

THE OAKLAND POST

Oakland University's Independent Student Newspaper

Rochester, Michigan

Volume 47 | Issue 4 | September 1, 2021



Grizzlies on the prowl

Students are back roaming the campus for Welcome Week

Page 4

RAISE THE WAGE

OUSC launches campaign to get student workers paid

PAGE 7

SOCCER SHOCKER

The men's team's buzzer-beating finish against UofM

PAGE 8-9

CONTRACT CONUNDRUM

How negotiations between faculty and OU turned sour

PAGE 11

PHOTO BY AYMAN ISHIMWE

THIS WEEK

PHOTO OF THE WEEK



HERE COMES THE SUN *The last days of summer are upon us, so be sure to get out and see all the nature that the campus to offer before fall sets in.*
SOPHIE HUME / PHOTOGRAPHER

THE OAKLAND POST

EDITORIAL BOARD

Jeff Thomas
Editor-in-Chief
jdthomas2@oakland.edu

Lauren Reid
Content Editor
lrreid@oakland.edu

Bridget Janis
Managing Editor
bridgetjanis@oakland.edu

EDITORS

Sophie Hume Photo Editor
sophiahume@oakland.edu

Matthew Scheidel Sports Editor
mscheidel@oakland.edu

Gabrielle Abdelmessih Campus Editor
gabdelmessih@oakland.edu

Sarah Gudenau Features Editor
sgudenau@oakland.edu

COPY & VISUAL

Jennifer Wood Graphic Designer

Megan Parker Graphic Designer

Carolina Alonso Graphic Designer

Elizabeth Foster Graphic Designer

Noora Neiroukh Photographer

Maggie Willard Photographer

Ayman Ishimwe Photographer

Anna Drumm Photographer

DISTRIBUTION

Ryleigh Gotts Distributor

Katie Reid Distributor

Jillian Wood Distributor

Erika Beechie Distributor

REPORTERS

Tanner Trafelet Senior Reporter

Rachel Yim Senior Reporter

D'Juanna Lester Senior Reporter

Christian Tate Sports Reporter

Brittany Kearfott Sports Reporter

ADVERTISING

Tori Coker Marketing Director
Toricoker@oakland.edu

Madeline Parker Ads Director
mparker@oakland.edu

248.370.4269
Megan Dull Ads Assistant

ADVISING

Garry Gilbert Editorial Adviser
ggilber@oakland.edu

248.370.2105
Don Ritenburgh Business Adviser

ritenbur@oakland.edu
248.370.2533



6 VACCINE MANDATED

Students share their thoughts on the Covid-19 vaccine.
Photo/Sophie Hume



10 PEOPLE OF OU

Student Ayman Ishimwe shares his journey in our new feature series.
Photo/Ayman Ishimwe



15 KICKIN' IT AT OU

Women's soccer battled the DePaul Blue Demons at home.
Photo/Maggie Willard

VOTE AND CONNECT AT:
oaklandpostonline.com

POLL OF THE WEEK

WHICH SAFAC ORG HANDED OUT THE BEST MERCH DURING WELCOME WEEK?

- A) SPB
- B) OUSC
- C) CLUB SPORTS
- D) THE POST

LAST ISSUE'S POLL

FAVORITE SOCIAL MEDIA APP TO WASTE TIME ON THIS SUMMER?

10%
A) SNAPCHAT

17%
B) TWITTER

49%
C) TIKTOK

24%
D) INSTAGRAM

CORRECTIONS CORNER: In a previous issue, we referred to the Oakland United Student Workers Coalition (OUSWC) as the Oakland University Student Workers Coalition, which is incorrect.

The Oakland Post corrects all known errors of fact. If you know of an error, please email editor@oaklandpostonline.com.

Dear campus community, The Post is with you

JEFF THOMAS
Editor-in-Chief

What a privilege it is to be back at OU for another year, what an honor it is to serve the campus community. I've been at this Editor-in-Chief (EIC) gig for a few months now, and with the start of the new semester I'm here to reintroduce myself and say a few things.

I'll start by saying that my heart goes out to all you people now 18 months into this pandemic, downtrodden, misled and abused. This fall semester isn't going to be what we had hoped for, but we'll get through it together. I am with you and the rest of The Oakland Post is too.

I started as Life & Arts Editor at The Post almost exactly a year ago. It's the first non-manual labor job I've had in my life. I was sitting on the couch next to my little brother when I got the email with the job offer. It seemed like the strangest turn of events at the time. Things got stranger.

Every week I was covering the most loathsome news. Howling in op-eds about COVID-19 or the upcoming election or police brutality. It was hard times, you could feel the weight of the world everyday. A year

later we've got a slightly different set of problems, but that pressure is still folding shoulders, still weighing on people. It's more important than ever that we're willing to extend a hand to one another and help pick people up when they're down.

At The Post, we're here to provide a service to the campus community. Yeah, we're here to inform and highlight the good and the bad, but we're also here to record this moment in history. You better believe these are extraordinary times that we're living in. Your voice matters and now isn't the time for any of us to go quiet.

I am fortunate to have a team of people on staff who are ready to meet this moment — editors, reporters, photographers, designers, etc. who work hard and care about what they do. Their dedication is what's going to make all this possible, and believe me readers, there's plenty for you to look forward to.

We're bringing back the "Looking Back" series to provide a historical perspective about what's happening at OU. We're starting a new "People of OU" series to highlight more of the incredible people on this campus. And in case you haven't noticed, the "Letters to the editor" are now open. If you've got something to say,



type it up and email it to editor@oaklandpostonline.com. That's the forum I have to offer for the voices of students, professors and staff. God willing, this year we may even hear from an administrator or two.

I know the 2021-2022 school year isn't starting the way we wanted, but it'll be what we make it. The Post is going to be here for you people, so I'm asking you to please be here for us too. The editor email exists for a reason. Help hold us

accountable. If we slip up and fall short, then let us know. If there's a story that needs to be told, reach out with the lead. We're dying to do our best work, so if you can, help make sure we follow through.

My name's Jeff Thomas, I'm the Editor-in-Chief of The Oakland Post. Thanks for giving me the time of day. I hope soon we can all take off the masks and share a smile with the ease that we used to.

THE POST

YOU CAN FIND US ON

Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

VISIT US ONLINE

WWW.OAKLANDPOSTONLINE.COM

Welcome Week festivities are in full swing

LAUREN REID

Content Editor

After a summer of what seemed to be alternating humidity and rain, classes are starting again and with that, welcome week festivities. From the Stress Less fair to OU's classic GrizzFest, there's something for everyone.

The Welcome Back to OU All-Day Party kicks off a slew of events on the first official day of classes — Thursday, Sept. 2 — between North and South Foundation Hall. From 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., students can stop by for food and music, and meet various student leaders, faculty and staff.

"It'll be a fun time for everyone to see each other — some maybe for the first time in a year and a half," said Jean Ann Miller, Senior Director at the Office for Student Involvement (OSI). "As people are coming to campus, we want to truly welcome them back to the university and welcome new students who are on-campus for the first time."

Friday, Sept. 3 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. is the "How to Have a Stress Less Semester" Fair at Elliott Tower. As classes get underway, stress is surely imminent for most students. The fair will give students tips and

strategies to manage stressors before the semester heats up.

GrizzFest — OU's annual involvement fair — will span four days this year instead of one. On Tuesday, Sept. 7, Student Affairs & Diversity/Academic Departments & Offices and Meadow Brook will be set up outside of Elliott Tower, and on Wednesday: Nonprofits, Community Businesses and Preferred Vendors.

"Normally, GrizzFest is very compact — there's 800-1,000 students in attendance," Miller said. "[This year], we felt that may be a little daunting and uncomfortable under the [COVID-19] circumstances, so we're spreading it out over multiple days, and spreading out the tables."

For the last half of GrizzFest, Student Organizations & Club Sports will take their turn on Thursday, Sept. 9. The four-day fair rounds out with Student Activity Fund Assessment Committee (SAFAC) organizations such as The Oakland Post and WXOU, Fraternity & Sorority Life (FSL) and remaining Student Organizations on Friday.

Other events taking place around the time of GrizzFest include Student Program Board (SPB's) Silent Disco on Tuesday, Sept. 7 from 8 - 11 p.m. at

Elliott Tower, Mainstage Kickoff with Dueling Pianos on Thursday, Sept. 9 in The Habitat from 7 - 9 p.m. and Student Congress (OUSC's) S'mores and Pours Bonfire on Friday, Sept. 9.

