

THE OAKLAND POST

Oakland University's Independent Student Newspaper

Volume 46 | Issue 21 | February 10, 2021

Men's soccer shuts out RMU

*Dylan Borczak scores three goals,
starting the Golden Grizzlies
season with a 5-0 win*

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highlighting Japanese art

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Kwon's teaching career

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Men's basketball loses close
games during final home series

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PHOTO BY JOSE JUAREZ / OAKLAND UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS

THIS WEEK

PHOTO OF THE WEEK



ARE WE THERE YET? Oakland University will be hosting a virtual road trip from Feb. 22-25, showcasing top student leaders and faculty. Registration is on Oakland's website.
PHOTO / OAKLAND UNIVERSITY



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Photo/PR News Wire



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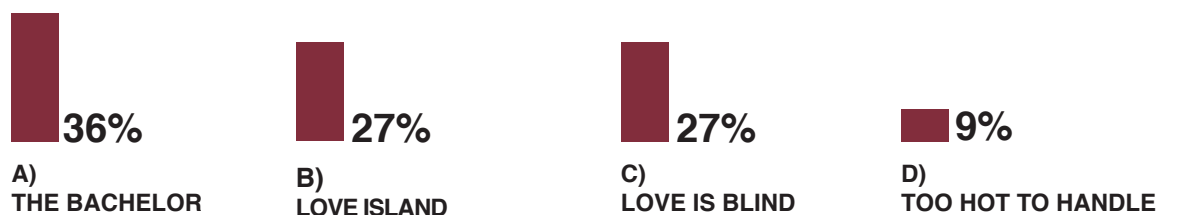
POLL OF THE WEEK

IF YOU COULD GET ONE VALENTINE FROM ANYONE AT OAKLAND, WHO WOULD IT BE?

- A) PRESIDENT PESCOVITZ
- B) COACH KAMPE
- C) GRIZZ 🐻
- D) AD STEVE WATERFIELD

LAST ISSUE'S POLL

WHICH REALITY DATING SHOW WOULD YOU MOST WANT TO BE ON?



‘Healthy Campus Initiative’ plans to add health resources

EMILY MORRIS
Managing Editor

The OU Healthy Campus Initiative is offering a reminder to focus on health, after a physically and mentally draining year for many.

“For all of us, COVID-19 has been overwhelming... We must be mindful that the next few months will continue to pose public, personal and mental health challenges,” Dr. Ora Hirsch Pescovitz said in the official video.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF OAKLAND UNIVERSITY
Dr. Ora Hirsch Pescovitz announces the Healthy Campus Initiative in a video available on OU’s website. The project plans to focus on mental health.

Recent months have posed increased public health issues: discrepancies in healthcare availability, social isolation, trauma and food insecurities. Campus officials are acknowledging these struggles and urging students to use health resources.

“We all have experienced the direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our work, ourselves and our families,” Director of Athletics Steve Waterfield said in the official email. “It is time that we acknowledge that impact and do something about it.”

Waterfield, Pescovitz and Becky Lewis, associate director of university recreation and well-being chimed in with their recommendations in an advice video, available on the Healthy Campus Initiative page on OU’s website.

While Waterfield notes there will be a “variety” of healthy resources accessible in the next year, there are a few suggestions for right now. Visiting the health section of OU’s website and following their social media, using friends or coworkers to stay on track and relaxing were the main healthy highlights.

New outreaches will involve human resource efforts, OU’s counseling center and the Recreation and Well-Being Center, according to Waterfield. No specific additions have been announced yet though.

Other departments and programs are encouraged to partner with the Healthy Campus Initiative by filling out a registration form on OU’s website. Any approved partners to the program could be featured on OU’s or OU’s Athletics social media pages.

During the pandemic, OU has made a similar outreach, partnering with Spread Hope, Not COVID in October.

Pescovitz reminds students and faculty to continue following the three w’s — wear a mask, watch your distance and wash your hands.

“Conversations about how we feel should include our physical and mental health,” Pescovitz said in the official video.



SAM SUMMERS | DESIGN EDITOR
Steve Waterfield is OU’s Athletic Director and is a partner of the Healthy Campus Initiative. The Athletics’ social media will be posting updates.

The Healthy Campus Initiative is more tailored to mental health on campus. Currently, Lewis recommends iPause and the Green Bandana Project, while they plan expansions of OU’s mental programs. Both programs aim to end the stigma surrounding mental health care.

“When we prioritize our ourselves and mental health and take advantage of these resources... available at OU, we are all more successful,” Lewis said in the official video.

THE

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OUWB students keep hospital patients connected to loved ones



PHOTO COURTESY OF PR NEWSWIRE

DEAN VAGLIA

Staff Reporter

Among the many words to describe COVID-19, “isolating” is surely among them.

Almost a year of quarantining has made agoraphobics of many people, and some longing so much for a return to normalcy that they will risk their lives to eat food in public.

Hospitals have also been subject to the isolating effects COVID has on society. Most patients are no longer allowed to accept visitors, whether they are hospitalized with COVID or any other ailment. Cut off from friends and loved ones, patients can find themselves physically isolated and left to navigate the medical system alone.

But work is being done to make sure this is not the case. Students from the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine (OUWB) have been volunteering at Beaumont hospitals as communication liaisons, providing patients with a way to talk with loved ones.

“It becomes really isolating really quickly when you are only interacting with providers that are under a bunch of medical garb,” Alexandra Jankulov said. “The purpose of this volunteering is to provide an interface so that patients can have brief 15-minute video chats with their family members.”

Video calls between patients and loved ones are the big part of the liaison role. Volunteers work with family members to set up calls through the 8x8 app, which allows for the calls to be encrypted, and schedule a time for the patients to make their call.

