

THE OAKLAND POST

Oakland University's Independent Student Newspaper

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Starting off safely

Students living on campus were required to take a COVID-19 test before returning



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PHOTO OF THE WEEK



ALUM MAKING MOVES Shreyas Gavit was part of a team that won the Salesforce Career Journey, a national competition that tasks students with solving the problems of fictional online retailers. His team worked to improve the onboarding and hiring processes.
PHOTO / OAKLAND UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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POLL OF THE WEEK

WHAT IS YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?

- A) LOSE THE QUARANTINE WEIGHT
- B) CLEAN OUT MY CAVE
- C) FINALLY MASTER ZOOM UNIVERSITY
- D) TAKE SOME "ME" TIME

LAST ISSUE'S POLL

WHAT ARE YOUR HOLIDAY PLANS

38%

A) SIT AT HOME

10%

B) VIRTUAL CELEBRATIONS!

36%

C) HANG WITH FAMILY, SAFELY!

16%

D) WHAT DAY IS IT?

CAMPUS

Letter from the Editor: Not protestors, terrorists

MICHAEL PEARCE
Editor-in-Chief



It's a shame how this year kicked off — with terrorists raiding a government building to attempt a coup because their supreme overlord can't handle losing.

After months of whining, spamming Twitter with lies and riling up some dangerous people, the 45th president of the United States Donald Trump finally had years of stoking division and lying to the American people catch up with him.

What happened on Jan. 6 is pure and simple: terrorism. These "patriots" (as they call themselves)

raided a federal building to stop the democratic process.

The harsh reality of this embarrassing act is that Trump enabled this the whole way. On Dec. 30, he tweeted "JANUARY 6, SEE YOU IN DC!"

If anyone can read that and interpret it as anything other than inciting a riot, they are beyond saving.

This is how the Trump presidency will end — inciting an attempted coup and getting banned from Twitter for his fascist activity. This is the legacy he will leave behind as the 45th president, and the worst part is his cronies will never see the true evil behind the man.

This university had a tremendous response to these acts — Student Congress and President Pescovitz releasing statements condemning this kind of activity. It's refreshing to see so many people at Oakland call this point in history what it is — terrorism.

Hopefully, this horrendous act — which has left five people dead — can become a learning experience for the future leaders of this country. This act not only spits in the face of democracy, but it's also an extreme example of white privilege.

The police officers at the scene let the armed rioters in the building. One officer even took a selfie with a rioter. They did not use excessive force as seen in numerous cases with unarmed Black people.

These people, who had violent intentions, were simply allowed to walk right into the Capitol, for no other reason than the color of their skin and their ideologies.

Black children have been gunned down in the street for holding much less than what these John McClane wannabes brought into the Capitol. Rioters with zip-ties, rope and weapons were allowed to waltz right into a government building with intentions to

harm government officials for simply following the democratic process.

The lack of response from the D.C. police is something that should shake even the staunchest Trump voters. I challenge anyone who disagrees that this raid crossed the line to look in the mirror, and truly reflect on why they can't accept the reality of white supremacy and white privilege in the United States' legal system.

Not only is the behavior of the D.C. police offensive to any Black person who has been forced to live in fear of law enforcement for their entire lives, but it's also offensive to anyone of Middle Eastern descent and the Jewish faith.

Many rioters on Jan. 6 had anti-semitic t-shirts, including (but not limited to) phrases such as "6MWE," meaning the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust was "not enough." Confederate flags flew in the Capitol, and Nazi paraphernalia littered the sidewalks of what once was a city that represented freedom.

For almost 20 years now since Sept. 11, 2001, people of Middle Eastern descent have lived in fear of persecution, enduring remarks about "terrorism" simply based on their religion, skin color and even clothing. The fact that the same people who would harass a woman wearing a hijab can commit terrorist acts with such glee and joy in their eyes is despicable.

What happened on Jan. 6 was a despicable display of our country's broken system. To all those Golden Grizzlies who are people of color, people of various religious beliefs or people of the LGBTQIA+ community, The Oakland Post stands with you as a voice against racism, fascism and white supremacy.

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Immunization study conducted with Beaumont Hospital

BRIDGET JANIS
Staff Reporter

With COVID-19 being the focus of so many studies, some Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine faculty members stepped up to help in an immune study at Beaumont Hospital.

The study began last March, when COVID-19 first started spreading in Michigan. The first blood drawn to test for COVID-19 and antibodies took place mid-April. This process had to be quick, although extensive. There were 370 people helping the process.

When Beaumont started its immune study, it was the largest of its kind. Beaumont took a different approach with its study. Instead of studying who's being infected — the study monitored what antibodies people had in their blood.

At the time, Beaumont had just gotten new equipment that was going to help do large scale serology testing. This would allow them to look for antibodies.

Rami Homayouni, professor of foundational medical studies, and a data analysis team, helped make sure that all the data being received was clean. Homayouni was able to provide information on what was actually being seen with the data.

"To carry out a study and make meaningful conclusions from it, you have to make sure that the data is valid and correct," Homayouni said.

The study also contained a questionnaire, one question was about masking. It allowed people that were affected by COVID-19 to answer if they were wearing a mask, and if so what kind.

The study was opened up to anyone that worked at Beaumont, there were about

22,000 people that got tested several times to see if they developed antibodies.

"We found that there was a fair number of people who did... Some of them knew that they had COVID, others did not," said Matthew Sims, director of infectious diseases research at Beaumont Health and professor of internal medicine and biomedical sciences at OU. "So we had over 700 people who we found that had asymptomatic COVID[-19]."

Another important finding of the study was that nurses were more likely to test positive, and since the study was being taken at Beaumont, they were able to keep track of the spread better within their own workplace.

"Of course, the frontline workers are most at risk of getting infected because they are face to face with patients," Homayouni said.

Masks were proven to play a significant role in protecting people. If you don't wear a mask, you're more likely to contract COVID-19. If you wear a surgical mask, you're even less likely to get it, and if you wear a N95 mask, you're least likely to get it. Even if you do contract COVID-19 with an N95, you're more likely to be asymptomatic. Also, people with more exposure were more likely to get it.

"I'm much more afraid of the person I don't know has COVID[-19] than the person I do know has COVID[-19]," Sims said. "If I know they have COVID[-19] I can take precautions, I can be sure to wear the right kind of mask and everything."

Overall, the study showed that a lot of what people are currently doing, wearing masks and social distancing, is working. The study will continue to add data pertaining to the COVID vaccine as well.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BEAUMONT.ORG



Information courtesy of Oakland University
and the Center for Disease Control.

COVID-19 BEST PRACTICES

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
3. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
4. Stay home when you are sick.
5. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue. Immediately throw tissues away.
6. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects or surfaces.
7. Keep all age recommended vaccines up to date including annual flu vaccine.

Community music offers discounted music lessons

DEAN VAGLIA
Staff Reporter

If you have been waiting to learn to play an instrument, now is the time to do it.