Miller mentioned the OSI's goal is to reflect the OU experience.

"It isn't just going to classes, there's so much more," Miller said. "[Welcome Week] gives students the full picture of college life — there is a campus life at OU. It may be different, but we have a great campus life that hopefully students get a feel for at Welcome Week, and then they'll keep coming back for more."

For incoming freshman Faith Andrzejewski, the festivities are something to look forward to.

"I'm super excited about Welcome Week — [I'm ready] to meet new people and explore campus more," Andrzejewski said.

Welcome Week festivities close out on Saturday, Sept. 11 with the "March for Heroes" to honor the 20th anniversary of 9-11, taking place at Elliott Tower from 8:30 to 10 a.m. At the march, participants will walk as many steps as there were in the towers.

Once Welcome Week is over, students can look ahead to Homecoming and Reunion weekend: Oct. 8-9.

For a full rundown of Welcome Week activities, locations and times, visit the 2021 Welcome Week homepage on OU's official website.



PHOTO BY NOORA NEIROUKH

International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) hosts welcome reception

RACHEL YIM

Senior Reporter

Oakland University's kick-off to a new school year involves a variety of events. This includes the annual international welcome reception welcoming its new international students from across the world.

"Just seeing familiar and new faces, I love seeing students when they first arrive on campus not knowing much about life here, having so many questions and being so excited and curious," Petra Knoche, International Advisor with ISSO, said. "I love listening to their stories and being able to help them throughout this difficult and complex process of coming to the U.S. to study."

After 18 months of virtual activities and events due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ISSO staff and students are excited to get back in the "normal" swing of life and get to know each other in-person.

"This is always a very exciting time of the year for me and others as we welcome new students to campus," she said. "We are excited to serve them and help guide them in their unique and hopefully successful journey here at OU."

Pandemic travel restrictions have prevented international students from coming to the U.S. or traveling back to their home country. As the new school year approaches and international students are welcomed back to campus, it is also important to point out that it will allow domestic students to share different life perspectives and friendships, and learn to appreciate different cultures and traditions.

Knoche herself once was an international student from the Czech Republic. Being a student in a foreign country, she was able to have many wonderful people to

help navigate the new life and its challenges as a student-athlete in the USA. This allowed her to grow passion in her job within ISSO.

"I enjoy creating meaningful events that help to promote diversity on campus and create interactions among domestic and international students, faculty and staff," Knoche said. "There is so much to learn from our international guests as well as so much to learn about life in the U.S."

In collaboration with the Office of Global Engagement, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the President and the Office for Student Involvement, ISSO made sure the event is successful and inclusive of all international students.

"We all value the different perspectives our international population brings not only to campus life but also in the classroom and community," Knoche said.

Dr. Britt Rios-Ellis, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost, and Dr. Rosemary Max, Executive Director of International Education, will be providing remarks and welcome newly arrived students, faculty and staff to the OU community. Mark Stone, Associate Professor of Music, will be providing music throughout the event.

Highlighting the different perspectives the OU international population brings to campus life, classrooms and community, this event will be a great opportunity for many people to learn and socialize.

This year's welcome reception will be from 3-5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 3 between Elliott Tower and the Engineering Center. As this event is open for all OU community members, anyone interested in participating

or attending can reserve their spots by visiting www.oakland.edu/provost/rsvp.

Besides the welcome reception, OU offers a plethora of opportunities for international friendships. Students can find more information on GrizzOrgs.



FLYER FOR THE ISSO WELCOME RECEPTION

Counseling Center offering free therapy sessions

GABRIELLE ABDELMESSIH
Campus Editor

For the 2021-2022 academic year, the Oakland University Counseling Center (OUCC) will be offering free therapy sessions to OU students.

In the past, students were offered six free sessions and had to pay \$12 a session for the next nine sessions.

Currently, based on a short-term model, a student may partake in up to 15 free therapy sessions.

After that, if recommended, students may continue working with an OUCC counselor or will be referred to a recommended provider in the surrounding community. Counselors work with students on a case-by-case basis, so if students have any concerns regarding the session cap, it can be addressed.

“We know that with everything students have been through and are still going through for the past 18 months, mental health resources are going to be more critical than ever,” said Dr. David Schwartz, psychologist and director of the OUCC. “Anything we can do to remove barriers to people getting help in this coming year, it’s always important, but more critical than any year before.”

It is important to point out the therapy sessions are confidential and counseling is provided by licensed psychologists or interns supervised by licensed psychologists.

“It is just like confidential counseling you would get anywhere else,” Dr. Schwartz said.

In addition to counseling sessions, the OUCC also offers a broad range of mental health services including

more affordable psychological and psychoeducational testing for students who may be concerned they have a learning disability, outreach, and crisis intervention.

“We really try our best to never let finances become an obstacle for students who need services,” Dr. Schwartz said. “If someone can’t afford that, please still reach out to us because we have an emergency health fund and there are things that we can do.”

In addition to free therapy sessions, the OUCC is also introducing some new initiatives for the 2021-2022 Academic Year, including a full-time Group Coordinator Position — the first of its kind at the university.

“Groups are such an important resource to have available to students. It’s one more way to meet the needs of students, especially during a time when more students are struggling than ever before.” Dr. Schwartz said. “We are going to be offering a variety of groups. A specific focus of the position is to really try and reach out to students that are in communities that are the most marginalized and most under-represented, like BIPOC communities, the LGBTQ+ community, veterans and students with disabilities. These are the groups we are really trying to reach out to specifically, but we’re also going to have some general groups for anyone who is an OU student.”

The OUCC will also be offering workshops and groups surrounding the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on mental health.

For more information regarding free therapy sessions and OUCC services, please visit <https://www.oakland.edu/oucc/>

School of Nursing granted Jonas Philanthropies

RACHEL YIM
Senior Reporter

“Nurses are the backbone of the American healthcare system,” Donald Jonas, co-founder of Jonas Philanthropies, once said.

To further improve the educational environment for nursing students, Jonas Philanthropies – national philanthropic funder of graduate nursing education – has partnered with schools of nursing across the U.S. including that of Oakland University. In partnership with nursing schools, it financially supports high-potential doctoral nursing scholars.

This year, the OU School of Nursing has recently been awarded a grant of \$15,000 by Jonas Philanthropies. This grant is used to fund the scholarship of a doctoral nursing student at OU. The honor of the scholarship this year went to Aaronica Phommalee, student in the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at OU.

“It is a prestigious honor to have been awarded the Jonas Nurse Scholar Scholarship,” Phommalee said. “I am proud to be representing Oakland University as a Jonas Nurse Scholar.”

Growing up surrounded by her mother and her sister, who are both nurses, Phommalee acquired a strong desire to pursue a career in nursing as an undergraduate student. She has nursing experience in areas of stroke and medical-surgical nursing, and has worked as a diabetes educator. Besides being in the DNP program at OU, she is currently teaching future nurses as an Assistant Professor with the RN to BSN program at Mercy College of Ohio.

The scholarship will support Phommalee with her current DNP project which focuses on Type 2 diabetes and the impact of implementation of a virtual-based group diabetes education program on improving patients’ glycemic control (HbA1c), diabetes self-care knowledge and diabetes related emotional distress.

“This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to network with other nurse scholars from around the country while enhancing my leadership skills,” she said. “The support given towards the completion of my DNP degree will be important to my future in educating nurse leaders and addressing the ongoing healthcare needs of our community.”

Despite the severity of the nursing shortage – especially after COVID-19 pandemic – an adequate educational curriculum is critical to produce qualified nurses to shape the future of healthcare with appropriate and efficient patient care. Both Jonas Philanthropies



PHOTO BY NOORA NEIROUKH
The outside of Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine. The school of nursing has received yet another accolade.

and OU School of Nursing continue to support their aspiring nurses aim to satisfy these goals.

Improved educational curriculum will also help enhance the healthcare environment for underrepresented groups and reduce the health disparities in our society. Having worked closely with minority populations in underserved areas, Phommalee said healthcare systems have to holistically support communities through chronic diseased focused access to healthcare services, educational programming and outpatient resources.

“I have witnessed first-hand the difference this type of support can make in the lives of patients; providing needed empowerment to better manage their health, which could lead to improved health outcomes and healthier communities,” she said.