“It is honestly so heartwarming to see the patients’ faces light up just from a simple video call,” Jankulov said. “It makes their experience in the hospital a little bit more bearable. We are eliminating this avoidable suffering [of

isolation] to the best of our abilities.

With COVID-19 being around in the hospitals, there are measures taken to keep the volunteers safe. Students will help set up calls and hold the iPads for the patients when possible, but only official nurses are allowed to enter rooms of patients with COVID-like symptoms.

Video calls make up only a portion of the work communication liaison volunteers do.

“Aside from the ... video calls, we also do ‘get to know me’ sheets where we basically talk to the patient or a family member about what things bring the patient comfort, what TV or music they like, any pets they have,” Tiffany Loh said.

The sheets allow for the medical staff to better know the patient, allowing them to have a personal connection with them. Liaisons also help patients with advanced directive instructions, allowing the patient to let staff know what they want done in case they are unable to make healthcare decisions while at the hospital.

Students are able to choose between Beaumont hospitals in Royal Oak, Troy and Grosse Pointe. Volunteers can choose between working 16 hours per week for four weeks, or eight hours a week for eight weeks.

The volunteer work has helped both patients and students. With COVID changing the work dynamic for many people, volunteering has provided medical students with a unique way to get hands-on experience working at a hospital.

“One of the biggest things that I have been able to take away is the necessity of these different disciplines communicating,” Tyler Shubitowski said. “While I am learning as a physician and have things that I know I need to watch for, there are so many other working parts going on to help a patient to get better. This has really helped me to understand that those working parts exist and are ongoing and helped to better understand

GRIZZLIES PROTECT GRIZZLIES

Cumulative on-campus positive cases since January 16:

26

Faculty or staff:

2

Students not living in OU Housing:

13

Students living in OU Housing:

11

On-campus isolation rooms occupied

1/110

All information is from OU COVID Public Dashboard

CAMPUS

OUCARES 'Comorbidity & Autism'

AUTUMN PAGE

Staff Reporter

The Joanne and Ted Lindsay Foundation Autism Outreach Services (OUCARES) is hosting a free webinar for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), parents and caregivers, professionals and anyone interested in learning how to support and keep people with ASD safe.

OUCARES is the outreach services of the OU Center for Autism. They offer comprehensive and quality support for people impacted by autism across the lifespan - ages three through adulthood.

According to the Director of OUCARES, Kristin Rohrbeck, the mission of OUCARES is to "improve the quality of life of people impacted by autism."

Rohrbeck has been on the OUCARES team since 2012 and has seen it go through a lot of changes and exciting developments.

"I started as program coordinator and have proudly served as the director since 2015," Rohrbeck said.

Her and her team serve over 2000 people impacted by autism in Michigan and beyond with more than 100 programs annually.

"These programs are primarily for the individual diagnosed with autism, but we also offer programs for families, caregivers, professionals, and the entire community to better support people with autism," Rohrbeck said.

The upcoming webinar, 'Comorbidity & Autism,' is meant for anyone and everyone. It's designed for individuals with ASD, parents and caregivers, professionals and anyone interested in learning how to support and keep people with ASD safe.

'Comorbidity & Autism' will cover all ages and ASD behaviors.

"As people with ASD grow and develop, they sometimes struggle with different comorbid challenges,

such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder and more," she said. "When paired with social and self-advocacy difficulties, these new diagnoses can result in new and concerning behaviors, including suicidal ideations, self-harming behaviors, and sometimes suicidal attempts. This webinar is designed to help inform our families to manage such behaviors and maintain a positive quality of life."

Specifically, it will discuss ways caregivers can better prepare & support comorbid diagnoses with an ASD diagnosis, strategies to help people with ASD advocate for themselves and how to determine courses of action to maintain safety for individuals with ASD & their families.

The host of this event is Hana Jurgens, M.A., BCBA, LBA. She is the regional clinical training coordinator for Positive Behavior Supports Corp. and she has created a number of free behavioral support videos for OUCARES to support families impacted by autism during the pandemic.

She has extensive experience working with individuals with autism and comorbid diagnoses in a clinical setting as a board certified behavior analyst (BCBA).

The webinar will be held on Feb. 11 at 6 p.m. It will be virtual, a specific meeting place has not been set and RSVP is required.

OUCARES greatly values and relies on volunteers to help their programs run successfully. If interested, students and community members can volunteer by emailing oucaries@oakland.edu.

OUCARES has an application process for volunteers and requires volunteers to be trained to understand autism and best practices to interact with people impacted by autism.

The application and more information about OUCARES can be found on their website.

WHO CAN GET THE VACCINE?

Phase 1a. Healthcare workers and residence in long-term care facilities (Started Dec. 3, 2020)

Phase 1b. Frontline essential workers and people over the age of 75. (Started Dec. 20, 2020)

Phase 1c. All essential workers, people within the age of 65-74 and people ages 16-64 with underlying health issues. (Started Dec. 20, 2020)



PHOTO COURTESY OF RYAN T. SMITH

OUCARES will be holding a comorbidity and autism webinar, free for all interested.

HOP-UP-PT leaves positive impact on local seniors

RACHEL YIM
Staff Reporter

While physical therapy is one of the most common and important services for senior citizens to help improve functional mobility, not many of them have easy access.

To address this problem, Oakland University's Home-Based Older Persons Upstreaming Prevention Physical Therapy (HOP-UP-PT) program has been providing early preventative interventions to local senior citizens at a broad range of risks for more than five years now.

Coordinated by Chris Wilson and Sara Arena, the co-principle investigators and co-founders of the HOP-UP-PT program, and Lori Boright, program coordinator, the program was recently awarded a \$321,075 Healthy Aging grant by the Michigan Health Endowment Fund. This grant will be spent in growing technology and reimbursement innovation.

