scheme that they ran on James Harden and Damian Lillard in the two previous series.

Beacon
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BASKETBALL

Who will make it to
the NBA Finals?

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Co-Sports Editor
Lakers v. Heat

Ariel Reed
Co-Sports Editor
Nuggets v. Heat

Chris Gowarty
Sports Staff Writer
Lakers v. Heat

Baylee Guedes
Staff Writer
Nuggets v. Celtics

Kirsten Peters
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Lakers v. Heat

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Should Wilkes join the MAC esports league bandwagon?

By Chris Gowarty
Sports Staff Writer

With its popularity increasing dramatically over the last few years, esports is finding its way to college campuses across the country.

Esports, which stands for electronic sports, is competitive gaming in an organized format, such as tournaments or leagues, where individual members or teams compete for a specific goal such as a championship title or a money prize.

Organized competitions in gaming have been around for a long time, but were mostly amateur until the late 2000s. Esports became an important factor of the video game industry in the mid-2010s, with tournaments and leagues sprouting across the globe.

In 2014, Robert Morris University of Illinois became the first of over 130 colleges to have an esports program, being included in the National Association of Collegiate Esports.

With eight other Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC) schools offering esports, those being Misericordia, Albright, DeSales, Hood, Lebanon Valley, Stevenson, Widener and Arcadia (with a soon-to-be ninth in King's, who was scheduled to begin a program in Fall 2020 but was postponed due to COVID-19 concerns), a question arises: Should Wilkes adopt an esports program?

Dr. Samuel Schmidt, former professor in Wilkes' Jay S. Sidhu School of Business and Leadership, as well former coach of Misericordia's esports team, believes that a team could bring many opportunities to Wilkes' campus.

"It could bring a different kind of recruiting for students," said Schmidt. "Student-athletes who compete in esports are different from your traditional sport student-athletes. They are looking for opportunities to participate at a high-level because there are such few options right now. You could scout a student-

athlete in Wisconsin, talk about your esports program in Wilkes-Barre and give them an opportunity that they wouldn't have in Wisconsin. All of a sudden, that's a student who never would have thought of Wilkes University who's now coming to Wilkes."

Schmidt also believes that the program could allow Wilkes to keep up with colleges within the area.

"Misericordia started their program in 2019, King's was going to start theirs in Fall 2020 and Lebanon Valley College has one of the best esports programs in the country," said Schmidt. "A team at Wilkes could give them a chance to play catch-up. As of right now, these schools have admissions from students they wouldn't normally get due to esports."

Some students at Wilkes understand the following that has become of the esports community and would like to see the university to introduce its own program.

"Esports is a really interesting and growing activity," said sophomore Keith Nissen. "It's beneficial for colleges to have more programs, so you can attract more people with wider interests."

Not only would an esports team draw in additional students, but it would also attract a following from students interested in playing video games professionally.

junior Emilie Detweiler. "I feel as if it's a good platform for many young adults to work on as teams or individuals."

Others believe it's a useful way for students to connect with each other and to show the talents that they possess. Unlike traditional sports, not everyone is successful on a court or field, and this would be a platform for students to showcase their other talents.

Traditional student-athletes are in favor of the esports addition, as well.

"Esports is a good way to keep students connected who are not comfortable going out and playing contact sports, especially

with the circumstances given in the world today," said junior Alexa Crossgrove, a member of the Wilkes women's tennis team. "It's also another way for students to be known for what they are good at."

Schmidt considers there to be many aspects that make esports extraordinary to its competitors and fans but highlights the importance of its

place online, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"When COVID hit, lots of sports shut down - esports in general did not," said Schmidt. "It continued to go as normal. ESPN was even streaming esports just to have some form of sports going on. You can recruit people easily and schedule scrimmages and matches easily because it is all online. There's a lot of unique things about esports, and I think more people should check it out."

"I personally like esports because I feel as if it takes a great deal of practice and skill to be a professional at a video game," said junior Mason Thrush. "I think it would be sick if Wilkes had their own organization with different games - it would be a cool way for students to compete that are into gaming."