Phommalee hopes to become more involved with local community-based diabetes education efforts through working with clinics to provide volunteer support. She also hopes to publish some of the work she’s completed through her DNP program coursework and present her work at local research symposiums to continue to share new knowledge with peers and future nurses.

“To the nurses of tomorrow, I would encourage them to always be open to new opportunities to learn and grow along their educational journey,” she said. “It is important for them to stay connected to their communities through nursing honor societies and leadership programs, as the networking opportunities and information that can be obtained from experienced nurse leaders is immensely beneficial to cultivating a passion for providing nursing care that will help to improve community health outcomes.”



PHOTO BY MAGGIE WILLARD
The entrance to Graham Health Center, where students can go to receive health services.

Looking for a job? OU Career Services can help

GABRIELLE ABDELMESSIH
Campus Editor

Offering consultations, networking opportunities and events, the OU Career Services team is here to help students and alumni find job opportunities at no additional cost — a unique feature to the university.

Also unique to the university are the career consultant teams assigned to the Schools of Business and Engineering located in each building, respectively, as well as other education paths that assist students specifically in those fields.

“We do everything, from beginning to end when it comes to the career part,” said Carol Anne Ketelsen, Career Consultant for the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Nursing. “From what you are going to with your major to looking at all the different options, we help you explore all that you can do with your degree and then figure out the next steps.”

For many students, these next steps include internships, job shadowing volunteer experiences and more. OU Career Services helps students get there.

“We help you with all your professional documents your resume,

cover letter reference sheets,” Ketelsen said. “We help you once you have an interview scheduled whether it’s for an internship or full-time job and we help you practice interviewing so that you can get the job and know what to say.”

The scope of opportunities made available through OU Career Services doesn’t stop once students find employment. They can also learn how to negotiate job offers

and their salary as well as how to be professional in the workplace.

Kristen Brehmer, a senior in the School of Nursing, received and accepted a post-graduation job offer as an acute care registered nurse through the University of Michigan Health System and credits OU Career Services for helping her during the application process.

“I originally met with Carol for my

resume and everything. And then once I got a call back for my interview, I scheduled another appointment for a mock interview with her,” Brehmer said. “I took the mock interview the day before my interview so it would be fresh. I just remember that she was very helpful and that she went through all types of questions that they would ask. And I’d say my answer and then she would say any feedback—positive feedback—and then add in her comments of what to include.”

When asked if she would recommend OU Career Services to other students, she replied by saying: “Definitely, yes.”

In terms of when students should meet with OU Career Services, Carol Anne emphasized that it should be early and frequently in one’s academic career. She also underscored the importance of building rapport with a particular consultant so that they continuously search for and communicate potential opportunities with them.

“We really encourage students to start coming the second semester of their freshman year,” Ketelsen said.

For more information regarding OU Career Services and their upcoming events, please visit their webpage, Handshake, or social media accounts.



PHOTO BY MAGGIE WILLARD
A bear hug of a welcome to OU Career Services

Students discuss COVID-19 vaccinations at OU

GABRIELLE ABDELMESSIH
Campus Editor

Prior to Oakland University’s vaccine mandate for all students, staff and faculty, OU had established only a vaccine mandate for students living on-campus along with a mask mandate for the entire campus community.

On August 20 — prior to the mandatory vaccine mandate — I walked around campus and asked a few students the following question: Should OU mandate COVID-19 Vaccinations? Here are their responses.

Rebecca Schwartz, Spanish K-12 education

“Well, I myself am vaccinated, so I’m fully in support of vaccines, but I think that it would be a really good idea because we’re all around each other so much and lots of the time in closed spaces and classrooms for a long amount of time. If we’re going to share that space I think we have a duty to protect each other and a vaccine mandate would help with that. Plus, other businesses and corporations, they’ve recently started passing vaccine mandates, so I think that it’s a good idea.”

Ryan Jones, Biology

“I think it’s a personal choice. I took the vaccine myself, but I don’t think it should be forced upon anybody, but I think people should get it.”

Katherine Troy, Human Resources Development

“For a vaccine mandate for campus, I think that whatever can get college back to whatever the new normal is, is the best way on how to keep people healthy and just keep moving with life, I think is the best decision. So, if that requires vaccine mandates, so masks don’t have to be worn, then that just has to be how it is. Although I’d like to people choose to get the vaccine on their own, or do what’s best for them, I think just getting back to normal and letting kids have a normal college experience, or students have a normal college experience as well as faculty is the best way to go.

Ross Mair, Social Work with a specialization in Gerontology

“So, at the moment, I don’t mind too much. I definitely see why people do mind, however. I feel like at the end of the day, if it’s to keep our students safe, we’ve been wanting to keep students safe forever, so I figured that if it keeps students safe, then [we] might as well, I suppose.”

Jalen Felix, Nursing

“I wouldn’t have a problem with it. I’m already vaccinated, especially being in the nursing program. As far as I know, we’re supposed to be vaccinated for the nursing program, so I’d be okay with it.”

On August 23, President Ora Pescovitz announced that all students, faculty and

staff are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19. The mandate, an extension of other infection prevention measures like wearing face masks inside all OU buildings, requires those who are not yet vaccinated to receive their first shot by Friday, September 3, and their second shot for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines by Friday, October 1. Oakland University is now among several universities in the state with a similar mandate.

Just a few hours prior to the announcement, I walked around campus and asked students the same question I had asked in the first part of this survey series: Should OU mandate COVID-19 vaccinations? Here are their responses.

Maria Gancar, Graphic Design with a minor in Art History

“For myself, I would yes. I think that people would be safe, but at the same time like I know people that cannot get the vaccine for medical conditions. I don’t know if that’s right for them to mandate something like that because I have friends losing jobs because they have Crohn’s [Disease] or something else that they don’t feel safe taking the vaccine, so they are getting fired because of that.”

Emma Schien, Psychology

“Yes. That would definitely decrease the spread and it’s just like the flu vaccine, just like wearing a seatbelt I feel. That’s my opinion.”

Lizzy Kay, Nursing

“Just let people make up their own mind because everyone is going to have a different opinion.”

Kaylee Siebert, Communications

“I have the vaccination, but no, I don’t think so. Just because, I mean, people are, we’re college students. People can make up their own minds. Don’t tell people what to do. Let them figure it out on their own.”

Nik Lewis, Nursing

“Probably. It helps prevent [COVID-19]. I’m not 100% sure because I know there’s some concerns about vaccine safety, but yeah, I think the vaccines should be mandated.”



PHOTO BY SOPHIA HUME
Student enforcing the mask mandate in the Oakland Center.

OUSC launches Raise The Wage Campaign, advocates for \$15 minimum wage

TORI COKER
Marketing Director

Oakland University Student Congress (OUSC) is calling on OU administration to raise the minimum wage for campus employees — and they’re asking students to help convince the university of the necessity for this change.

On August 9, OUSC’s official Instagram account announced the launch of their Raise The Wage campaign, asking students to respond to a Google Form detailing what a \$15 wage would mean to them.

The campaign comes on the heels of a resolution passed by the congress on June 28, outlining their proposed plan for raising the wage to \$15 an hour by the 2025-26 academic year. C.R. 22-05 recommends an increase from where the minimum wage sits at \$9.87 to \$11 an hour as soon as possible, followed by an increase of \$1 per hour each academic year until the goal is met.

From there, it’s suggested that each 1% increase in tuition spur a 0.5% increase in the wage on a permanent basis, with the organization noting they do not recommend the typical tuition increase rate of about 4% annually be exceeded.

Jeremy Johnson, OUSC’s Steering Chair, was the initial sponsor of C.R. 22-05. His motivation to present this bill stemmed from concern for student finances, acknowledging that — when adjusted for inflation — the cost of college has increased by

nearly 34% since 2010, while the minimum wage has only increased by about 8% in Michigan over the same period.

“Throughout the last few decades the cost of college has increased astronomically, and the wages paid to student workers haven’t really tracked with that at all,” Johnson said. “One of the best ways we can help students’ financial situations is [to] pay them more for the work they’re doing, because realistically their work is the reason that OU stays afloat.”

OUSC’s Legislative Affairs Director Jordan Tolbert reasons that this initiative is in the best interest of the entire OU community.

“We should care about the way that others experience their time on campus, and [care] about [others] having the best experience they can at our school,” Tolbert said. “One of the ways to do that would be to give better wages to our workers.”