Oakland University Community Music is offering a special discount on virtual music lessons through the month of January. The offer is for five 30-minute lessons for \$125, allowing students a chance to try out music lessons without having to pay the regular price, which can be upward of \$400.

“Usually we run 13-week semesters ... but we are trying to help people out a bit since we know the finances are difficult for a lot of people and a long-term schedule commitment is hard,” OU Community Music Director Elizabeth Medvinsky said.

Like the program’s regular classes, the discounted classes are open to anyone. OU Community Music is willing to accommodate students’ financial needs, if they want to take lessons, but might not be able to pay.

“We offer payment plans — especially to undergrads— if needed,” Medvinsky said. “We are always willing to talk to people about financial assistance if they need it.”

The online classes are a consequence of having to adapt to the COVID-19 world, which the program has been doing since March of last year.

Lessons now take place over Zoom, Skype, FaceTime or whichever platform students find the most comfortable to work with.

“We did have a very small sprinkling of students who tried to come back for lessons in the fall,” Medvinsky said. “We decided it was better online.”

Now in its 18th year, OU Community Music is OU’s



PHOTO COURTESY OF OU COMMUNITY MUSIC

way to offer music lessons without the need to pay for course credit. Courses are offered to whoever wishes to take them and students range from elementary school-aged beginners to adults and senior citizens looking to pick up an instrument.

Before COVID-19 about 200 students per week came to Varner Hall to take lessons, classes and camps put on by OU Community Music.

Current OU students who are not in a School of Music, Theatre and Dance major or do not qualify for any SMTD courses are welcome to take OU Community Music classes.

Most classes took place on the second or third floor of Varner Hall, the latter previously serving as the location for Stephanie Thompson’s piano classes. But aside from the change of venues, not much about teaching has changed for Thompson.

“It is actually more similar than different,” Thompson said. “We still have the back and forth banter and we still have our goal planning and assessment. The big difference is not being able to play live music together, so not being able to play duets. If I want them to play along with something it has to be a pre-recorded backing track . . . that I could listen to them playing along to.”

Children’s music education has always been a part of OU Community Music’s curriculum, and the realities of life under COVID-19 have led them to expand their youth offerings.

“We have started adding some group online classes for youths,” Medvinsky said. “There are varying levels of music education kids are getting right now depending on their district and depending on if they were in person or virtual learning, so we wanted to offer some more options.”

For further information about OU Community Music, visit <https://oakland.edu/smted/community-music-engagement/communitymusic/>. To schedule classes, email communitymusic@oakland.edu for details.

SEHS receives perfect accreditation score

RACHEL YIM
Staff Reporter

Oakland University’s School of Education and Human Services (SEHS) recently received a perfect score on its accreditation report from the council for the accreditation of educator preparation (CAEP).

The CAEP is a professional accreditor, whose council determines the accreditation status of educator preparation providers. At the fall 2020 meeting, the council made its final decision. It awarded OU the highest ratings on all assessment criteria, including candidate quality, recruitment and selectivity; clinical partnerships and practice; content and pedagogical knowledge; program impact; and provider quality, continuous improvement and capacity.

After the SEHS received feedback from a team of teacher educators from around the nation on its self-study report in March, a virtual visit was conducted. The visit involved coordinating over 100 people and about 20 online meetings over a three-day period.

“The visit was a tremendous success,” Jon Margerum-Leys, dean of the SEHS, said. “For us, [this result] is an

affirmation by a group of our peers – the visit team and accreditation council – that what we are doing meets a very high standard. That’s gratifying, of course.”

According to Margerum-Leys, this accreditation process has high stakes because teacher preparation programs in Michigan are required by the Michigan Department of Education to be accredited.

Through accreditation, each institution is assured of improvement of internal policies, processes and procedures for transparency, accountability, high quality program and service. When an institution or specialized program is accredited, it has “demonstrated meeting the standards set by organizations representing the academic community, professionals and other stakeholders,” according to the CAEP.

This also means that OU will continue to be able to grant teaching licenses to its graduates and marks OU as one of the institutions with the strongest education and human service programs.

Margerum-Leys noted that the people and the relationships between them is the bottom line.

“We have wonderful students who have persevered in a time of pandemic — outstanding faculty, all of

whom have been teachers, great staff who are dedicated to the SEHS and alumni of the program who work as educators and school administrators and can be a bridge between OU and the P-12 schools,” he said.

Proven by the CAEP as one of the strongest education programs in the country, the SEHS will be introducing an updated teacher preparation program that will start in the fall of 2021.

This program has experiences in schools built in from start to finish, updated curriculum that is relevant to Michigan’s education landscape. The program will also be streamlined, meaning that they cut the number of credits and the amount of time required, without sacrificing quality.

“That will save valuable time and money for our students, and will allow us to respond more quickly to the shortage of teachers here in Michigan,” Margerum Leys said.

Continuing with its 60-year-long history at OU, the SEHS strives to build stronger programs each year to guarantee student success, scholarship, community engagement, diversity and equity.

To learn more about what the SEHS offers, visit its website on oakland.edu.

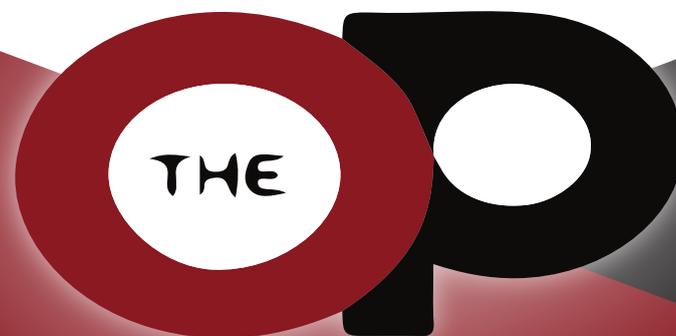
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FEATURES

The lifelong aquarist, Amanda Murray

DEAN VAGLIA
Staff Reporter

Amanda Murray has always found the natural world fascinating. As a child, Murray went around with her wagon collecting insects and fishing with her father at a cottage north of Traverse City. She enjoyed the time spent casting lures and lines into the lake, but not for the thrill of the catch.

“I love getting to see the fish [and] interact with the fish,” Murray said.

As an aquarist at the Belle Isle Aquarium, the Oakland University graduate now gets to work with all the fish she could ever dream of.

Murray’s road to working as an aquarist began with her mother, who raised angelfish and encouraged Murray’s curiosity toward nature. When it came time to choose a college, Oakland University’s biology program stood out as the best fit for her.

Her interest in biology was furthered by working with Dr. George Gamboa, who she worked with while pursuing both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees.

“He is probably the strongest influence on me,” Murray said. “He is such a great guy, and I learned so much from him and the classes I took. He worked with me doing research and made sure that I had everything I needed for that.”