"Our previous grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund in 2018 enabled us to do a large-scale demonstration project of the clinical effectiveness of the program," Wilson said. "We found that older adults who participated in HOP-UP-PT were eight times less likely to fall after the program, and their health and home safety improved as well."

The system of this program is quite simple. After a referral from a community senior center, a physical therapist will visit the home of the senior citizens and do a comprehensive health assessment. Then, the therapist will return in a week to teach them balance exercises, also providing a wearable activity monitor and a blood pressure cuff for home use.

To date, they have helped more than 175 senior citizens. According to Wilson, the program played a huge role in enabling these seniors to stay active and healthy in the middle of the pandemic.

"While HOP-UP-PT has grown substantially since the early discussions, a vision to empower older adults to remain safe and active in their home remains at the core of the program," Arena said.

As the main contributors of the program, Wilson, Arena and Boright all started with a common goal. That goal, as Wilson put it, was to make this model "the standard of care for older adults across the United States." The three of them coordinate the program, train the local physical therapists and recruit senior citizens interested in the program.

"It was very rewarding to visit our participants in their homes, develop relationships with them (some of which outlasted the duration of the study and continue to this day) and play an important role in maintaining a safe and independent lifestyle through the innovative approaches of HOP-UP-PT," Boright said.

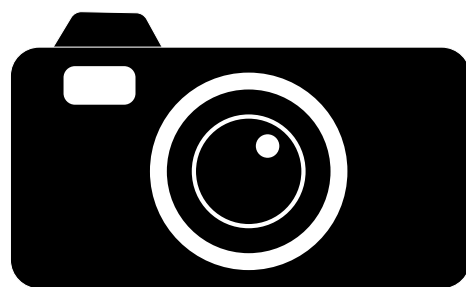
Additionally, they are currently

mentoring 26 OU students on various aspects of research related to the HOP-UP-PT program. By engaging students with the research and clinical end of the program, they are spreading awareness of the importance of this program.

"Now that the clinical gains are being clearly established, we need to be able to train other physical therapists across the nation how to do this program, help insurance companies to see the value in upstream physical therapist services and to help community centers identify and refer senior citizens in their communities to this program," Wilson said.

With the expansion of the HOP-UP-PT program, more senior citizens are living their daily lives with improved overall health and a renewed physical fitness that makes simple tasks easier to perform.

For more information about the program, visit its website or email hopuppt@oakland.edu.



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Nozomi Naoi brings her book to life

JESSICA ORLANDO

Staff Reporter

Oakland University's Art and Art History Department hosted an online lecture featuring Nozomi Naoi, an assistant professor of humanities at Yale-NUS College.

The lecture, which was presented on behalf of OU's Jean S. and Fred M. Braun Memorial, featured Naoi live from her Singapore office, where she brought to life her book: "Yumeji Modern: Designing the Everyday in Twentieth Century Japan."

Her lecture consisted of an introduction to Takehisa Yumeji's life and works, Yumeji-style, graphic arts in the emerging media landscape and a look at the Great Kanto Earthquake series.

Naoi specialized in modern Japanese art and the surrounding media environment in Asia. She has received the first Takehisa Yumeji Research Society Award for contributing to the Nihon no Hanga Museum exhibition, and her latest project focused on Japanese poster design and global modernism during the twentieth century.

"Takehisa Yumeji was an emblematic figure," Naoi said. She described his graphic works as developing in association with the emerging media scape of the 1900s and 1910s, "when novel forms of reprographic media were enabling the creation of new spaces of visual culture and image circulation."

Naoi described Yumeji's works as ranging from socialist messages such as images of anti-war, all the way to his devastating portrayal of the Great Kanto earthquakes in the Tokyo region.

Yumeji's work was also known for images of beautiful women described as "Yumeji-style beauty." The Yumeji-style was considered to be one of the more popular aspects of Yumeji's career as it dealt with women as both the subject and audience. This created a popular beauty standard for women in Japan and was sought after by many women.

"Fashionable images of beautiful women ... were in books and magazines targeting a female audience," said Naoi. "Yumeji-style provided an entry point for his female consumers to project their own identities onto images of ordinary girls who were given central focus and attention in his work."

Naoi highlighted Yumeji's commercial success in branding and selling his popular Yumeji-style. His brand was extremely popular in the twentieth century, consisting of items all the way from lithographs to clothes.

"By purchasing Yumeji goods from [the department store] Minatoya, consumers

were able to inhabit the space of the Yumeji-style beauty and in association become one," said Naoi.

Naoi talked about some of the beginning chapters in her book, discussing Yumeji's relationship between his illustrations, socialist bulletins and mass media. These works laid the foundations in discovering his subject matter and audience.

"Yumeji's illustrations demonstrate his strong anti-war stance and his support for the day-to-day lives of the average person," said Naoi. "They display a more serious, political side of the artist still little discussed by scholars today."

Naoi discussed Yumeji's larger role in commercial design after being recognized for his illustrations and connection with the common people of Japan. Yumeji was recognized for his creation of music sheets and promotional magazines for department stores in Japan.

The music sheets created by Yumeji allowed a wider audience to experience contemporary tunes that were otherwise too expensive for the lower classes.

"The Sinome company enlisted a number of artists to illustrate its score's covers, however, Yumeji was the most popular with over 270 designs," Naoi said.

The department store began to rise in popularity throughout the twentieth century, and Naoi described it as a large aspect of urbanizing Japan. It catered to a broader audience such as the growing middle class. Naoi illustrated that these department stores brought a more western-style approach to living and popularized a consumer culture.