The bill contains several other provisions in addition to those aforementioned, including a call to establish a Fair Compensation Committee to monitor the continued adjustment of the wage with tuition raises, a recommendation that departments with budgets that can’t meet the raised wage be subsidized by the university until they can, and a request for OU to not conduct business with any outside organizations which compensate their employees less than the wage outlined in the plan.

“I would argue that this resolution is a systemic solution to a big systemic problem of students not being able to afford college or taking out debt for

the rest of their life,” Johnson said. “I think this plan is solid, it’s very implementable, and it would be a way for OU to tangibly improve lives for all of its students.”

The Raise The Wage campaign recently launched by the organization aims to convince OU administration of the necessity for this wage increase through student testimonials.

“Everyone’s experience is different, but at the same time very connected,” Tolbert said. “To hear each individual, unique experience might help administration better understand the struggle we’re going through.”

From student workers themselves to any concerned party with loved ones who work for the minimum wage, the congress encourages every person in the campus community who cares about this issue to head to their Google Form — available at the Flowpage in their Instagram bio — and share what a \$15 wage would mean to them.

“As our world works, the only way to ever make change is by mobilizing students or activists that care deeply about issues and raising awareness about [them],” Johnson said. “OUSC being the body representing the students, we’re calling on OU to raise the wage, and we want every student to join us in that pursuit.”

The Oakland Post

NOW HIRING Reporters

TO APPLY EMAIL
EDITOR@OAKLANDPOSTONLINE.COM

\$100 FOR STUDENTS

Open your OU Credit Union account, use your debit card 10 times, and you'll receive \$100.

oucreditunion.org/students

Offer of \$100 valid 5/1/21 to 10/31/21 for members who qualify under the OU student SEG. OU Credit Union Visa Debit Card must be activated by 10/31/21 and 10 debit card purchases must post within 30 days of card activation to qualify. The \$100 will be deposited into member's checking account within 4 to 6 weeks of the 10th purchase. Not valid for existing members with an OU Credit Union checking account. May not be combined with any other deposit offers. If new member is referred to the Credit Union, member referral offer will not apply.

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY
Credit Union

Men's soccer falls to Michigan on two buzzer-beater goals

The Oakland University men's soccer team fell to the Michigan Wolverines in heartbreaking fashion on Sunday afternoon at the Oakland Soccer Field.

Right from the get-go, the story was the weather. Temperatures hung around 90 degrees for the duration of the game, with winds steady between 10-15 mph.

Due to the heat, water breaks were taken about halfway through both halves. Head Coach Eric Pogue said the wind "made the heat bearable."

"[It's important to note] that it's hot for both teams," Pogue said. "But after we got to about the 80th minute it started to die down a little bit. So that, [combined with the travel after Thursday night's game], started to take a toll on us for sure."

It was a very quiet first 15 minutes. Neither team took a shot until Dylan Borczak scored unassisted in the 16th minute to give the Golden Grizzlies a 1-0 lead.

Oakland's defense got off to a hot start — while Michigan didn't take their first shot until the 22nd minute.

Things got a bit chippy in the 28th minute, when Oakland forward Mikey Ketteman received a yellow card for unsportsmanlike conduct. The Golden Grizzlies had three yellow cards in total to Michigan's one.

Just when it looked like the Grizzlies were going to enter the half with the lead, Michigan's Quin Rogers scored with three seconds left in the half to tie the game at 1.

The game stayed a defensive battle into the 75th minute. Shots were few and far between.

The Wolverines started turning up the





pressure late in the game — they had a few shots that missed just wide to the right. That pressure wasn't enough, though, as the game was still tied at one apiece by the end of regulation.

The first overtime period was dominated by Michigan. The Golden Grizzlies were backed up in their own end for the majority of the period. However, they were able to hold the Wolverines out of the scoring column to push the game to a second and final overtime period.

The game came down to an unbelievable finish. With about five seconds left, Michigan rebounded a corner kick, and after a couple misses, midfielder Mark Ybarra scored with one second left to clinch the 2-1 victory.

Pogue said he was “left a bit speechless” after losing on two buzzer-beater goals.

“To have it happen at the end of the half is one thing, but to have it happen at the end of overtime — that’s a backbreaker,” Pogue said. “We [have to] pick our heads up, though. It’s better this happens to us now than when it matters most come league or tournament time. We obviously have to finish out halves and games a little bit better.”

Despite the loss, Pogue said he was pleased with his team’s overall performance.

“I thought we had some chances to put the game away and we didn’t do that. They also had chances to put the game away as well, so I thought it was kind of an evenly matched game [possession-wise],” he said. “I thought [in] the second half we had some good stretches.”

The men’s soccer team’s next game will be at Michigan State on Friday, Sept. 3 in East Lansing.

Story by Matthew Scheidel
Design by Bridget Janis
Picture by Ayman Ishimwe

Navigating college as a young autistic student

D'JUANNA LESTER
SENIOR REPORTER

As someone who was diagnosed with autism halfway through high school, my lack of knowledge — as well as many of my fears — have transferred to college.

When I was diagnosed, there were a lot of things I didn't know about myself, things that I just thought were normal that weren't, even in college. Being around my neurotypical classmates has shown me that my perspective is drastically different, and that's ok.

One of the biggest things I've had to navigate was social interaction. Being autistic, on top of transferring from Columbia College during a pandemic, I often wondered if I'd get the chance to make many friends before graduation. From joining Oakland University Student Congress (OUSC) and Creative Writing Club, I found new, easier ways to interact with my peers. I'm more open with people and I don't find myself masking as I did in high school.

There's no "old me" that I have to hide from people. Being in college is all about

new experiences and discovering what you want for yourself, and I feel like I'm doing that. Through being in diverse clubs, I'm able to find people who share the same interests as me. A big thing for me is my major. When you're autistic, you find yourself switching special interests often. Special interests are like obsessions — something you can't see yourself without. It's more intense than a hobby, but something we have a passionate interest for.

I've found myself switching them, which often led to me questioning what I wanted to do in terms of life after graduation. I have many different special interests, i.e. history, theater and writing. It's hard to decide on something, not knowing how interested I'll still be in it further down the line. Consequently, I've changed my major several times, before settling on creative writing. Now, I can bring my special interests into what I want as a career path.

The hardest thing for me to navigate is burnout. Burnout is a state of physical or emotional stress that makes it difficult to perform tasks. Its longevity depends on the situation. Sometimes

my burnout lasts a few hours and other times, a few days or even weeks.

When I'm burnt out, I physically can't socialize, so I shut myself away from people. I lose my sense of creativity and find myself scrolling through my phone or listening to music for hours to find a sense of escapism. This especially happens when I feel helpless.

For example, on July 6 the FDA re-legalized the use of GEDs on the autistic community. GEDs are an unethical shock device used to torture people in order to make them "normal." I felt helpless — like we were the only ones who cared about helping ourselves. Not knowing many autistic people personally, no one would understand how I felt. So I shut down, only talked to a few people and lost all ability to think about anything else for the next week.

College can be overwhelming when I'm in a burnout state. Getting through



PHOTO BY ANNA DRUMM
Students with autism have additional challenges to navigate in college. Senior Reporter D'Juanna Lester shares her experience.

school while trying to maintain some social standing can be taxing. Despite burnout and the many challenges that come with it, I know I can eventually get out of it. Even though college is very difficult at times, I wouldn't change anything.

People of OU: International Student Ayman Ishimwe

JEFF THOMAS
Editor-in-Chief

International student, computer scientist, photographer extraordinaire — Ayman Ishimwe, a graduate student studying software engineering and information technology, left his home in Africa in pursuit of an education and for his chance to make a positive impact on the world.

Born and raised in Rwanda, Ishimwe went first to Tanzania to earn his undergrad degree at Zanzibar University. After studying there, he took time to get job experience working as a software engineer, carefully laying out a plan for his future. Plans changed, however, and despite COVID-19, he found himself making arrangements to travel to the United States.

"My plan was to initially work for at least two years and get that work experience before I started thinking about masters or anything," Ishimwe said. "Then things happened so fast that the opportunity presented itself one year after [finishing my undergraduate education]. I was initially supposed to come and start last fall, but because of [COVID-19 restrictions I deferred to] the winter semester ... Traveling was really tough ... When things started easing up towards the end of last year I realized

that [I needed to come then]."