Other students do not know too much about esports and the competition it brings, but they are not opposed to having a new program for students to enjoy and compete in.

"I don't know much, but I would love the opportunity to learn more," said



Schmidt gave his insight on what is needed to develop and run an esports program, from having support from the athletic department to having the right equipment and coaches.

"First and foremost, you need buy-in from leadership," said Schmidt. "When I was coaching at Misericordia, the athletic director was all-in on esports. He took it seriously and wanted it to be successful. Secondly, it's important to have good computers, chairs and rooms for student-athletes to call their own. Finally, having coaches and a good coordinator is pretty important, too."

Christopher.Gowarty@wilkes.edu
Graphic by Mia Walker

Getting to know Michael Piranian, men's soccer head coach

By Ariel Reed
Co-Sports Editor

Michael Piranian, head coach of the Wilkes' men's soccer team, had traveled vast and far, but his passion for soccer landed him in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Prior to Wilkes, Piranian got his start as an assistant coach at Washington and Lee University working alongside his father. He served at this position for four years before he made the journey to Pittsburgh to accept an assistant coaching position at Carnegie Mellon University.

His coaching trek continued, as he switched from western Pennsylvania to eastern Pennsylvania by accepting a position at the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn).

"My dad was the head coach at Washington and Lee University, and I was his assistant for four years," said Piranian. "I then went out to Pittsburgh, where I was an assistant again for six years. Then, an assistant at Penn for two years. Finally, I landed here."

Piranian decided to stay in the area because of the hometown feeling.

"There's similarities to this area that I can draw to my hometown, Lexington, Va.," said Piranian. "A lot of schools and universities in the area and students are the dominant

source of population, like my hometown. It's a little bit bigger of a city for me, but this area is more diverse in a socioeconomic sense. For me, the biggest draw is the mountains in the area. It allows me to pursue my second passion: Outdoors."

Before his coaching debut at Washington and Lee, Piranian went to Virginia Tech, where he played soccer and majored in consumer studies.

Piranian dabbled in different sports throughout high school, but with his father's influence, he became increasingly passionate about soccer.

Despite his career choice, when Piranian was younger, he did not want to follow in the footsteps of his father and be a soccer coach.

"My dad's been a college coach since I was born. I grew up in a team environment, playing soccer and watching soccer," said Piranian. "That's the reason why soccer has been so important to me. If I am being completely honest, when I was in school, I didn't want to be like my dad. I wanted to explore other avenues and see what the world was like with other jobs. I had an opportunity to be an assistant coach as my first job, and there were a lot of reasons to do it. He was a coach, and initially, I thought I wouldn't want that lifestyle, but then I realized that I was being a little naive and



The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Head coach Michael Piranian pictured in front of Bruggeworth Field prior to one of his player sessions, the new format approved under COVID-19 regulations.

stubborn."

Before Piranian began coaching, he spent his time pursuing what he loves – traveling and exploring the outdoors.

After graduation, he jumped into his vehicle and drove to California to work for a travel agency. He was able to venture throughout all of North America with this job.

"Little known fact, I was a tour guide," said Piranian. "I love to travel, so I got into my truck and drove to California. I worked for a company that was based there, but I drove all around the U.S. and Canada, and took them to a bunch of national parks."

As a travel-lover, the COVID-19 pandemic altered Piranian's lifestyle, particularly in how he kept busy during the extended offseason.

He was able to spend a substantial amount of time focusing on recruiting players. However, there are a lot of elements that he needs to communicate with his potential incoming players, including the possibility of his senior athletes staying for a fifth year.

"Right now, we have sessions. I get to plan those," said Piranian. "It's more trying to think about recruiting. We have some seniors that are not sure what their next step is – some may be getting their MBA or (staying for) pharmacy or nursing. That plays into the decision of how many people we need to recruit. For me, that means a lot

of communication with high school kids and trying to plan out scheduling when I will go out to see them."

Practices have been an adjustment for most players, as the new limitations on time and what the players are allowed to do has made it difficult. The athletes have taken on these challenges head-on and are now easily able to get through a practice.

"It was rough at first, but once we got the hang of it, it seems normal now and helps develop more of the technique side of the game," said R.J. Rauh, junior goalkeeper.