After graduating with a bachelor’s in biology and a focus on ecology and animal behavior for her master’s, Murray worked as an educator at the Michigan Science Center for several years. The science center allowed Murray to develop her skills working with children and with informal education, as well as allowing her to use other sciences she picked up through her studies like physics and chemistry.

But while she enjoyed working at the science center, Murray’s heart was always

in biology. When a job opened up at the Belle Isle Aquarium, Murray did not hesitate to apply.

“I wanted to work with animals in any capacity,” Murray said. “I applied for [the aquarium job] not having a ton of specific fish experience, but having a lot of experience in behavior in animals and a lot of knowledge of that.”

At the aquarium, Murray works with fish from all over the world, from lungfish from Africa to the alligator gar of North America. Most of the fish are freshwater, though some in the collection are saltwater fish.

“My favorite fish at the aquarium are the Great Lakes fish because I grew up with them,” Murray said.

An average day consists of checking up on the fish and the tanks, making sure fish are fed, and generally maintaining the health of the fish and cleanliness of the tanks. Visitors were only allowed in on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays before COVID-19, and the lack of visitors during the pandemic has allowed the aquarium to expand and redecorate the tanks.

One aspect of the job that keeps work interesting are the various personalities of the fish, especially between individuals of the same species.

“We have two largemouth bass here and they are completely different in the way they act,” Murray said. “One of them is very friendly, he likes to come up and take food away from you, and the other one is aloof and stays out of the way.”

To OU students unsure about what to do after graduation, Murray says to find a job doing what you love.

“Do internships or volunteer,” she says. “If you want to be an aquarist, work at a pet store and get that experience. Having the education is a great foundation for everything, but you want to find the experience in what you want to do.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF OUMAG
Murray posing for a photo in front of a tank at the Belle Isle Aquarium, where she currently works. She turned her lifelong love of fish into a career.



PHOTO COURTESY OF OUMAG
Murray cleaning a tank at the Belle Isle Aquarium.

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The Townsend family: the golden genes

Story by Michael Pearce // Photos courtesy of GoldenGrizzlies.com // Design by Meg Speaks

For Trey Townsend, coming to Oakland University to play basketball was always a goal.

“In all honesty, I’ve always wanted to go to Oakland,” Townsend said in a self-authored article on GoldenGrizzlies.com. “It goes all the way back to when I was just a little runt with a basketball in my hands. I guess you could say, it’s in the genes.”

Both of his parents played basketball at Oakland. His father Skip played under Head Coach Greg Kampe, who still leads the men’s basketball program in 2021.

“Skip was a pure center, he was 6’8” and worked in the post, where Trey works more on the perimeter,” Kampe said.

For most of high school, Trey would play multiple positions, whatever the team needed. He mostly stuck with playing the two guard, small forward or power forward position.

According to Trey, it was a “funny” turn of events that he wound up playing the same position as his dad.

The Golden Grizzly ties run even deeper than just Trey’s parents. His brother Zach is committed to playing for Oakland University’s men’s soccer team, after he graduates high school in the spring.

“We recruited Zach because he stands for everything we look for in an Oakland soccer player, and he most importantly bleeds black and gold,” Head Coach Eric Pogue said via email. “We love that Zach really wanted to come to Oakland and create his own chapter in the Townsend family legacy at Oakland University, this one on the soccer pitch.”

Trey played basketball in the area, at Oxford High School, where Zach still plays soccer. During his senior year, he was invited to watch Oakland vs. Rochester, where Kampe made him an official offer.

After shortly mulling his offers, Trey decided to play for the team he had been watching since he was a toddler.

“It was quite a no-brainer,” Trey said. “I had always wanted to play basketball here, so the moment I realized that it was a real possibility was when I felt like I could compete here and play at the division I level.”

Trey earned minutes quickly at the beginning of the season. Kampe said his rebounding stuck out the most.

“Trey and [Dan] Oladapo are our two best rebounders,” Kampe said. “He earned those minutes.”

Not only did he earn minutes, he earned a starting spot. Fourteen games into the season, Trey has become

a bonafide starter. He has started every game for the Golden Grizzlies.

Regarding his own growth, Trey believes he’s improved the most physically. As an undersized forward with guard-like skills, he has been trying to bulk up to improve his inside game.

“I’ve grown the most physically,” he said. “I’ve done a lot more weight training, my diet has changed and I’ve just been eating a lot more and getting bigger to compete at this level.”

Trey and Zach are both 6-feet-5-inches tall, and at one point, Trey felt Zach might stick with basketball.

“I was kind of hoping that he would stick with basketball and then maybe play basketball here, because I’m a very family-oriented guy,” Trey said. “Having him on campus will be cool, just to see him progress and watch his games whenever they’re here.”

Trey is already gaining league-wide attention on the basketball court, and like his brother, Pogue believes Zach has the potential to gain the same attention on the pitch.

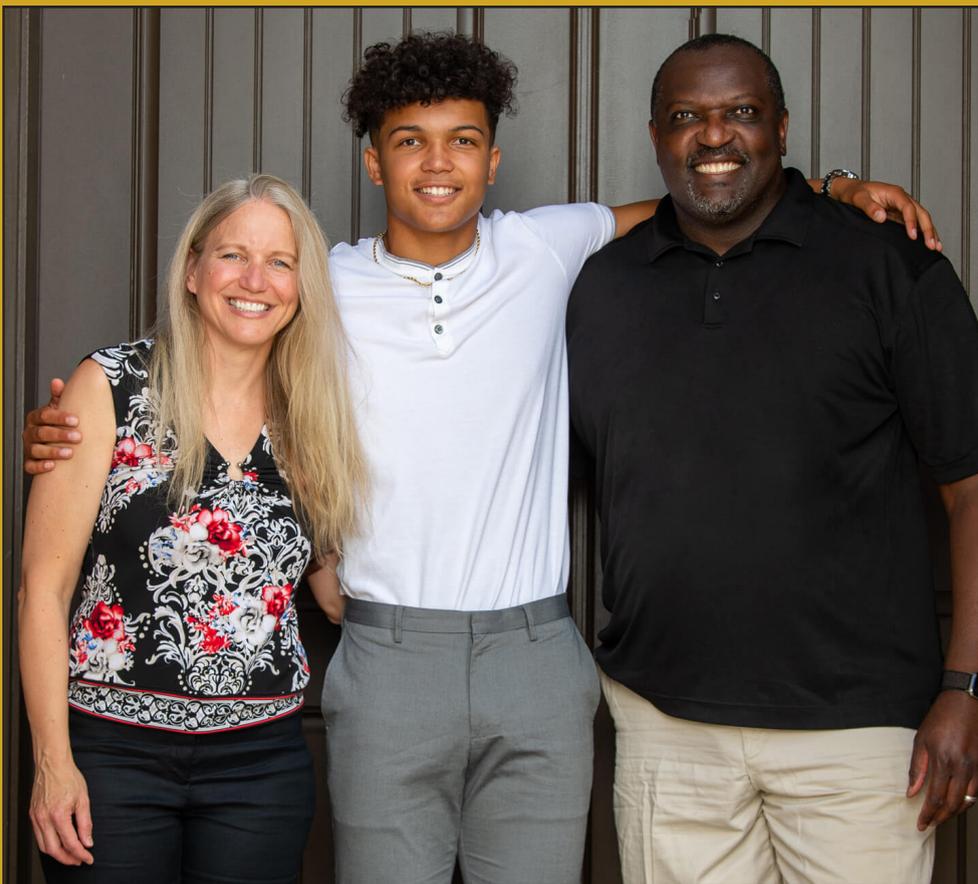
“Zach has all the tangible and intangible qualities to be not only an all-league selection one day, but receive many other accolades regionally and nationally when he reaches his full potential through his hard work, effort and dedication,” Pogue said via email.