"Yumeji's involvement with the Mitsukoshi Magazine tied together the appeal of his female imagery with the more concrete elements of fashion and consumer items that could be attached to the branding of his Yumeji-style," Naoi said.

Naoi wrapped up her lecture with a discussion about her book's final chapters on Yumeji's overall eclectic style seen in his Great Kanto Earthquake series. This series of works consisted of 21 issues and brings in both Yumeji's political and social ideas developed since his beginning illustrations.

"This series demonstrates Yumeji's comradery with his fellow Tokyoites and the struggles that the survivors faced as the city, region and nation attempted to come to terms and recover from the disaster," Naoi said.

After Naoi's presentation, she was able to do a brief Q&A with the participants. The viewers were able to ask questions and Naoi answered as many as she could, giving the participants some insight into her podcast and website. Both the listeners and Naoi thanked each other for the lecture and opportunity.

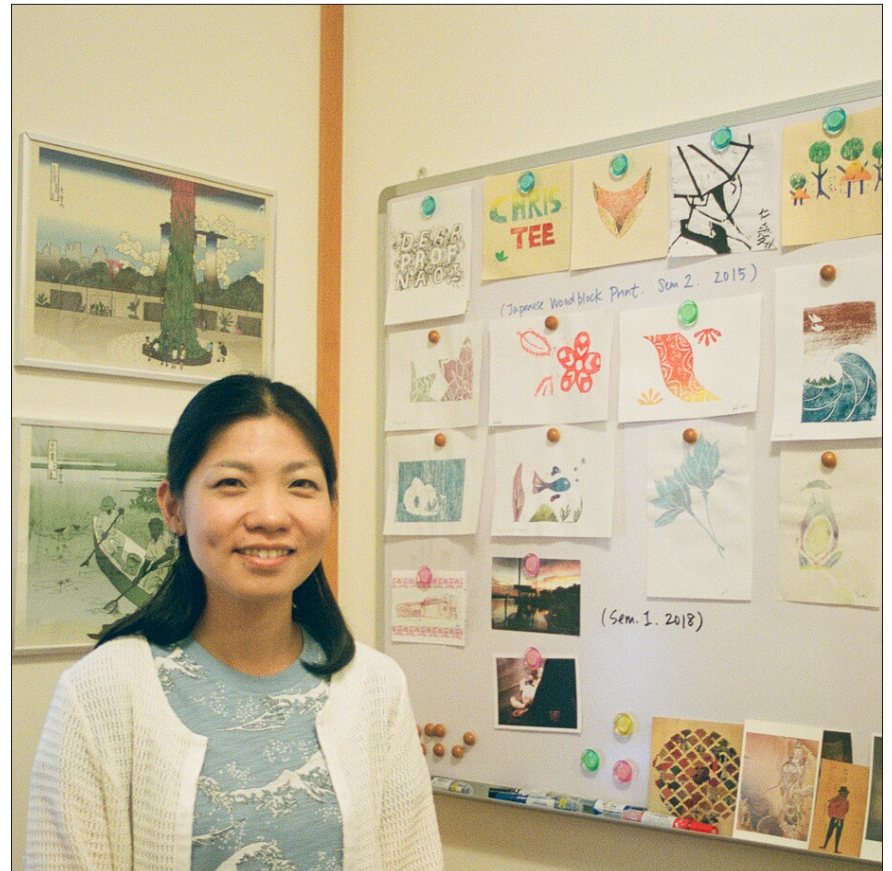


PHOTO COURTESY OF OBJECT LESSONS

Nozomi Naoi is standing by her art collection. She wrote "Yumeji Modern: Designing the Everyday in Twentieth Century Japan," which focuses on art and design by Yumeji Takehisa.

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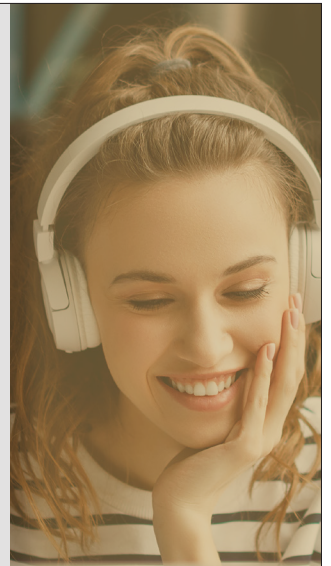
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BROOKLYN ARTIST RECREATES CRIM





CRIME SCENES WITH UNEXPECTED VICTIMS

CAYLA SMITH

Campus editor

Brooklyn-based artist Jeanette May presented her thought-provoking projects on Wednesday, Feb. 3 — one being unlikely murder victims — for Oakland University's Art and Art History departments.

May's lecture involved past projects dating back to 2008, including a project from 2012 to 2014 called "Morbidity and Mortality," which displayed photographs of pet toys posed as murder victims.

May says that this project was a lighthearted take on the obsession with the depictions of crime scenes, murder and forensics.

"These photographs are meant to be humorous, even though my inspirations were serious. I mean, I was a little disturbed by all the dead bodies," May said.

May explained that she loves murder mysteries, but found something unnerving about them. She found that in TV shows — "CSI: Miami" and other forensic series — there's an obsession with corpses.

Specifically, there were artfully-composed images of dead bodies, often women's bodies. She was inspired to create this project because of a fashion photographer, who began photographing the fashion models as dead bodies.

"As an artist examining the trend, I face the challenge of depicting yet not reproducing the violence — that was the challenge," May said. "How to examine the depiction of violence or murder without simply reproducing it, and the answer for me was the pet toys."

Pet toys resemble real animals that are already deceased, because they're designed to be "murdered" by your pet.