As some may expect, Ishimwe's biggest shock when arriving in Detroit last January was the weather.

"I still can't even find words ... It's something that people tell you that have been in America from Rwanda, they tell you that it's cold ... It's something you can't prepare for," Ishimwe said. "The first day when I landed in Chicago, O'Hare Airport. And then [we got] a local flight to Detroit. We got outside to get on this bus and go to another terminal. And that's when I experienced [the cold] for the first time, and I didn't know what happened ... I realized that I couldn't feel my fingers ... I couldn't feel my toes. I couldn't even grab in my bag to get my documents ... I had to go to the sink, water in the bathrooms, hot water and try to get that heat so I could feel my fingers again."

Ishimwe got a winter coat and settled into life as a student at OU. In a new country, the isolation of remote instruction was difficult for him. Following the winter semester he began searching for ways to connect with people on campus. One of those ways was becoming a photographer for The Oakland Post. A photography enthusiast with experience behind the lens, Ishimwe saw working for The Post as an opportunity to see more people and

places in America.

"I was impressed that The Post is managed by students," Ishimwe said "It gave me motivation ... knowing that it's entirely managed and run by my fellow students. I felt like this is the place I want to be, because it gives us the room to be ourselves ... It's like there are no restrictions. That [freedom] is what photography means to me. Another thing is that it gives [me] access to all these amazing events that are happening. I feel like it's really amazing that I get to experience all those doing my job. Getting paid ... but enjoying myself and learning the experience in America."

As a photographer for The Post, Ishimwe attended his first ever baseball game last May when the Golden Grizzlies closed their season against Purdue-Fort Wayne. One of the photos he took was featured on the cover of the May 26 issue of The Post. He's had his photos published online and in print ever since.

To gain more experience in his field, Ishimwe began working on campus at Classroom Support and Instructional Technical Services (CSITS) in July. As a computer scientist he's interested in the future of the internet and working to create a web that is decentralized so data can't be controlled by a single governing entity. His main interest at the moment is creating apps that run on Blockchain.

He's also fascinated by cryptocurrency and American sporting events like the Superbowl and the NBA finals.



PHOTO BY SOPHIE HUME
International student Ayman Ishimwe standing outside of Elliott Tower. A man of varied interests and talents, Ishimwe hopes to continue connecting with people and learning more about OU this school year.

The worst faculty contract negotiations in OU's history

JEFF THOMAS

Editor-in-Chief

Three months of negotiations, three deadline extensions, three days until the start of the fall semester and there still isn't an agreement on the table between the administration and OU's chapter of the American Association of University Professors (OU AAUP). A mediator from the Michigan Employment Relations Commission will be joining bargaining sessions this week, but, with both sides far apart on key issues and the midnight Aug. 31 deadline looming, the start of classes Thursday is in jeopardy. So, how did we get here?

Well, this starts back in the summer of 2020 when due to the unprecedented circumstances of COVID-19, an agreement was reached to extend the prior contract one year to midnight Aug. 14, 2021. In what now seems an inconceivable show of unity between the administration and faculty, the two sides came together so OU could weather the storm.

"[Last year] we and the administration wanted to spend all of our energy doing the best we could in terms of figuring out how to make the university functional during [COVID-19]," President of the OU chapter of the AAUP and Associate Professor of History Karen Miller said. "We were satisfied with the old contract in the sense that there were things that we disagreed with, and I'm sure there were things that the administration wanted to change, but they really paled in comparison to the larger concern — the immediacy of [COVID-19]."

Fast forward to May 2021 when this current round of negotiations began. Discussions between the two sides started in an amicable enough way. A baseline for negotiations was established throughout June, with both sides agreeing to 18 articles from the prior contract being placed into the new agreement.

From that initial point of agreement, the two sides presented concerns on non-economic issues like faculty wanting updated language concerning pronouns and expansion of groups protected from discrimination. The recurring theme between the two sides during this period was the AAUP wanting increased specificity in the language of the agreement.

Events at the end of June and beginning of July showed the first sign of friction in negotiations. This was mainly due to the Board of Trustees (BOT) approving a new budget and increased tuition. OU AAUP specifically criticized a single-year expenditure in the budget of \$6,942,893 to replenish the university's reserve funds, saying "It is our understanding that the decision to return this full amount to reserves in a single year, rather than using it for current needs, constitutes just that, a choice made by Oakland."

The next major development occurred on July 22, when OU AAUP put their first major economic package on the table. Among other things, it brought forth specific proposals like a 3.5% increase in salaries, paid parental leave, increased research fellowships and better benefits for special lecturers.

The administration chose not to respond to this package until two weeks later on Aug. 5. That day proved to be the turning point in the tone of these negotiations, as the administration's package was so far removed from the union's that faculty were left shocked and insulted by the proposals that had been put on the table.

"There were things that the other side put across the table that we thought 'Oh, come on. This is silly,'" Miller said. "... As soon as we started talking about that stuff across the table, very quickly, people got angrier and angrier. You know, they're not saying anything about cutting retirement benefits for administrators. They're not talking about cutting retirement benefits for deans, they're talking about cutting retirement benefits for faculty. And that makes faculty angry just to bring that to the table. And especially because we still are fairly confident that we don't get paid, as well as people at other institutions."

The issue of "market adjustments," or making sure the salaries of OU professors are competitive with comparable institutions, has been a major issue for OU AAUP. The union provides anecdotal evidence that OU faculty are underpaid, and has been trying for years to bridge the salary gap between OU faculty and professors at comparable universities. The administration's proposal made it clear that no market adjustments would be made.

The aforementioned cut to benefits in the administration's proposal included a reduction from 14% to 10% in the university's contribution to faculty retirement plans, as well as removing dental and optical insurance and increasing the employee contribution to the health insurance plan from its current 5% to 10% in the first year of the new agreement, 15% in the second year of the agreement and 20% in the third year of the agreement -- while allowing the administration to make changes to healthcare plans not mandated by providers.

Among other things, the proposals also froze minimum salary at current levels for the length of the agreement, froze the amount allocated to research and travel for the length of the agreement, included no or minimal raises of \$500 for full-time faculty in the first year and then a 1% merit based increase for each subsequent year, changed the rate of pay for summer instruction from the salary based system to a flat per-credit-hour rate, eliminated faculty choice in online-instruction and gave the administration sole control over retirement

plan provider choices.

The administration has moved on some of these positions since their initial proposal, but the fact that they were proposed in the first place was not only detrimental to negotiations, but significantly damaging to the faculty's perception of university leadership. To fully understand faculty frustration and their position, a little context is in order.

For comparison's sake, let's take a look back at 2009. That year the last "worst faculty contract negotiations in OU's history" took place, when the start of the fall semester was pushed back over a week until an agreement was reached. Some important similarities between that year and now include tremendous economic hardship (2008 financial crisis then, and COVID-19 now) and administrators proposing cuts to faculty pay and benefits after acquiring raises for themselves (President Gary Russi's \$100,000 raise then, President Pescovitz's reinstating her salary to pre-COVID-19 numbers after taking a 20% cut in 2020 now.) The pivotal difference, and why the administration's proposed economic package was such a hard pill to swallow in 2021, is the way faculty viewed OU leadership at the time.

Going into the 2009 negotiations, the faculty and administration already had a contentious relationship. President Russi was not necessarily well-liked or respected by faculty. President Pescovitz on the other hand, was for the most part until that Aug. 5 proposal came across the table.

Going into negotiations in 2021, faculty and the administration had just wrapped up over a year of working closely together to navigate COVID-19. Faculty were not only cooperative, but many of them lauded the university's decision making and President Pescovitz's leadership. The Aug. 5 package ruined whatever good faith had been established during that school year, and was received by faculty as a slap in the face.

Adding to faculty discontent was the Aug. 12 announcement that Robert Schostak would be taking over as new Chair of the Board of Trustees. Schostak is a former Republican party chair and was one of the architects of the anti-union right to work legislation former MI Governor Rick Snyder passed in 2012. Speculation about his impact on these negotiations as Chair is a common talking point among faculty.

Shortly following the BOT electing Schostak, faculty members began going public, expressing frustrations on social media and through editorials published in *The Oakland Post*. Generally, those editorials argue the path the administration is taking during negotiations will hurt students, faculty and the long-term wellbeing of the university.