Both Kampe and Pogue noted the ease in recruiting someone who already is familiar with Oakland and has a desire to wear the black and gold.

“When we were doing research on Zach — talking to his basketball coach, his school counselor, his strength coach, his teachers, his high school soccer coaches and his club soccer coaches — they all said the same thing, ‘great kid, tremendous student, world class family, immense potential, humble & hungry,’” Pogue said. “That says it all, we are very excited to see Zach suit up in Oakland black & gold this fall”

With two months remaining before the Horizon League tournament, Trey is focused on improving his physicality and achieving his personal goals, which coincides with team success.

“I just want to help the team as much as I can in any way,” he said. “Then, we’ll see where that leads to — maybe some accolades or something, but just helping the team out in any way I could is my main goal individually.”



“In all honesty, I’ve always wanted to go to Oakland,” Trey Townsend said in his article. “It goes all the way back to when I was just a little runt with a basketball in my hands. I guess you could say, it’s in the genes.”



Both Trey and his father Skip (left) played under Kampe while at Oakland University. Trey’s mom Nicole (below) also played basketball at OU in the late 80s. With Trey’s younger brother Zach (above) OU bound, the family will have four Golden Grizzlies in 2021.



Doctor's COVID-19 vaccine review and recommendation to others

Dr. Jones felt “relieved” when he received a COVID-19 vaccine

EMILY MORRIS

Managing Editor

After nearly a year of pandemic living, many Michigan residents are faced with the decision to take the COVID-19 vaccine — a “path back to normal life,” according to the state government.

Although returning to normalcy is a top priority in Michigan, receiving a COVID-19 vaccine is a new process. Dorian Jones M.D., husband of OU professor Rebecca Mercado-Jones, chose to take the Pfizer SARS-COV2 vaccine, and it was a “big sigh of relief.”

Vaccine options

There are two types of COVID-19 vaccines currently available — SARS-COV2 and mRNA-1273 vaccines. The SARS-COV2 vaccine is produced by Pfizer and BioNTech, and mRNA-1273 is produced by ModernaTX.

Both follow a similar patient process, requiring two vaccines. The SARS-COV2 vaccines are distributed 21 days apart, while the mRNA-1273 vaccines are given 28 days apart.

Once someone has received the vaccine, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) noted recipients may notice chills, tiredness or headache from either vaccines for up to seven days after administration. Those should be the only side effects, aside from mild irritation at the vaccine site — pain, swelling or redness.

“My wife was kind of concerned about potential risks ... and I didn’t have any side effects at all,” Jones said. “I didn’t have any soreness at all. I didn’t have fever or body aches.”

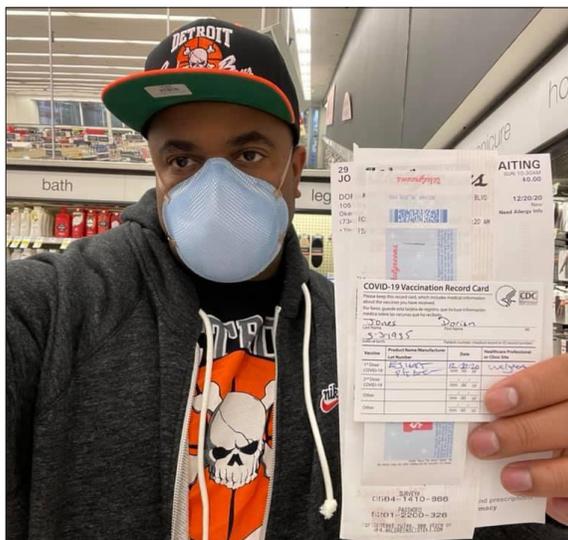


PHOTO COURTESY OF DORIAN JONES

Jones holds the documentation from the first round of his COVID-19 vaccination at a Walgreen’s store. He returned to the Walgreen’s for his second dosage Jan. 11.

The CDC reports both vaccines are effective to everyone, unless someone has an allergy to a vaccine ingredient. Both vaccines are 94% to 95% effective at preventing COVID-19.

“It was pretty simple,” Jones said. “[I’m] looking forward to getting the next dose.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF WFFA

The COVID-19 vaccines are all distributed with a syringe, similar to other vaccine processes. As time goes on, the vaccine is expected to be available to more people.

Vaccination process

Because Jones is a medical doctor, he was given a priority vaccination time. Michigan is operating in phases to offer vaccines to people who are the most at risk or exposed to COVID-19. Michigan will enter its next vaccination phase on Jan. 11, which will include residents 65 years and older, frontline workers, childcare, pre-k through high school staff and care facility staff.

Although the vaccine is still early in its distribution phases, Jones said the process was “simple.”

First, he signed up for an appointment online with Walgreens and received a specific time to arrive. Then he went to a Walgreens store to get his first dose of the vaccine on Dec. 20.

“It’s just like any other vaccine,” Jones said. “They clean the site [and then] a very quick injection.”

Next Jones was instructed to wait 30 minutes to ensure he wouldn’t have an allergic reaction to the vaccine.

“In the meantime, I just shopped around Walgreens a little bit,” Jones said. “[After 30 minutes,] then I went home.”

His first vaccination process took just over 30 minutes, and he was allowed to immediately return home. To finish the dosage, he plans on returning to Walgreens for his second and last vaccine on Jan. 11.

Doctor’s recommendation

He recommends everyone who can safely receive a COVID-19 vaccine should get it, and then more people will feel “that relief when they finally have more protection.”

As a doctor, Jones can come into contact with around 20 people who have “experience or exposure” with the virus. His main concern was his personal risk and how it could affect his family.

“Hearing [COVID-19] stories for the past ten months now — this really weighed heavily on me ... Even though, I felt pretty confident in the protective equipment I have [at work], there is still always the fear that maybe I wouldn’t be there at the dinner table at Christmastime this year,” Jones said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DORIAN JONES

Jones poses with his family (Lucia Jones, Dorian Jones, Rebecca Mercado-Jones and Cruz Jones). As a medical provider, he felt “relieved” for himself, his family and his patients.