She looked to the film industry, where dead bodies are often depicted and used that as inspiration for the locations of the crime scenes for the pet toys. In her research, she found one aspect of crime shows to be disturbing — a murder scenes that were staged beautifully.

"The staged murder might take place in a seedy hotel room, but if you stopped and paid attention, you would realize that the bedspread was gorgeous and the lighting was amazing," May said.

"Morbidity and Mortality" was presented in German magazine, Barbara. The photos were used, and the writers wrote their own narratives describing what they thought was the pet toys' cause of death.

May walked the attendees through a few of her other projects, like "Easy on the Eyes" and "Bachelor Pads." These two projects focused on the female gaze. Unlike other projects that study the female gaze, she didn't use women as the subjects in the photos, she used men. The men would be posed editorial style and never gazing into the camera.

Her final projects included "Tech Vanitas" and "Curious Devices."

May received her undergraduate in Fine Arts from the University of Illinois and a master's in Fine Arts from CalArts. She has been awarded grants and fellowships from the NEA Regional Artists' Projects Fund, Brooklyn Arts Council, NYC Dept of Cultural Affairs, Illinois Arts Council and Ms. Foundation. Her work is exhibited in New York, Washington D.C, Chicago, Los Angeles, China, Canada and Greece.

Professor uses disability to find purpose, thrives during COVID-19

Chang-kyu Kwon lost his eyesight at 16 years old. He turned that into a lifelong career in education, and believes it gave him a “purpose.”

BRIDGET JANIS
Staff Reporter

Chang-kyu Kwon used his disability to find purpose as an assistant professor at Oakland University in the Human Resource Department. He teaches introduction to HRD, fundamentals of human interaction, cultural diversity in the workplace and the internship course in HRD.

Kwon earned his doctorate at the University of Georgia, joining the OU faculty in 2019.

“The reason I chose OU was because of its emphasis on diversity,” Kwon said. “During the interview process they asked me questions about diversity and how I’m going to incorporate that into my teaching.”

Kwon lost his eyesight when he was 16 years old. While playing soccer he was hit in the back of the head with a ball, the impact caused retinal detachment. He went through many surgeries, still his vision eventually faded away.

Ultimately, he found his calling as an educator during his studies. While working as a teaching assistant for his advisor during his third and fourth year at Georgia, Kwon became acutely aware of his passion for teaching.

“I am really grateful for the fact that I was able to find my purpose and passion in my life because of my disability,” Kwon said. “My life before disability, that’s kind of grey, because I really didn’t have a purpose. I really didn’t have a sense of why I’m living. It’s kind of ironic because I lost my sight, but [now I’m able to describe] my life as more vivid.”

When the pandemic hit last March, Kwon had to transition to teaching classes using Zoom. The transition was quick

and unexpected. Kwon was familiar with Zoom and decided to look at the change from in-person to remote instruction as an opportunity to expand his teaching.

Overall he felt the shift went smoothly. Still, Kwon has noticed virtual class has affected some aspects of teaching.

“I am missing the opportunity to sense what’s going on in students’ minds,” Kwon said. “In person, that’s easier than in an online environment ... you can not sense the spirit like energy in an online environment. That’s been hard.”

Kwon has found his way as a professor by just being open with his students about his disability. This allows for him and his students to work together to achieve what is needed through the semester. Kwon simply asks for the communication that he needs, urging his students to be verbal with him throughout the semester.

Kwon does his work in Moodle and by sending emails, he uses a screen reader to examine texts and relies on audio readings to navigate through his computer.

“If I lost my sight 20-30 years ago, I don’t think I would have even studied like this at a graduate level,” Kwon said. “Because at that time there was no screen reader that translates visual information on the computer or screen or phone into speech.”

The programs that Kwon relies on for work are functional, but still not perfect. With the recent surge in remote technology, Kwon has noticed that awareness of necessary improvements has been increasing. He is hopeful technology will continue expanding so visually impaired people like him can find their passions and contribute as important members of their communities.

Detroit Hives have all the buzz



PHOTO COURTESY OF MODEL D
Detroit Hives has taken over empty lots and brought positive change to the community.

AUTUMN PAGE
Staff Reporter

Timothy Paule and Nicole Lindsey’s beekeeping business, Detroit Hives, has gained all the buzz. Lindsey, an Oakland University alumni, and Paule, her partner, are both Detroiters born and raised.

Their inspiration for a business started when they read an article in the summer of 2016 about all the vacant lots in Detroit.

“There were 90,000 vacant lots and there wasn’t a budget to make sure these lots were tended to,” Paule said. “Lawns weren’t getting mowed, people were committing crimes in these lots and it wasn’t safe for the community.”

The article was a call to action, the couple felt like their communities were being left out and that no one cared about how people visit the inner city communities within Detroit.

From there, they brainstormed different businesses they could add to the community.

“We knew it had to be different — something never done before,” Paule said.

They thought about starting a peacock farm or local zoo, a photography studio or selfie area, a camp site, an Airbnb or an urban garden. All these potential businesses had pros for their community, but it wasn’t until Paule got sick that the perfect business idea was created.

In 2016, Paule got a bad cold and a cough. For two months he’d try at home remedies, over-the-counter medicine and antibiotics from a doctor.

Nothing helped his condition — until he got advice from a store owner in Ferndale. The owner recommended that he should try local raw honey.

“I didn’t think it’d work, so I pretty much just laughed and said ‘I tried

everything and that’s not going to work for me,’” he said.

The owner then explained the benefits of local raw honey,

“When you have raw honey it has microscopic traces of pollen and it not only helps to alleviate allergies, but also provides great health benefits,” Paule said.