The administration on the other hand, has been tight-lipped for the duration of negotiations -- declining interviews while

negotiations are ongoing and providing only a few updates via the office of the provost. This lack of transparency has frustrated faculty, as the goals of the administration in these negotiations have been unclear.

"I have no idea what their endgame is," Miller said. "... We have made suggestions, in part designed to see what exactly they seem to want. Because it's hard to kind of figure some of it other than they want to cut our compensation package significantly."

And so we have arrived at this point in the negotiations where both the administration and faculty union are steadfast in their positions. The faculty argue they stepped up to the plate last year and deserved to be fairly compensated for those efforts. The administration justifies their conservative economic package by saying the pandemic has hurt OU's bottom line. The two sides remain far apart on key issues including faculty benefits, salaries, pay for special lecturers and processes for hiring/firing.

Naturally, the faculty are dubious of what the administration says. The question for many has become whether COVID-19 is the reason for the administration's hard stance in these negotiations or an excuse for it. Doubts about the administration's intentions were not in any way assuaged when, after agreeing to a six-day extension, they decided to spend five of those six days away from the bargaining table.

Using economic hardship, specifically COVID-19, to try and break a union is not an unprecedented occurrence. Faculty at Western Michigan and Wayne State are currently embattled in struggles similar to their OU counterparts. Almost as soon as the pandemic started, American universities began going after faculty tenure. Around the country, universities are ditching shared governance in favor of short term self-preservation.

The reality is, faculty don't have a ton of leverage in these situations. This reality is why OU AAUP members have been so outspoken about their belief that OU is damaging students now and the university long term. It's why they haven't been shy in their criticism that the administration's public message about appreciating professors and doing what's best for students has not matched their behavior at the bargaining table, or in sharing that they're mad as hell about what's going on.

2020 and 2021 have not been ordinary years for the campus community, the faculty or the administration, these negotiations reflect that. Whether it happens Thursday or in the coming weeks, a faculty contract will be signed and the fall semester will begin. That much we know. What is unclear is the impact of the damage that's been done to the relationship between the faculty and administration, and what long-lasting effects the outcome of these negotiations will have on the university.

Bargaining will resume Tuesday, Aug. 31.

Alumnus returns to OU staged reading of his play ‘Alabama Story’

D’JUANNA LESTER
Senior Reporter



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE OAKLAND PRESS

Kenneth Jones (pictured here) returned to OU to read his play, “Alabama Story.”

New York playwright Kenneth Jones returned to Oakland University for a staged reading of his play “Alabama Story” on Saturday, Aug. 21 on the lawn of the John Dodge House. The event was a fundraiser for OU’s Kresge Library.

The reading was the third time the play has been performed. The most recent version of the play will be published this coming fall.

Jones graduated from OU in 1986 with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication. “I took a lot of theatre and film history classes,” Jones said. “I wanted to be an entertainment writer.”

After graduating, he worked as a critical entertainment reviewer for The Oakland Press and The Detroit News before eventually moving to New York in 1998. He got into the creative writing process and received a call from Playbill.

Jones got a job working as a writer and editor at Playbill. Jones credits the connections he made during his time

at OU for helping him get internships and a start in the industry.

Jones was reading a story in the New York Times about Emily Reed, a librarian in Alabama, when he got the idea to write “Alabama Story.” The story centers on Reed who was persecuted by white segregationist senators because she wouldn’t take “The Rabbit’s Wedding” — a children’s book about the marriage of a black bunny and a white rabbit — off of a bookshelf.

The “Rabbit’s Wedding,” originally published in 1958, was written and illustrated by Garth Williams. The book was thought to be promoting racial integration and challenging segregation policies. Williams narrates the six-character play and the story — a mixture of both fact and fiction — is set in Montgomery in 1959.

Jones used several newspaper studies as research for the two-act play. The show was written during a very important time in U.S. history,

the Obama era. Jones points out that the show felt like something that was needed at the time.

The play has received critical acclaim since its dawn. It was nominated for the 2016 Steinberg/American Theatre Critics Association New Play Award and it was a finalist in the 2014 National Playwright Conference of the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center.

Jones says the part he is the most proud of with this play is “having people in tears talking about the passing of information — the first book that they read, the free flow of information.” He talks about how the responses to storytelling inspire him. Jones’ success from his love of the arts and the connections that he made at OU inspire students who want to follow similar paths. For information about the project, visit OU Genomics, Puerto Rican Genome Project or email Oleksyk: oleksyk@oakland.edu.

Students share thoughts on online learning, the good and bad

GABRIELLE ADBELMESSIH
Campus Editor

For the past 18 months, students and faculty have been grappling with the struggles of a COVID-19 impacted learning environment. I walked around the Oakland Center and asked students to share both their positive and negative experiences with online learning and attending college courses during a pandemic. Here are their responses.

Eli Russell, Marketing

Negative Experiences: “The worst was definitely statistics because it was rough doing online testing. I really disliked it. I normally do better if you can include the work instead of just the answer, and with online statistics, it was just [listing] the answer as all you could get credit for. I had a rough time rounding correctly, I guess. It was rough for me.”

Positive Experiences: HC 1000 was pretty fun. I liked that a lot. I made some friends. I actually have a close friend that I met in HC 1000, so that’s probably been the best experience.

Nikolas Vilotti, Economics

Negative Experiences: “The worst experience was overall technical

difficulties. I’m sure [there were difficulties] during the beginning of 2020 when there was the switch to online [learning] at OU, I wasn’t here at that time, but in the fall of 2020, there were a lot of technical difficulties, especially among professors who weren’t technologically enabled and things like that, so I think that was probably the worst part of it. It wasn’t too bad, but online learning for me wasn’t as bad as it was for other people.”

Positive Experiences:

“I had a communications class. I remember I had the class at 8 am. I remember waking up at 7:47 am and getting to class on time. That overall encapsulates my experiences from online learning.”

Jenna Ostranter, Elementary Education

Negative Experiences: “I really didn’t like it when professors weren’t hands-on. It was putting stuff out there and letting you figure it out on your own. It felt really lazy to me. It was one of those things where it’s like ‘Why am I paying to be in this class when I’m sitting in a room, and you’re not helping me, and you’re not answering emails and things that? That was really a struggle. That happened with a couple of

different classes.

Positive Experiences: “I’ve had great experiences too. My professor, Lauren Childs, was so great. She had us do a bunch of surveys before class. She would reach out. We had zooms—we even had one-on-one zooms to see our progress. It was a lot of step-by-steps with feedback that I appreciated. I ended up getting an A in that class, and that was really great.”

Elizabeth Muscott, Clinical and Diagnostic Sciences

Negative Experiences: I live four hours away from campus, and it’s really hard for me to even not be in the classroom because I am a person who needs to be in the classroom and have that experience with the teacher because it’s one thing to be in the

room with the teacher and hear the professor say stuff instead of a pre-recorded lecture. For me, that was really hard.

Positive Experiences: My professors were really engaging. They wanted you to succeed whether or not the classes were online. I had a biology teacher who had experience with teaching online classes previously, so that made it a lot easier. She had known what online teaching was like versus some professors who might not know how to work some things or how to do some things. It was confusing for them, so it had to be more confusing for the student who had never done online learning before for freshman who had no college experience prior, like me, that made it really hard.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SOPHIA HUME
Banners in the OC welcome students back to campus.

‘Don’t Breathe 2:’ Who is the bad guy?

BRIDGET JANIS
Managing Editor

Some companies can’t seem to grasp the concept of stand alone films. Even though “Don’t Breathe” left us with no unanswered questions, the production company still decided to move forward with presenting “Don’t Breathe 2.”

This film dives in eight years after the first one, moving forward with Norman Nordstrom, the blind man (Stephan Lang) as he continues out his days off the grid, far from society with his daughter, Phoenix (Madelyn Grace). From being homeschooled to very little encounters with going into town, Phoenix mostly only interacts with her father, spending her days in solitude while developing skills to survive on her own in case of another intrusion.

After a sequence of events, Norman’s house is once again broken into, and instead of the intruders looking for millions of dollars, they only came for one thing: Phoenix.

Taking a leap of faith, Norman had to leave his familiar home to go on the hunt to save Phoenix as he did care about her. Once Norman arrived on scene, just in time and for some reason

knowing exactly what to do once he gets in the basement of the building even though he has no idea what’s happening upstairs, the revenge killing trend begins again.