Since his vaccination, Jones has recommended the vaccine to some of his patients, including patients on immunosuppression and who’ve received liver transplants. Although there are some side effects, “it’s certainly worth it.”

While the vaccine isn’t available to everyone yet, Jones predicts the vaccine will be open to everyone in roughly a month and recommends everyone safely receive a vaccine as soon as possible.

“No one’s life or no one’s job isn’t changed or altered by this virus ... Everyone’s going through something, and we have to take care of each other in the meantime,” Jones said.

W.E.B. Du Bois' words ring truer after 2020 in America

The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line

JEFF THOMAS

Features Editor

These words written in 1903 from the opening paragraph of W.E.B. Du Bois' "The Souls of Black Folk" constituted his thesis that the Civil War was not the transformative moment in U.S. race relations that Abraham Lincoln had hoped for. Du Bois' pursuit of racial progress in post-Reconstruction era America was marked by many of the same obstacles that civil rights activists are confronting today.

Among other horrid distinctions, 2020 will carry historical notoriety as being yet another year in U.S. history defined by issues of race.

COVID-19 proved itself uniquely capable of pulling back the curtain of American exceptionalism, effectively dragging all lingering skeletons of our nation's foundational white supremacy out of our closet for the world to see.

The pandemic disproportionately impacted Black people, with the community seeing higher infection, mortality and unemployment rates compared to other demographics.

As if this weren't bad enough, police brutality once again rose to the forefront of public consciousness, following the

lynching of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis.

Following an explosion of protests across the globe in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement, Black people faced a new wave of racial resentment stoked by public officials and media figures. This backlash turned violent, leading to a spike in hate crimes.

This renewed racial tension culminated in the aftermath of the presidential election, when Republican officials made efforts to block certification of votes from Wayne County, MI. Specifically citing irregularities in Detroit, a city consisting of 78.6% African Americans, as justification for their actions.

As these racial injustices continue, the work of Du Bois seems a critically important piece in the intricate puzzle of race relations in the U.S.

In our current racial climate, the ideas expressed in his collection of essays "The Souls of Black Folk" have become an invaluable historical resource for contextualizing the struggles of Black people and how real racial progress can be achieved.

Du Bois' words from 117 years ago — "The Nation has not yet found peace from its sins; the freedman has not yet found in freedom his promised land" — now seem

almost hauntingly prophetic, as the U.S. continues to face the consequences. The U.S. is failing to live up to its founding ideals of providing all citizens with a right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

"The Veil," his metaphor for describing the separate racially divided worlds existing in the U.S., seems more relevant than ever given the underlying social and economic conditions that have allowed the pandemic to ravage the Black community.

His theory of a Black "double-consciousness," defined by him by "always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt." This seems like a spot on description of the inherent double standards that make it harder for Black people to excel in today's society.

His criticism of Booker T. Washington established a crucial foundation of intellectual variety in the Black community. His outspoken disapproval of Washington's approach to achieving racial progress helped establish the precedent that Black intellectuals were not a monolith of beliefs.

This precedent is especially important for the modern BLM movement, as the push for racial equality faces an onslaught of moderate opposition.

Recently, opposition even came from former-President Barack Obama. He sat down for an interview last month and criticized the "defund the police" slogan as being too divisive.

Acting as a modern day Booker T. Washington, Obama used the interview as an opportunity to peddle his usual tranquilizing drug of gradualism to the masses. Fueled by the urgency of now, BLM supporters fired back at Obama by pointing out the human lives being lost to police violence.

Du Bois exemplified this kind of urgency by using his work to portray the magnitude of the issue of race in America. His advocacy for Black suffrage, equal education and economic opportunity were all tied to his fundamental belief — if allowed to cultivate their traits and talents, Black people would meet and contribute to larger American ideals.

To Du Bois, issues of race concerned all Americans.

"The burden belongs to the nation, and the hands of none of us are clean if we bend not our energies to righting these great wrongs," he said.

Until we all embrace our burden in reconciling race relations, the U.S. will continue being defined by the the color-line.

The Nashville bombing was not properly covered

AUTUMN PAGE

Staff Reporter



A bombing took place on Christmas Day in Nashville, Tenn., and chances are, you didn't hear about it.

Around one in the morning on Dec. 25, Nashville police officers heard what they thought was gunfire, but they

found a recreational vehicle (R.V.), with the message of a bomb set to detonate in 15 minutes.

I know what you're thinking, and no, it's not the start to a movie.

The R.V. exploded, resulting in eight injured and 41 damaged businesses. If it weren't for the warning from the bomber, the explosion would have resulted in more injuries. Police said the explosion was deliberate, because the area draws thousands of people nightly.

This sounds like a "possible" terrorist or an extremist approach to a situation, so why did I only hear about it days after it happened? Why were there two warnings, the sounds of gunfire then the actual warning?

You might be thinking, "maybe you're just not informed."

While that's possible, even doing research to write this, I couldn't find an article related to the actual bombing. The most I found were updates regarding the bomber, but nothing about the low coverage and how Nashville is handling the damage.

A Washington Post article shows videos of the explosion and pictures of the R.V. There's little about this bombing compared to some of the other events that happened recently.

No, COVID-19 doesn't count. It didn't attract a lot of social media either.

When looking at #nashvilleexplosion on Twitter, the results have nothing to do with what happened.

Possible human remains were identified, maybe from the R.V. or maybe not, which I think is kind of a big deal?

The bomber was later identified as Anthony Quinn Warner through the R.V.'s vehicle identification number (VIN). An alleged ex-girlfriend, said that Warner had been building bombs previously in the vehicle. Moreover, the police knew about this back in 2019.

I don't want to sound like an annoying person, but isn't that kind of worrisome? If your significant other is casually building bombs in their vehicle?

The police said they did everything they could legally, but who trusts the police these days? ACAB. Like everything else, this wasn't given much coverage in the media either.

I get it, 2020 was a year from hell and we all should never speak of it again, but something like this happening on Christmas should get more coverage. Also, the perplexity of the entire situation should've gotten more coverage. Police are unsure of what to call it, is it a terrorist attack? Is it not? Why were there deliberate warnings? Injuries were limited in the explosion, so what was it for?

The whole thing is confusing, and maybe it wasn't covered because it was Christmas, or maybe the city didn't want tons of conspiracy theories circling around.

Either way, more people should be aware of what happened, and question why it was kept so hush-hush.

‘Soul’ offers lively animation and life advice

BRIDGET JANIS

Staff Reporter

I thought college was the root cause of my mental breakdowns, but since the new Pixar Animation movie “Soul”, I haven’t been able to stop rethinking my whole life.

“Soul” brings up existential questions everyone struggles to answer at least once in their lifetime, like: why do I exist? What is my purpose? The kind of considerations, for college students especially, run through our heads all the time.

“Soul” came out on Dec. 25, just in time for stay-at-home family Christmases.