He started consuming local raw honey nine times a day, and over the course of three weeks his cold and cough had gone away. He was surprised by what local raw honey had done, and he wanted to learn more about it.

He learned that it’s safe to consume if you’re pre-diabetic or diabetic, it’s a natural sweetener and it’s a topical medical solution.

This led Paule down a path of learning everything he could about bees and local raw honey — Lindsey then suggested turning one of the vacant lots into a bee farm.

They pitched the idea and won \$1,600, with 300 people wanting this idea to pass. They contacted the South Eastern Michigan Beekeepers Association and they helped Lindsey and Paule get their business started.

The two took courses to become certified beekeepers, and started their first project for Detroit Hives in 2017. Now, they have over 13 locations, both in and outside of Michigan.

After their story went viral, people reached out to the couple, wanting to start the same project in other states.

Their business expanded to Kansas City, Missouri, and had places like New York, Chicago and Ohio reach out.

Detroit Hive offers volunteering opportunities and anyone interested should email them.

FEATURES

Peter Markus talks education and writing during COVID-19

JEFF THOMAS

Features Editor

Oakland University creative writing professor Peter Markus has spent the last ten months of his work as an educator and creative writer navigating the new socially distanced landscape of COVID-19.

An author and veteran-educator, with decades of experience teaching young writers as part of InsideOut Detroit Literary Arts project and OU's creative writing department, Markus has an old school reverence for the classroom. For him, the educational transition from chalkboards to keyboards, from face to face meetings to class sessions over Zoom, has been far from easy.

Amid the uncertainty of a global pandemic, Markus has found comfort leaning into what he knows best — the power of the written word. Alongside his students, he has persevered through the growing pains of remote learning and pushed his own creative writing to new places.

In this follow-up interview to the one he gave The Oakland Post last August, Markus answered my questions on his takeaways from the fall semester and what it's been like continuing his work as an educator and writer during COVID-19.



PHOTO COURTESY OF OAKLAND.EDU
Professor Peter Markus.

Jeff Thomas: The fall semester was the first semester that you had to teach entirely through remote instruction, in what ways was the experience eye-opening?

Peter Markus: Maybe one positive to come out of this pandemic is that it reaffirmed what I've long believed: that words have the power to connect people. That even despite all else that might be going on around us, no matter how bad things may get, words can bring us together. Yes, even remotely, or through the tiny camera lens and speaker of a laptop. Words can be spoken. Words can be listened to. Conversations can happen. Students can learn. Teachers can teach.

JT: In what ways has your perspective on online instruction shifted? Do you feel better about teaching remotely now than you did when we spoke last August?

PM: I've grown used to doing what I do online, in my slippers and with my dog asleep at my feet. I've gotten used to this new routine. To stepping out of my slippers and into my duck boots drying by the heat duct to go for long walks with my dog at the marsh and the river that offers me a different perspective on what a pandemic might also offer us. Time with ourselves. Or what the poet Jack Gilbert speaks about in one of his poems, that "It is the pace of our living / that makes the world available. / ...it is always our gait of being that decides / how much is seen, what the mystery of us knows, / and what the heart will smell of the landscape." I carry those words with me wherever I go.

JT: When we spoke last August, you described the energy of in-person instruction as "a charged experience." At its best, how would you describe the energy experienced during Zoom class sessions?

PM: What remains "a charged experience" for me, despite how things might be delivered, is that at the heart of what I'm teaching we are talking about the human heart. That's my advantage in teaching young writers to write the writing that is theirs to write and to find the words of others to guide them and to be in conversation with.

JT: Creative writing classes are most productive when there's a healthy relationship between students and their instructor. Without the benefit of in-person class meetings, what kind of steps are you having to take to establish a relationship with your students?

PM: I take the time to check in to ask them how they are doing. It's a simple and easy way to let them know that I realize that they are people first, young people for the most part, and that they need to tend to those people matters of emotional well-being before they and I can begin to think of them as merely students — and beyond that to be or see themselves as poets or writers.

JT: How would you say COVID-19 has impacted your students? Has the pandemic had a noticeable influence on the creative writing work your students are submitting?

PM: I'm sure it's informed what they've been writing. How could it not. But I've also encouraged them to use writing as a way to make sense of things and also as a way of going back through memory and language to a time, such as childhood, that might offer them some solace. That was especially true in the Fall with my course offered through the Honors College, "The Poetics of Childhood." That was an especially fruitful experience for me, to watch students, I mean people, connect and create a sense of real community through the stories that were told. Zoom as a kind of "campfire" experience where we were able to gather each week on Wednesday evenings for three hours to tell stories that might not otherwise have gotten told. Which is always, for me, as a teacher of creative writing, the end-all hope.

JT: What are your thoughts on schools reopening, the decision to have students and teachers return to the classroom despite cases still being high?

PM: I think we're rushing things for the wrong reasons. I don't think we're thinking of the kids but only the economics of schools as being our primary means of daycare.

JT: How has COVID-19 impacted your work with InsideOut?

PM: I'm still able to do my teaching with InsideOut in the same way that I'm still able to do my teaching here at OU. The biggest difference is how third graders are able to negotiate the mute button and other technical issues that aren't as big of an obstacle for college kids. But I do miss being able to walk around an actual classroom giving out high-fives when a nine-year old writes something sublime as they are prone to do.

JT: You've been in the process of writing and publishing a book about your late father. How is this book going to be different from other books you've written? How did the process of writing this book compare to the process of writing your other books like "We Make Mud" or "Bob, or Man on Boat"? In what ways did COVID-19 impact the writing and publishing process of your upcoming book?