The major thing that Piranian wants to promote amongst his team is unity. Through his years of coaching, he has realized that this is the main component that holds his team together.

"Most prominently, it's trying to get the team together," said Piranian. "It feels like an impossible thing under these conditions."

Despite the impossible feeling, the players have been able to find safe ways to get together on the field.

"It has given us more time to work together and get a better understanding of how we will connect on the field," said Rauh.

The hope is that Piranian and the men's soccer team will get to see the field this year with a competitive season in the spring.

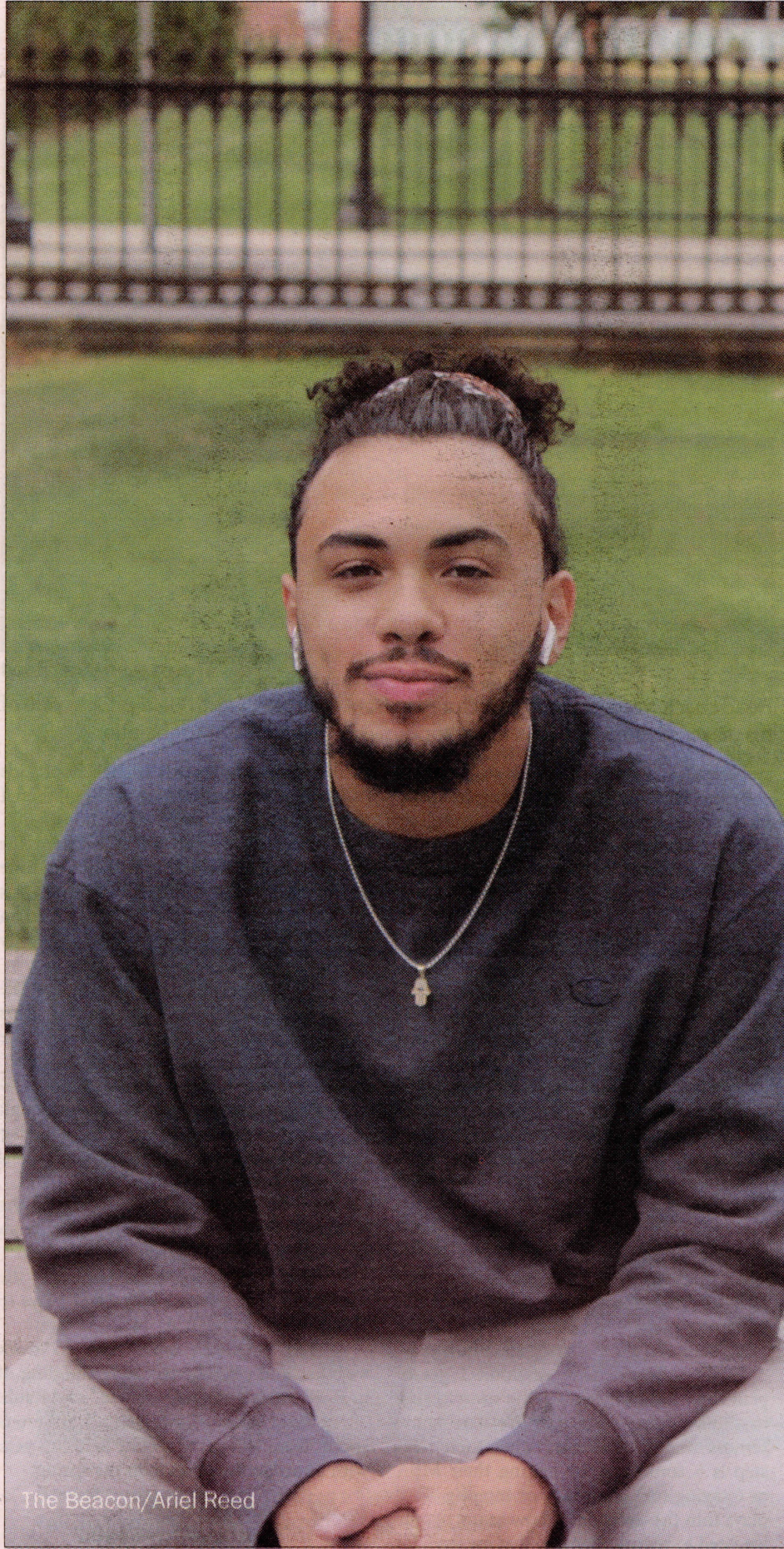


The Beacon/Kirsten Peters

On Oct. 5, 2019, Piranian's then-sophomore midfielder Gabriel Nieves scored in the 21st minute of play against FDU-Florham, recording the first goal in history on Bruggeworth Field.



@wilkesbeacon
Ariel.Reed@wilkes.edu



The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Getting to know...

Jose Tabora Jr.

Senior Football Player

The Beacon: Senior Spotlight

Why Jose Tabora was selected: Tabora has been a dominate force the past four years. Despite the fact that he is graduating after the fall semester, his impact for the Colonels has been one for the books.

Name: Jose Tabora Jr.
Year: Senior
Major: Criminology
Hometown: Egg Harbor Twp., N.J.
High School: St. Augustine Prep
Position: Quarterback

Other interests or hobbies off of the field?

I love music, and I also enjoy art. Playing some Madden and cooking, too. I have many things that I enjoy doing.

Driving force for your decision to come to Wilkes?

I wanted to be somewhere where I could better myself on-and-off the field. The family that was established within the team was unmatched.

Favorite meal to eat on campus?

It's got to be a cheesesteak from Which Wich and some curly fries.

Post-graduation plans in terms of a career?

Ultimately, I want to be a detective once I've finished my career with football, whether that is overseas or somewhere else.

What color/flavor of Gatorade is your favorite?

Purple Gatorade is the best thing after a long workout.

Favorite memory as a Colonel?

I love making memories every chance I get, but my favorite so far was the first win after we went 0-10. It was the start of something great.

Favorite professor?

Dr. Seeley and Dr. Garr are the best.

Hopes for this season as a Colonel?