It takes place in a busy and chaotic New York City. The movie follows Joe Gardner (Jamie Foxx), a jazz musician and middle school band teacher, who just wants to catch his big break. His luck seems to be turning around, after he is offered to play piano with Dorothea Williams (Angela Bassett) for a show.

Joe ends up falling into a manhole on his way home and finds himself on a walkway moving toward the great beyond. He freaks out and tries to get back to his body but ends up in the “great before,” which is where new souls are created.

Joe pretends to be someone else and mentors a new soul in finding their spark to get their world pass to start living. He ends up being partnered with 22 (Tina Fey), a soul that has no interest in going to Earth and has already had thousands of mentors.

22 decides to help Joe get back to his body. During the process of opening the gateway between the spiritual and physical universes, Joe knocks over 22 with him. Joe’s soul ends up inside a cat and 22 ends up in Joe’s body.

They both go on to try to switch so 22 can get back into the great before, and Joe

can get back into his own body. During this time, 22 gets to actually experience the one thing they has been dreading.

While helping Joe out, 22 began to find herself. They discovered what pizza tastes like and began to think maybe Earth isn’t so bad. That maybe life is just about living.

This whole movie, with the various animated interpretations of the souls, reminded me a lot of “Inside Out” because of the more abstract characters. The animation throughout the film was amazing. I was struck by how cute the souls looked and how many details there were, right down to the cat’s whiskers.

The characters were well developed and accurately represented the diversity of the real world, which is important. The audience could connect with Joe and how passionate he is, while also sensing how stubborn 22 is.

At one point Joe and 22 are looking at moments in Joe’s life and Joe begins to think his life is meaningless. Once he gets back into the physical world, he says “if I died today, then my life would have amounted to nothing.” I’m not gonna lie, this part was heavy. It really hit me hard.

At the end, the movie title is finally shown, once Joe finally decides to start living. This movie had an important message: the meaning of life is simply to live.

By the time I was done watching, this movie had made me rethink some aspects of my own life, which might have been exactly what I needed. “Soul” is heartwarming and appropriate for all ages, and I encourage everyone to see this potentially life-changing film.

Rating: 5/5 stars



PHOTO COURTESY OF USA TODAY

Joel has just met 22 and learned he will be their mentor in this scene. “Soul” discusses many existential questions, including life and mentoring.

‘We Can Be Heroes’ is a Marvel parody, at best

EMILY MORRIS

Managing Editor

Netflix’s “We Can Be Heroes” is a sloppy shell of director Robert Rodriguez’s childhood staple movie — “The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF CNN
Lavagirl and Sharkboy from “The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl” are adults now and have joined a group of superheroes to protect Earth. When their powers are failing, their children have to step in and help save Earth though.

Rodriguez took an abrupt turn in the early 2000s, after focusing on action films his entire career, from “Sin City” to “Spy Kids.” Despite the switch, his kids’ content was goofy and imaginative, and those movies even hold up nearly 20 years later, at least as satirical nostalgia.

After two decades, Sharkboy and Lavagirl’s return had no anticipation, an irrelevant reboot. In fact, the superheroes of the original movies were degraded to half-baked side characters.

Instead, the main character Missy Moreno (YaYa Gosselin) was the superpowerless daughter of this movie’s version of the least favorite Avenger — Hawkeye.

Marco Moreno (Pedro Pascal) is a retired member of an elite hero group without any superpowers — just like Hawkeye. Moreno is their skilled swordsman, which is indiscernible without a Google search.

When an alien invasion puts Earth at risk, he jumps into action. With the comeback of the century, Moreno is captured within the first 20 minutes of the movie, and Missy joins forces with the other heroes’ children — who luckily all happen to be parents — to save the world.

Despite his drab development, Pascal is also recognizable for his roles in “The Lord of the Rings,” “The Mandalorian,” “The Mentalist,” “Buffy the Vampire Slayer,” “Wonder Woman” and the list goes on. “We Can Be Heroes” is a confusing and lackluster addition to his career, at best.

He’s not the only recognizable actor sprinkled into “We Can Be Heroes” though. Fans of Rodriguez’s work may remember the president of the U.S. (Christopher McDonald) from “Spy Kids.” He’s continuing a cinematic dictatorship from his presidency in “Spy Kids 2: The Island of Lost Dreams” in 2002.

Mild political commentary continues throughout the movie, an “essential” aspect to any kids’ movie.

“How did this guy get to be President? He can barely put two sentences together,” one of the supers said.

This isn’t a surprise though, considering the current political climate, and Miracle Guy (Boyd Holbrook) — that’s actually his hero name — even admits not voting for him.

Although political commentary seems out of place in this movie, it is one of the few elements preventing all the characters from becoming unoriginal or at least static.

The uninventive heroes — children and parents — include Miracle Guy (extreme strength), A Capella (amazing singing) and Blinding Fast (super speed). These are just a few of the 17 different supers that were likely given little personality, even in their naming, because “We Can Be Heroes” tries to cram the Avengers movies into one movie with a fraction of the budget.

“We Can Be Heroes” follows a simple plot, yet feels overwhelming. Rodriguez’s early children’s movies were overflowing with imagination, despite spotty production quality, and “We Can Be Heroes” missed that mark.

Even though this just grazes the surface of the movie’s nonevent plot and characters, “We Can Be Heroes” is still worth a watch for some audiences. This is a lackluster example of an action movie and nostalgia, but “We Can Be Heroes” could be great satire as a parody of the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

“We Can Be Heroes” doesn’t seem to be intended to be consumed satirically, but it’s the best way to enjoy what amounted to be a cinematic novelty.

Rating: 1/5 stars

OPINION

Netflix gets it right with ‘Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom’

JEFF THOMAS
Features Editor

On Dec. 18, Netflix added another must-see original to their gargantuan streaming catalogue with the release of “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom”.

Driven by powerhouse performances from lead actors Chadwick Boseman and Viola Davis, the film is a testament to the value of diversity in media and the inherent strength and importance of African American stories being told by Black voices.

Adapted from August Wilson’s play by the same name, the film takes place in Chicago in 1927. It details a tumultuous recording session where iconic blues singer Ma Rainey (Davis) continually clashes heads with ambitious trumpeter Levee Green (Boseman), as well as her manager Irvin (Jeremy Shamos) and studio owner Mel Sturdyvant (Jonny Coyne).

Staying true to the source material, much of the film is recognizable to the format of the play. Most of the sets are fixed, and storyline tension is built through characters interacting via dialogue and long dramatic monologues.

It is through these monologues that Davis and Boseman really shine in the film. Their stunning work in these scenes carries the story, pulling the audience in masterfully with their characters.

Donning extravagant makeup, magnificent costumes and all the swagger of a blues singing diva virtuoso, Davis owns the screen as Ma Rainey. Her pinnacle in the role is during a scene where she demands a break from recording so someone can go get her the Coca-Cola that she was promised.

After dialing the tension up to eleven while angrily dismissing her band members and management, Davis flips an emotional switch and tenderly confides her motivation to her longtime band leader Cutler (Colman Domingo).