PM: This new book, "When Our Fathers Return to Us as Birds", which will be out in September from Wayne State University Press [as part of its] "Made in Michigan series", is different mainly in that it's a book of poems whereas my work up until now has been mostly prose fiction. The exception being "Inside My Pencil", my non-fiction book about the teaching that I do with InsideOut. I was writing these poems long before [COVID-19] came along and as you've noted what triggered this new book was the dying and death of my father. And even since [COVID-19] I've been still working on new poems, which feel like I'm working towards a new book which will also be a collection of poems which I've already begun calling by title, "What Remains". Some of those poems definitely seem informed by the pandemic, as this title might suggest. I can't say I'm as interested these days in making stuff up. Fiction seems to have lost some of its magic for me of late since I started paying closer attention to the things around me, or what Jim Harrison says in a poem, "Listen to the gods. / They're shouting in your ear every second."

JT: How has your time as a creative writing instructor affected your work as a creative writer?

PM: I'm not the kind of writer who feels aggrieved by the teaching that I do. I don't see teaching as taking away precious time from my own pages. I find pleasure in talking about the pages of other writers and watching new pages rise up at the hands of other younger writers. On my desk right now are open books and notes and this machine that allows me to see into the lives of other humans in their houses. What a great thing to be able to do. To build a life this way and to help others build their own lives out of things, words, both temporary and, potentially at least, permanent. To borrow again from Jack Gilbert, a poem I turn to often, "When we slow, / the garden can choose what we notice."

'Below Zero': Netflix's new chilling thriller

BRIDGET JANIS

Staff Reporter

With the snowstorm that hit us this week, "Below Zero" seemed like a fitting movie to watch. On Netflix's top charts recently, this film offers a thrilling plot.

Originally a Spanish movie titled "Bajocero," just like "Dark," "3%" or "The Platform," in "Below Zero" Netflix has dubbed an English voice over the film.

The movie begins as main character Martin (Javier Gutiérrez) starts his new job as a National Police Corps officer in Spain. He is assigned to transfer a handful of dangerous prisoners to another facility with his new partner, Montesinos (Isak Férriz).

It's getting dark out, it's freezing and there are some unexpected visitors. The van is ambushed, and Montesinos is killed, leaving Martin alone to deal with the prisoners inside and the trouble that's outside.

Each prisoner is in their own individual cell in the van, but soon, due to the conditions, Martin seems to become outnumbered. The villain on the outside Miguel (Karra Elejalde) wants one specific person from the inside, and he wants him alive. The only way out is by unlocking the door with the key, and if they don't Miguel threatens to kill them all.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NETFLIX
'Below Zero' on Netflix boasts a thrilling plot.

The characters are well developed, but it takes a minute to get to know them and the surprises they all had behind their characters. They go through many conflicts throughout the film, like the heat being shut off and someone swallowing the only key to get out.

The movie has the English audio over it, but it wouldn't have been the worst idea to just add subtitles. Sometimes with dubbed films some of the aggression or tension that is within the dialogue is lost, which can really change the feel of a movie.

There was always something new to find out or some sort of plot twist happening. It was marketed as a thriller movie, and it definitely had some suspenseful and shocking scenes. The twists weren't too crazy, just enough to keep the audience entertained.

There is also a bit of mystery throughout the film. Viewers will wonder: why is this even happening in the first place? Why does Miguel want that one specific prisoner that's inside? The unknown adds a fun element, thinking about these questions was probably the best part of the movie.

Overall, the film was okay, something entertaining to watch for the night. It had a simple plot line, it was a thrilling watch and was easy to follow. The cold winter night setting fit the film very well, still with "Below Zero" being the title, the cold didn't have quite the impact you'd expect.

You could either love or hate the ending, depending on how you feel about some ethical questions the film presents. In the end, viewers will have to decide how they feel about Martin, a simple man just wanting to get prisoners from point A to point B.

Rating: 3/5 stars

Grab some popcorn for 'Defending Jacob': It's worth it

LAUREN REID

Sports Editor

Produced by Apple TV+ and based on the crime drama novel *Defending Jacob* by William Landay, 'Defending Jacob' is flawlessly suspenseful, cryptic and emotional, as parents Andy (Chris Evans) and Laurie (Michelle Dockery) Barber grapple with the fact their son Jacob (Jaeden Martell) could be a murderer.

Evans' Andy is a Massachusetts district attorney assigned to the murder case of Ben Rifkin (Liam Kilbreth) — Jacob's classmate who was stabbed to death at a local park. Unbeknownst to Andy that his own son will soon become the prime suspect, he pinpoints a potential suspect, sexual predator Leonard Patz (Daniel Henshall), but can't gather enough evidence to connect and question him.

After perusing online forums, Andy discovers Jacob's friend Derek (Ben Taylor) commented, accusing Jacob of owning a knife and murdering Ben. When Andy goes to search Jacob's room, he finds a knife in his nightstand drawer. Jacob insists he's innocent, but Andy and Laurie wrestle with the truth.

The miniseries continues to explore the Barbers' increasingly unimaginable family dynamic, their isolation from normalcy and the push to face impossible obstacles.

'Defending Jacob' features an extremely unpredictable plot — as characters and viewers jump back and forth between what to believe. With a huge ending twist, there's absolutely no way to anticipate what's ahead.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LA TIMES
'Defending Jacob' stars Chris Evans and Michelle Dockery.

Evans, Dockery and Martell are phenomenal throughout the eight episodes — at some moments they seem a happy, content and loving family, but it's clear they've been confronted with a situation that will never fade, regardless of the outcome.

Martell is perfectly suspicious as 14-year-old Jacob, maneuvering between fear, confusion and any emotion

a teen would understandably feel in his position.

Every character has a purpose and every scene has you glued to the screen.