I just want to return to the field as quick as I can.

If you could have dinner with a famous person from the past, who would it be?

It would be Jesus, so he could turn the water to wine.

When/Why did you first begin playing?

I first began playing when I was six years old. They tried to make me a lineman until I scored the first couple times I touched the ball, then they moved me to the right spot.

Most influential person in your life?

I have many people who influence me – my mother, father and sister are some of the leaders of that group.

Favorite thing to do during practice?

My favorite thing is to put the ball up and let my receivers make plays on the helpless defensive backs – and listen to music.

A quote you live your life by?

"You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take." – Wayne Gretzky

If you had to choose one thing about your program that you could improve, what would it be?

I would love to improve the gear we get and make it more frequent – more shorts, shirts and sweats.

What does "Be Colonel" mean to you?

It means being a part of something that is bigger than you – being more.

Anyone to give a shout-out to?

Shout out Yan man, Zeus, Fredo and X block.

-Compiled by Ariel Reed, Co-Sports Editor

Getting to know...

Niamh Harkins

Senior Women's Soccer Player

The Beacon Senior Spotlight:

Why Niamh Harkins was selected: Harkins has been a staple on the Colonels' roster for the past three years. Three first-team All-MAC selections makes her deserving of this recognition.

Name: Niamh Harkins
Year: Senior
Major: Marketing and Management
Hometown: Pennington, N.J.
High School: Hopewell Valley Central HS
Position: Center back

Driving force for your decision to come to Wilkes?

The team chemistry that I got to experience during my overnight visit drew me to Wilkes. I also had the opportunity to be a part of the Honors program and come in as an undeclared major.

Post-graduation plans in terms of a career?

My plans after graduation from Wilkes are to pursue my master's degree and then apply for jobs in the healthcare industry.

Favorite memory as a Colonel?

My favorite memory as a Colonel is getting a bid into the NCAA tournament when I was a freshman and beating Conn College in one of the craziest games I've ever played in.

Hopes for this season as a Colonel?

My first and biggest hope is to get the chance to play a hybrid version of a season in the spring, and then after that, make it the best and most memorable season possible.