During this monologue, Rainey expresses the struggle of African American artists dealing with racism and the exploitative nature of the record industry. She is aware of her value as a performer and asserts agency by leveraging her talents to ensure that she is treated with respect by the racist businessmen making money from her work.

Lines like, “They don’t care nothing about me, all they want is my voice” position Rainey as a hero to the audience, one worthy of Davis’ powerful performance.

Boseman’s emotional apex as Levee occurs in a similarly intimate scene during a monologue that outlines an all too frequent reminder of what African Americans faced living in the Jim Crow south.

In a heated exchange during the band’s rehearsal time, Levee reveals the

gruesome details of how as a child he had watched his mother being raped by a group of white men.

The account is written to be gut-wrenching, still the material is elevated to another level by Boseman’s utterly captivating performance. On screen, Levee’s expressions are so dynamic, the profound range of emotions displayed gives the audience a real sense of danger. This exposé of the rage that drives his character is done to tremendous effect.

These incredible acting performances are complimented with excellent cinematography and wardrobes. Don’t sleep on the visuals in this film, it is obvious the level of care that went into the designs and editing.

The film manages to successfully encapsulate the experiences of African Americans moving to major cities in the north by zooming in on this tale of what Black musicians were going through while trying to expand out of the south into northern media markets.

The racism and the almost maddening desire characters have to elevate themselves above the cruel circumstances of the times are all there for the audience to get a taste of.

All of this combined with the larger-than-life character of Ma Rainey, an iconic singer and Black queer woman who wasn’t afraid to express her sexuality in her songs, makes for a singular viewing experience.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE VERGE
Netflix’s “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom” will be Chadwick Boseman’s final film

Overall a crucially relevant and moving piece of art, do not miss out on this film.

Rating: 5/5 stars

New year, new me, future me

CAYLA SMITH
Campus Editor

The “new year, new me” cliché pushes an unnecessary burden to want to change, but why not appreciate and reflect on the present with a letter instead?

This year, instead of making my new year’s resolution the same uncreative thing that it’s been for the past eight years, i.e. lose weight. I wanted to change it. I don’t want to challenge myself and decide to complete this one task that’s been following me for almost a decade, but no. It causes unnecessary stress, especially if I don’t make it to February.

When we make a new year’s resolution we say that we need to do something, and that turns it into an obligation and puts a pressure on ourselves. If I do happen to lose weight this year, then I just happen to lose weight -- it’s not my burden of the year.

I took the easy way out and didn’t make resolutions, but I wrote a letter to myself instead.

Future Me is a free website that gives its users the ability to write a letter to themselves anywhere into the future. In this letter, you can write whatever you want whether that be a prediction of the future world, a journal entry from your present self, goals, etc. The letters get delivered via email on whatever date you chose.

I’m going to blame the pandemic for giving me time to self reflect and with this I’ve learned to appreciate the present. My letter to future me was a digital time capsule. I included my favorites at the moment, like songs, food, books, TV shows, movies and even described my surrounding environment for my future self.

It’s going to be nice to reflect on what I like now and compare it to my new interests. Also, it gives me the chance to look at what led me to be in a completely different place, if I am, compared to where I thought I saw myself.

I’ve used Future Me in the past, but I

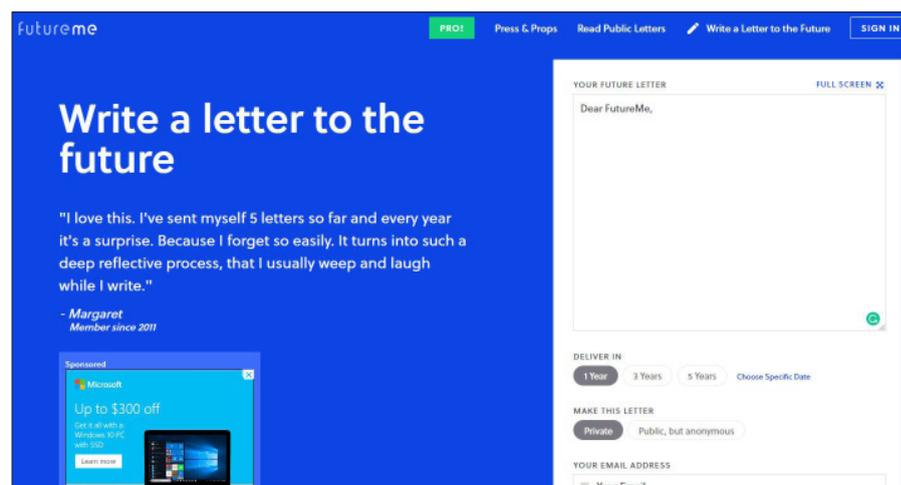


PHOTO COURTESY OF LIFEWIRE.COM

Future Me is a free website where users can write letters to their future self.

used it as a diary entry and a check in with myself. I asked myself if I met certain accomplishments present me hoped for, or if I had found something else along the way. I scheduled this letter to be delivered around the upcoming summer because I’ll be a college graduate.

The letters act as a surprise gift to yourself. In my experience, life moves fast and I forget about certain things like

the letters I write to myself, so when they’re delivered it’s a nice surprise and there’s always something in the letter that you need to hear.

Writing the letter is quick and easy, and it’s something you do once with no strings attached.

If interested, check in with your future self by visiting Future Me’s website, futureme.org.

OPINION

The elusive Playstation 5 beats past consoles, for now

MICHAEL PEARCE

Editor-in-Chief

The Playstation 5 has been released officially for almost two months, and it is still nearly impossible to obtain.

The new PS5 console has two different models — the digital version and the disc-drive version. The digital version costs \$400 and the disc-drive version costs \$500, if a customer is lucky enough to get their hands on one before bots and resellers clear out inventory.

It's a small upgrade from PS4 to PS5 — in terms of performance and graphics — but an upgrade that's worth purchasing as soon as stores have enough systems in stock.

There is a definite difference in graphics between the PS4 and PS5. Games that are specifically made for PS5 have moments which will leave the customer feeling satisfied with their purchase, which at \$400-500 is a "treat yourself" item.

The difference between the PS4 and the PS5 isn't worth \$500, but it's a worthwhile investment for anyone who plays console video games consistently and also uses streaming services instead of using cable.

The PS5-base version has more storage than the PS4, a much better dashboard

and some new innovations, which make it worth the purchase. Additionally, the latest model will be the current generation of consoles for about seven years.

One feature that sticks out the most of the new console is the controller. The new controllers have haptic feedback, which means vibrations from the controller will feel tailored to the game experience, as well as the triggers being more resistant and responsive to the user.

Astro's Playroom — a game that is pre-loaded onto PS5s — shows off the haptic feedback really well. The game uses different features of the controller in different platformer levels, taking the user through an adventure through Playstation and Sony history.

The way the controller vibrates and changes intensities really works with the platformer format, making Astro's Playroom's strength an unexpected surprise for what seems like a throwaway game.