The film paints the characters in ways that leave them thinking, ‘who is actually the bad guy?’ While it may be obvious that Phoenix’s kidnappers are actual monsters, is what Norman did okay?

The directors try hard to present this new idea of Norman, one they want the audience to sympathize with and think of him as a hero. But at the end of the day, he is disturbing in every light you shine on him. It was a nice attempt.

Both of the “Don’t Breathe” films fall pretty average on my scale, as they were unique and had events that were both surprising and twisted, but they just both had a lot of dull parts. “Don’t Breathe 2” left the audience thinking once again: ‘how could someone do that to a young girl?’ As the first film that was a big thought racing through my head after discovering Norman had kept a woman in his basement to birth him a child. But this time it was a completely different scenario that had me questioning the character’s morals.

Nowadays, it is hard for me to justify spending money on seeing movies and



PHOTO COURTESY OF BOWTIECINEMAS.COM

Norman (Stephan Lang) and his daughter Phoenix (Madelyn Grace) practicing their survival skills.

getting popcorn at the theater, but I did for this one. It wasn’t actually worth buying a medium popcorn and a large slurpee for, but it did have entertaining elements, despite its flawed plot at moments.

I will say, it was better than the first one, since we got to move outside his prison of a home and see more action between Norman and his intruders.

I originally had no expectations for this film as I didn’t even see a trailer. It was a good sequel if you compare it to the first one, but on a larger scale, the film won’t rank well as a horror movie favorite for me.

At least this time, in the end everyone got what they deserved.

Rating: 2.3/5 stars

A loss of focus: United States’ missteps in Afghanistan

TANNER TRAFELET
Senior Reporter

The United States’ (U.S.) focus on the security needs of Afghanistan’s national level government and lack of military support for the more influential, decentralized local Afghan governmental structure explains the rapid conquest of the Taliban. Put simply, there was — and likely still is — a severe disconnect with the nation-building aspirations of the U.S.’ foreign policy behemoth and the military and political realities on the ground in Afghanistan.

Power centralization was a large aspect of the Afghan presidential system, where the national government based in Kabul attempted to rule through giving itself as much power as possible. This process occurred regardless of its ability to effectively exercise that power throughout Afghanistan — through either exerting a state monopoly on violence, or being able to stay in political power without the constant military support and presence of a foreign country (i.e. the U.S.).

U.S. foreign policy towards Afghanistan — dating back to the Soviet Union’s 1979 invasion during the Ronald Reagan administration — has largely been centered around making the Afghan government and military look and function like their U.S. counterparts. The idea is the success enjoyed by the U.S. in becoming the most powerful nation-state that the world has ever seen, in addition to being the most politically and economically prosperous and tolerant nation in human history, would provide a functional blueprint for rebuilding the Afghan state.

Initial U.S. intervention in Afghanistan, which began



PHOTO COURTESY OF APNEWS.COM

Taliban fighters raise their flag at the Ghazni provincial governor’s house. They took control of the Afghan presidential palace two weeks before the U.S. finished withdrawing its troops.

October 7, 2001, was undertaken with the purpose of removing the Taliban government from existence and further rescinding the ability of terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda from using Afghanistan as a staging base to engage in terrorism. This goal was accomplished with the removal of the Taliban from political governance on December 9, 2001. However, after this point, the U.S. continued occupying Afghanistan in further attempts to inflict losses on the Taliban and build up the governing capacity of the newly installed Karzai administration.

The U.S. erred in disregarding the complex locally-based system of ethnic politics and power-brokering that had persevered regimes installed by the Soviets and the Taliban. The recent failure of the Afghan military to present any level of substantial resistance to Taliban offensives represents a glaring testimony to the lack of support for the Kabul-based national government.

Afghanistan’s military forces were better equipped, better trained and vastly outnumbered the Taliban insurgency, yet they surrendered in a matter of weeks. A most sensible explanation of this would be that the ideals impressed by the U.S. in coordination with its political and military aid to Afghanistan were not valued enough to fight and die for.

Now this is not to claim that Afghans do not value these ideas, if recent chaos at Hamid Karzai International Airport did not provide clear enough evidence already of this. I argue, rather, these ideas were not locally grown using the most effective and influential mechanisms of Afghanistan’s ethnically fragmented society, where people value local governance and familial and social ties over a far-away government in Kabul that cannot consistently protect them from the Taliban’s violence.

Regardless of whether you support Joe Biden’s decision to evacuate, the power vacuum left by the U.S.’ exit will be filled by another country. The People’s Republic of China has long stood ready to recognize a Taliban regime, albeit in a transactional nature centered on the extraction of Afghanistan’s mineral and realization of regional security concerns regarding India. Russia is another likely candidate to fill the vacuum, given its recent roles as negotiator and powerbroker in attempting to increase its leverage with the Taliban.

Men's basketball releases non-conference

MATTHEW SCHEIDEL

Sports Editor

The Oakland University Men's Basketball program has announced its non-conference schedule for the 2021-22 season, featuring four matchups against NCAA tournament teams from last season and a multi-team exempt event (MTE).

The team will start their season Nov. 9 at West Virginia, before traveling to Stillwater, OK to take on Oklahoma State. The two teams met last season as well, ending in a 84-71 victory for the Cowboys.

The Golden Grizzlies first and only true home game in non-conference play will be Nov. 17 against Toledo. Head Coach Greg Kampe said the primary reason for having only one true home game was the Horizon League increased the number of conference games to 22.

"With 11 non-league games we would have had at least one, maybe two more home games," Kampe said. "We would have probably had Eastern Michigan on the schedule and I would have tried to make that at [home] this year, and then we would have had Rochester College or somebody like that."

Two days following their home opener, the team will travel to Tuscaloosa to play the Alabama Crimson Tide, who

advanced to the Sweet 16 in the NCAA tournament a year ago. Kampe said the primary reason they were scheduled is because they were "willing to pay."

"A lot of schools weren't willing to pay this year because of COVID-19," Kampe said. "Alabama was willing to pay the going rate. A lot of schools this year slashed guaranteed money by 25%. Instead of \$90,000 they're paying \$60,000, [for example]."

The Gulf Coast Showcase takes place Nov. 22-24 in Estero, FL. The Golden Grizzlies open the eight-team tournament against Vermont on Monday, Nov. 22, at 1:30 p.m.

Kampe said there are "a lot of good mid-major teams" in that tournament.

"Vermont's been one of the top mid-major teams in the last five, six years," Kampe said. "They've been ranked in the top five to 10 of the college insider mid major poll yearly for probably five years. So that was not a great draw for us to get. Then Evansville is in the Missouri Valley, and Rice [is] in Conference USA. We will play the winner or loser of that game."

On Dec. 7, the Grizzlies will take on Kampe's alma mater, Bowling Green. He said there "isn't as much excitement as there was 20 years ago" to play his alma mater.

"It's still my school that I went to and there's still a lot of pride in that



PHOTO COURTESY OF OU COMMUNICATIONS

Men's basketball's non-conference schedule has been released

and there's still a lot of friends there," Kampe said. "Right now it's not that big of a deal because it's the middle of summer but I'm sure come December it'll mean a lot more."

The team will wrap up non-conference play on Dec. 21 against Michigan State at Little Caesars Arena. This is the tenth consecutive year the Golden Grizzlies will match up with Tom Izzo's squad.

"Tom and I, our careers have kind of mirrored each other in that we've been at

one place a long time, we're [both from Michigan], [and] basketball in the state means a lot for both of us," Kampe said. "I think that we're a good game for them because he knows that we're gonna come after them and do some things and it's a big game for us and to get a game in like that before they go into league play probably helps them."

This season will mark Kampe's 38th as the Head Coach of the Golden Grizzlies.

Edward Rowe and Bhavneet Sohal to join men's golf team

CHRISTIAN TATE

Sports Reporter

The Golden Grizzlies Men's Golf team has bolstered its ranks with two new signings coming to the team. Freshmen recruits Edward Rowe and Bhavneet Sohal have committed to and signed onto the team, and Head Coach Nick Pumford couldn't be happier about it.

"I'm excited to add our new freshman to our already competitive roster, they're going to come in hungry to compete right away which will only make our team stronger," Pumford said in a press release. "They all have great international resumes so they will feel comfortable coming in and competing at a national level."

A native of Northern Ireland, Rowe is the young upstart winner of the Ulster Senior Cup, the Fred Daly All Ireland Champion and comes from Banbridge Academy. He is set to make a big splash this season and set the league on fire.