When/Why did you first begin playing?

I started playing soccer when I was about five or so because it was the only sport offered at my catholic school that my older sister and I could do together.

Favorite thing to do during practice?

My favorite thing to do during practice is finishing drills, even though I never actually shoot the ball during games.

If you had to choose one thing about your program that you could improve, what would it be?

If I had to choose one thing about my program that could improve it would probably be a larger locker room for the team!

Other interests or hobbies off of the field?

When I'm not playing soccer, I really enjoy reading, spending time with my friends and listening to true crime podcasts.

Favorite meal to eat on campus?

Grill Works' chicken cheesesteak with ranch and hot sauce, no onions.

What color/flavor of Gatorade is your favorite?

I guess the red one, but I don't really drink Gatorade.

Favorite professor?

Dr. Justin Matus.

If you could have dinner with a famous person from the past, who would it be?

Mac Miller.

Most influential person in your life?

My dad.

A quote you live your life by?

"Tough times don't last, tough people do."

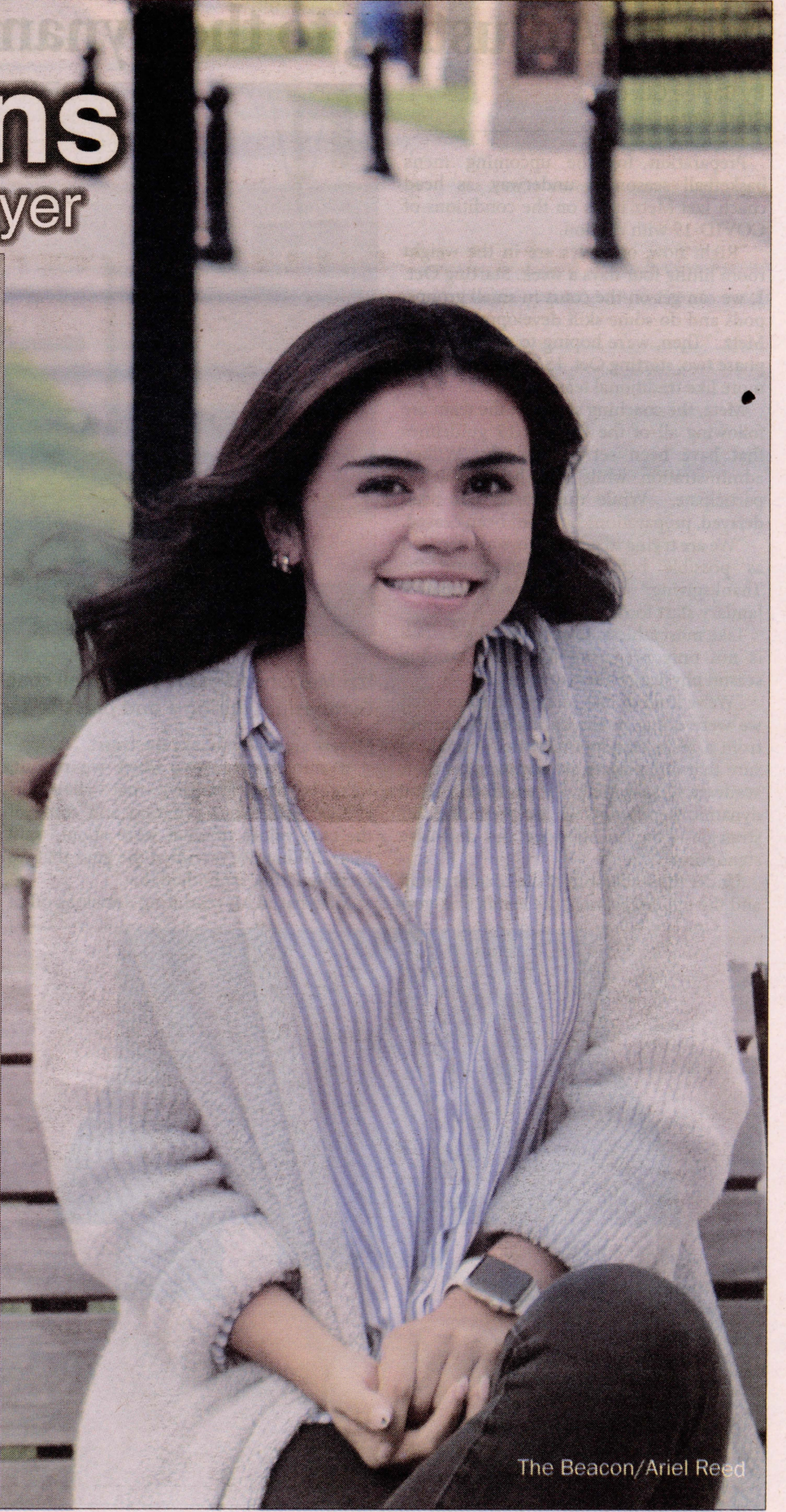
What does "Be Colonel" mean to you?