While the PS5 excels in the new controller, it lacks in solid titles for the new system. There are some good options for someone looking to test out the strength of the system, but at the moment there isn't a large game selection.

Assassin's Creed: Valhalla, Demon's



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

The PS5 is impressive, but at a high price point, those who are fine with the PS4 should wait.

Souls and Spiderman: Miles Morales are three games that have earned positive reviews on the new console.

However, with only about 20 games for the new system, it is tough to get value out of buying a brand new console when there are only a handful of games people will find interesting.

Despite the new system being a definitive upgrade from the PS4 — at \$400 minimum — it is tough to justify purchasing a PS5 right now. If someone wants to buy the new system, they should buy it only if they

have the disposable income to comfortably drop almost \$500.

Even though the system has been impressive in numerous ways after launch, it's very difficult to obtain and expensive to justify a small jump in performance.

Those who aren't too serious about video games or feel \$500 would be a huge purchase should wait until the PS5 is more obtainable, and there are a wider selection of Playstation exclusives. Then they can truly get their money's worth.

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Every sport to compete: What's ahead for athletics

LAUREN REID
Sports Editor

Fall semester was a wild ride for Oakland University Athletics — the Horizon League pushed back fall sports to a spring season, COVID-19 protocols ramped up testing and safety requirements and practices ceased for track and field and swimming and diving back in November.

Now, it's likely every sport at OU will compete at the same time in an effort to fit in and finish up seasons.

"At some point this month and into February, we'll have every sport that we offer competing," Athletic Director Steve Waterfield said. "[This] has never happened before, and my hope is it will never happen again — the reasoning being the pandemic."

Both men's and women's basketball teams are currently playing — men's basketball having most recently dropped both contests against Green Bay, 84-81 in overtime on Friday, Jan. 8 and 87-78 on Saturday, Jan. 9. Women's basketball defeated Youngstown State University 71-61 on Friday and fell 72-57 on Saturday. These players are currently being tested for COVID-19 six times per week to comply with the current Michigan guidelines.

Swimming and diving is looking at having some home competitions within the next couple months, with dates still uncertain, and their championship has been pushed back to April for the Horizon League. Competitions for track and field are projected to start mid to late January, depending on state regulations.

"We still have the current state order that (as of Jan. 8) goes through Jan. 15," Waterfield said. "Other sports will get [COVID-19 tested] three times a week through the duration of the state order. If there's no order that mandates the three tests a week, the NCAA mandates certain thresholds of testing depending on the category of sport risk."

For fall sports that were pushed to winter, volleyball is planning to start Monday, Jan. 25 and men's/women's soccer is aiming to begin Feb. 2-3.

Baseball and softball typically start at the end of February and middle of February respectively, with Horizon League play beginning early March for both. Indoor tennis should begin in January, golf and outdoor track & field are to start up soon as well — details and updates are forthcoming.

From a facilities standpoint, Waterfield mentioned there's been some shifting, but



OAKLAND POST ARCHIVES

Steve Waterfield hopes athletics will never have to go through this type of year again.

providing certainty is a priority.

"[We're] looking at probably, on average, 4-5 home competitions depending upon the sport per week," Waterfield said. "[The Horizon League] tried to keep the days [any particular team] competes consistent, so our volleyball teams will always compete on Mondays and Tuesdays during the week, basketball games on Fridays and Saturdays, etc. — but there's going to be a lot of events, there's no way around that."

Waterfield mentioned he's excited to see student athletes compete as seasons start up

as he "knows it means a lot to them."

"[The student athletes] love their sports and love to practice and compete," Waterfield said. "Not having any of them fall semester was challenging and disappointing, but now we've positioned ourselves to give [student athletes] the opportunity to practice, compete and represent Oakland University."

For those interested in keeping up with OU Athletics, visit their website, follow their social media accounts and/or check out ESPN+ to watch various games.

WINTER 2021 PAYMENT DUE DATE

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY'S WINTER PAYMENT DUE DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2020.

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.



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

Scams we're used to

AUTUMN PAGE

Staff Reporter

As the holiday season has passed and my bank account is suffering, I came across this BuzzFeed article where non-Americans share scams that Americans think are normal.

Let me tell you, after I read this article I had a quarter-life crisis in the fetal position.

Once I came out of the fetal position, I decided to compile a list of reasons why the scams in this article are valid.

Cellphone plans:

Of course, companies make these plans expensive! How else would they be able to pay random influencers and celebrities, who go and party during a global pandemic, to promote their brand?

Unpaid internships:

The best part of any college or fresh out of college experience. Free labor in exchange for the thousands of dollars you gave your university! Can I get a "hell yeah?"

Charging \$1 to add cheese:

We all know the stereotype for America, maybe it's for the best.

"College is for everyone" mentality:

When the nation is trillions of dollars in debt, why wouldn't they want all the new generations to go to college and pay thousands of dollars to get a useless piece of paper?

I will note, that this mentality is slowly fading as the generations continue BECAUSE OF this mentality, but that's a whole other conversation.

Medical costs:

Americans have a lot of medical issues, so why not capitalize on it! Free healthcare? Equal healthcare? Not having an extremist harassing women outside of Planned Parenthood? Never heard of any of that.

Car dealerships:

Since all these immigrants are taking American jobs, why wouldn't America keep these parking lots?!

Megachurches:

How else would churches build this extravagant building that gets used three times a week by the same group of christian girl Autumnns?

Just to clarify, no I'm not talking about me for once. Sad, I know.

Anyways, the churches need all the money to cover up the pastor getting into scandals.

Time off:

Assuming you have seen those wholesome videos of other teachers giving a teacher their paid time off while the teacher is in the hospital because of cancer and ran out of sick days. They would have enough, if they never got sick and were superhuman, do better xoxo.

Tipping because of low wages:

The workers should be able to make \$10 an hour, tipping is only for good service! Oh minimum wage workers go to college full-time and want to be on their own and gain independence? Aw, that's a cute thought!

Expensive cards:

Valentine's day thrives in the holiday card industry! Why not let a multibillion dollar company make some extra change — because they need it.

Here are a few of my own scandals, not mentioned in the article.

Starbucks:

I didn't know capitalism could taste so good! No wonder every sad college student spends well over \$50 a month on their iced caramel macchiato with 15 espresso shots upside down.

Rent:

Anyone would be just beyond blessed to pay \$900 a month on a one bed + one bath apartment with neighbors who don't understand the concept of sleeping. Ugh, the life.

America is overpriced, and there are a plethora of scams that Americans, in some situations, have no choice but to accept. At least, we can make fun of them because of how absurd they actually are.

GRIZZLIES PROTECT GRIZZLIES

Cumulative on-campus positive cases since December 26:

34

Faculty or staff:

4

Students not living in OU Housing:

16

Students living in OU Housing:

14

On-campus isolation rooms occupied

5/107

All information is from OU COVID Public Dashboard