Hills International College's Bhavneet Sohal, a Queensland native, joins the team while being ranked as the 1,892nd best player in the world,

according to the Official World Golf Rankings. He is sure to take his game to even further heights while wearing the black and gold.

The Official World Golf Rankings takes professional golf players into account and Sohal is already ranking among the best in the world as a freshman in college. He's qualified for the 2020 Queensland Open, and has even finished the Gary Player Junior Classic in fourth place.

Rowe is no slouch either, having his fair share of wins and trophies to his name as well. They join an already competitive Golden Grizzlies team. Horizon League Player of the Year and graduate student athlete, Thomas Giroux, the second individual champion in program history, is returning to the golf team for his fifth year of NCAA eligibility and is hoping to lead the team to unparalleled success this season.

These acquisitions helped the team get younger, with most of its core being of senior status. Alongside the previously mentioned graduate Giroux, senior players Owen Tucci, Colin Sikkenga, Andrew Lack, and Anthony Comito could very well be playing in

their last season for the Golden Grizzlies, so it makes sense that Coach Pumford is looking to get more young guys into the locker room.

Although it's very unlikely given their already stellar international pedigree, it is still possible we won't see Rowe and Sohal really come into their own until next year or even later. The guidance and stability given to the team by their returning seniors could be crucial to their success.

The Men's Golf team has already seen its fair share of success this year. They won the Horizon League Championship with Thomas Giroux taking first place, and Oakland finished



PHOTO TAKEN BY JOSE JUAREZ.

Men's golf Head Coach Nick Pumford looking on at his team.

13th place in the NCAA Regional and they also swept the Men's Golf Horizon League awards. Rowe and Sohal will surely bolster their success for the upcoming season.

When they start the season, they'll be playing in the Earl Yestingmeir Invitational against Ball State University over two days.

Women's Soccer team suffers crushing defeat

CHRISTIAN TATE
Sports Reporter

The Golden Grizzlies women's soccer team put in a great effort against a very solid team — the DePaul Blue Demons — but came up short in a stinging 1-0 loss on Thursday.

Despite DePaul only having control of the ball for 47% of the game, the combination of their fast-paced, breakneck speed-driven offense and their suffocating, stifling defense seemed to just overwhelm the Grizzlies.

Nothing was able to get past DePaul's defense once the Grizzlies were able to get the ball past midfield — the Golden Grizzlies were only able to get one shot on goal during the entire first half of the game. It almost felt like the Blue Demons would give a little slack to the Grizzlies offense, then clamp down and become increasingly aggressive once they felt the Grizzlies had made it too far into their territory.

Nearly everything was going the Blue Demons way on both sides of the ball — except for the tangible scoring — as both teams put on a defensive showcase out on the pitch and tried to snuff out the offensive flashes and

sparks where they could.

Goalie Noëmi Stadelmann was the definitive star of the night on the pitch with six individual saves, compared to DePaul's Mollie Eriksson's one save. As a fan watching the game, some of Stadelmann's saves during her 90 minutes on the pitch were truly daring and breathtaking. Without her standing guard in the goal, the score could've gotten even higher with how dominant DePaul was playing on offense. The score, however, was kept at 0-0 for an entire half, despite DePaul getting 15 shots on goal in the first half.

The one goal that did get past Stadelmann, however, was scored by the Blue Demons' Morgan Turner, a short time into the second half of the match. The energetic, unassisted goal — which would turn out to be the game-sealing score — was followed by a defensive showcase being put on by the Blue Demons as they desperately tried to keep the game from going into overtime.

As good as their defensive efforts were, there were quite a number of fouls called during both halves of the game on both sides. DePaul ended the night with 15 fouls, and 11 of those were called in the first half. Oakland played with a lot



PHOTO TAKEN BY MAGGIE WILLARD
OU defending from opposing team on Aug. 26, 2021

more restraint, only notching five fouls, with the bulk of them (three) coming in the second half. Four yellow cards were given out, two for each team, with three of them (both of the Golden Grizzlies' cards and only one of the Blue Demons') coming in the second half.

Overall, this game was a showcase for

how good the Blue Demons' can truly be defensively and how that can translate into offensive success. Unfortunately, Head Coach Juan Pablo Favero couldn't be reached for comment after the game.

The next home outing for the Grizzlies will be against the Toledo Rockets on Thursday, Sept. 2 at 7 p.m.

NOW HIRING: SPORTS REPORTER



- MUST have a basic understanding of AP Style
- MUST write two stories per week
- ATTEND weekly budget meetings to pitch story ideas
- COMMUNICATE with sports editor effectively

Send resume, cover letter, and three writing samples to
EDITOR@OAKLANDPOSTONLINE.COM.

FDA-Approved Back-to-School Tips for Dummies

TORI COKER
Marketing Director

LAUREN REID
Content Editor

Another summer's come and gone, and you know what that means – school is back in session. (Yes, it also means Halloween's next month, which is way more exciting – but we're here to talk about something else right now, okay?)

Whether you're new to Oakland University or a returning student this fall, you can never be too prepared for everything a semester can throw your way. Thus, we're here to offer you six solid tips to get you through these next 15 weeks in one piece.

1) Any space is a quiet study space with the right attitude.

The booths across from Pioneer Food Court? Always vacant! You could hear a pin drop. The tables in Pawley Hall right above the daycare? The little ones will surely quiet down if you just ask nicely — there's no group more courteous than an army of

toddlers. Right outside Wilson Hall? You say noisy construction, I say studying ASMR. The campus is truly your oyster.

2) Short on time? Don't be afraid to skip that shower. Or quit 'em altogether.

Take a page out of the current celebrity handbook and smell a little. Your classmates might not thank you, but your class grades surely will! After all, if Jake Gyllenhaal can forego showers and still inspire an entire Taylor Swift album, you can, too.

3) Go big or go home with the class icebreakers.

If your professor asks for two truths and a lie, you laugh and politely decline. That's child's play. Come with your own "get to know me" PowerPoint in tow, whether they ask you to or not. Be the person that brings "the wave" from the sports stadium to the classroom.

Perform the "Questions I Get Asked" TikTok dance – you know, with the fists and the claps and the

pointing and the EDM – right then and there. You've got to establish yourself as the main character at first impression – believe me, your peers the supporting cast will appreciate it.

4) To save money, buy all your food at Plum Market.

Can't afford to drop seven precious dollars on a caprese sandwich? Well, you're in luck. Going to Plum Market everyday is the only way to alleviate all your financial burdens. This Oakland Center staple is literally so cheap — your bank account will practically worship you.

5) Wreak havoc on the Kresge Library quiet floor 24-7.

Quiet floor? Nah. If you're here to make friends, go absolutely WILD on the quiet floor. Trust me, people will respect and admire you for it. Bring a cowbell and just obliterate that thing until your hand is numb. You'll be the shining star of every Snapchat private story. There's undoubtedly no better way to be liked — students will be asking for autographs within minutes.

6) Talk exclusively about high school to everyone.

Remember the student-section, guys? That was so vibey — Friday Night Lights FOREVER! Oh, and remember prom? The best night of my life, xoxo!! Can't forget homecoming. Homecoming was always SO magical for me. When the teachers stood on bleachers shining flashlights into the crowd to monitor the choice of student dance stylings?! Love!!

Everyone wants to hear about your high school experience in immense detail, so make sure you share it with them. Not if you're me (Lauren), though. I'm going to take a guess and say eating pretzels in the bathroom everyday isn't particularly thrilling. Not saying I did that, but not saying I didn't.

If there's one surefire way to successfully attend OU, then we've outlined it for you here. Now, get vaccinated (!!), follow these tips and feel free to thank us later (we accept thanks in the form of one of those ultra-cheap meals from Plum Market, by the way).

FALL 2021 PAYMENT DUE DATE

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY'S FALL PAYMENT DUE DATE: AUGUST 15, 2021.

Students who do not pay their balances in full or sign-up for a payment plan (and make the required installment(s)) may be dropped from classes and University housing (if applicable), and may be subject to late payment penalties and registration holds.

If you have questions or are experiencing circumstances that may prevent you from paying your account balance, please contact Student Financial Services at (248) 370-2550. We are ready to support you and help with your financial aid and billing options.

Payment
Due

LEARN how to avoid cancellation (drop) at oakland.edu/financialservices/payments-refunds/payments-cancellation