To me, "Be Colonel" means to try your hardest and give your best in everything you do, as well as being a kind person to all.

Anyone to give a shout-out to?

My roomies and Phil of course.

-Compiled by Ariel Reed, Co-Sports Editor



The Beacon/Ariel Reed

MBB: Adjusting to the dynamic without Pecorelli, Mullins

By Baylee Guedes
Staff Writer

Preparation for the upcoming men's basketball season is underway, as head coach Izzi Metz takes on the conditions of COVID-19 with caution.

"Right now, our guys are in the weight room lifting four days a week. Starting Oct. 1, we can get on the court in small groups, pods and do some skill development," said Metz. "Then, we're hoping to progress into phase two, starting Oct. 15, which would be more like traditional team practices."

Metz, the coaching staff and the team are following all of the COVID-19 guidelines that have been set in place by Wilkes' administration while still being able to participate. While the season has been delayed, preparations have not been ceased.

"We are trying to get our guys as prepared as possible before they go home for Thanksgiving," said Metz. "We anticipate a January start for the season."

Like most athletic teams, men's basketball is not only preparing for the upcoming season physically but also mentally.

"We've kind of just carried on from what we were doing in the spring and summer from a team standpoint, which is making sure that our players are focusing on their academics," said Metz. "Then, from a team dynamic standpoint, we are preparing our strategies from an offensive and defensive standpoint."

Under the leadership of the coaching staff and the upperclassmen, the team's first-year



The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Izzi Metz, head men's basketball coach, pictured in front of the Marts Gymnasium during a pod practice session.

players are ready to take the court.

"I think every year when we recruit, we're looking for guys that value our culture within our program and some of the core values of what we're about," said Metz. "When we recruited the guys that we recruited, they embodied that."

Metz based his recruiting decisions off of

not skill alone but character as well.

"They're selfless, high-character people. They're obviously skilled basketball players, and they're good athletes," said Metz. "We feel like from a personality standpoint that they fit really well into our locker room with our returning players."

The team that Metz is building for this

season has started to get in sync.

"I've noticed that in just a few weeks that we've been back on campus, that our returning guys rave about them in terms of the kind of people they are," said Metz. "And I feel like our freshman class can certainly help us, if not instantly on the court, I think throughout their careers, they will all definitely be valued contributors."


These freshmen have big shoes to fill, as the team lost some recognizable names on the court: Rob Pecorelli and Mark Mullins.

"We lost two good seniors in Rob Pecorelli and Mark Mullins," said Metz. "We're going to miss those guys for what they did on-and-off of the court. Yet, we have Landon Henry, Cooper Chaffee, Jack Bova, Derek Heiserman and Trystan Griffith who all contributed on-and-off of the court over their time here at Wilkes."

Metz believes that this is the time for these upperclassmen to step up as leaders and take control on the court.

"I am hoping that those guys can really teach the younger players what it takes," said Metz. "In our junior class, we have four guys that have played a lot of basketball now and got a lot of experience last year. We feel like they are ready to continue to and elevate their game from a scoring standpoint."

Entering his seventh season, Metz is looking forward to leading his team to another successful season, despite the loss of two of the team's leading players.

 @wilkesbeacon
Baylee.Guedes@wilkes.edu



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