As someone who can't binge watch well at all (hello, 10 p.m. bedtime), I really appreciated the length of the show. There's more than enough time for every character to grow and develop, and every plot point to be addressed — but the show never drags on.

More than anything, I loved being in the dark alongside most characters in the show. As much as I wanted to know who killed Ben and why, I liked being skeptical of Jacob, or reassured by him, along with his parents, classmates, etc. It allowed for an optimal environment for twists and turns — all of which were absolutely nuts, by the way.

The setting was gorgeous too. Taking place in Newton, Massachusetts, everyone seemed to have their life together. The irony of the beautiful home, kitchen straight out of HGTV and "picture-perfect" family added a creepy, enigmatic feeling.

Overall, I highly recommend checking this one out. It's equipped with all the elements of a good mystery, but the family component makes it so much more personal. When you start to feel bad for the parents of a potential killer or even the suspect himself, you know the writing is good.

Rating: 5/5 stars

SPORTS

Men’s soccer wins 5-0, Borczak scores hat trick

MICHAEL PEARCE
Editor-in-Chief

Men’s soccer kicked off their season with a resounding 5-0 win over Robert Morris University (RMU) on the strength of Dylan Borczak’s big game.

Borczak scored a hat trick after the 15-month break, as well as assisting on Owen Smith’s goal, which put the match at 4-0. After being responsible for the first four goals of a 5-0 rout, Borczak was named Horizon League Offensive Player of the Week.

“Dylan was very dynamic, lively, and committed tonight,” Head Coach Eric Pogue said via email. “He was aggressive going to goal right from the start of the game and was unlucky not to have a few more goals, but three goals and one assist is very impressive. Credit his teammates getting him the ball early and often and making sure he got off to a hot start.”

The men’s soccer team was tied for first in the Horizon League preseason poll, and shut out their first opponent. However, getting off to a good start isn’t everything for Pogue and his team.

Despite a 5-0 win, the team is looking to improve upon a fast start. The team faces the preseason No. 1 University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC) Flames, who tied with Oakland for first in the preseason polls.

“5-0 is a great way to start, but there is always room for improvement,” Pogue said via email. “Going on the road to play the best team in our conference, besides us, in UIC, we know that we will need to be even more precise, as there is not a lot of room for error when you play a top team like UIC.”

In their first match since 2019, the Golden Grizzlies got off to a fast start. Borczak’s first goal came at the 10 minute mark on an unassisted look.

Borczak outshot the entire RMU team by himself, taking eight shots compared to the Colonials’ one. Five of Borczak’s shots were on goal, four more than the entire Colonials team.



PHOTO BY JOSE JUAREZ / OU ATHLETICS
The men’s soccer team celebrates their first win of the season. Dylan Borczak led the team, scoring three goals and assisting on one.

Since the match took place in February, it was played in the OU dome, located near the soccer, baseball and softball fields. According to Pogue, the turf, which is usually the team’s practice field, made no difference for his team.

“The turf is no big issue for us, as we train in here everyday, in fact I think we play a better brand of football on turf than on grass, as grass slows us down a bit at times,” Pogue said via email. “I like to think of this as the ‘Terror Dome.’ I wouldn’t want to be an incoming team coming to play us here, as we are pretty special in the Grizz Dome.”

The Golden Grizzlies defense was able to keep the Colonials in check without fouling much. Only one card was given the entire match, and it was given to Adam McAleenan with minutes remaining.

The Oakland defense held RMU to a lone shot, and goalkeeper Finn Jurak recorded his first clean sheet of the year.

“Oakland soccer has always been known as a strong defensive team that limits other teams opportunities, so that doesn’t change,” Pogue said via email. “Reid Sproat and Kieran Hayes were great in the back for us limiting RMU’s opportunities, but our defense was a total team effort ... we take great pride and satisfaction in getting the shutout and only one shot on us all game.”

The men’s soccer team’s next two opponents are UIC, who they play in Chicago on Wednesday, Feb. 10 and Purdue Fort Wayne, who the Golden Grizzlies host on Tuesday, Feb. 16.

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Women's basketball defeats Robert Morris 84-77 on Saturday, sweeps weekend series



SOPHIE HUME | PHOTO EDITOR
Teneea Heston making a move at the elbow against the Robert Morris University Colonials on Saturday, Feb. 6.

ANDREW BERNSDORF
Staff Reporter

On Saturday, Feb. 6, Oakland University women's basketball completed the sweep against Horizon League newcomer Robert Morris University. The Golden Grizzlies won 84-77, shooting 52% from the field and 47% from 3-point range.

Oakland had five players score in double digits: Kahlaijah Dean scored a total of 21 points, followed by Alona Blackwell with 14, Autumn Kissman with 12 and both Breanne Betty and Lamariyee "Suge" Williams with 11.

The Golden Grizzlies dominated the paint —grabbing 35 rebounds compared to RMU's 28. Kissman led the team with seven rebounds. Dominating the defensive end, the Grizzlies forced 15 turnovers throughout the game. The team took advantage of these turnovers, scoring 20 points off of those steals.

The Golden Grizzlies controlled the first

three quarters of the game, as a couple runs put the team up 63-43 at the half.

In a GrizzVision interview, Head Coach Jeff Tungate said the Golden Grizzlies are looking good heading into the final parts of the season.

"It's February now, and we have to start playing our best and peaking at the right time," Tungate said. "The last couple of days we shot the ball well and for three quarters we really [put] our best game together on both ends."

Oakland's bench tallied up seven of the team's 25 points in the third quarter — helping solidify the lead. Entering the 4th quarter, the Grizzlies were up 69-50.

The fourth quarter showed Oakland's strength in the paint — where they scored eight of their 15 points. RMU didn't quit though, going on a 14-3 run and cutting the lead down to six with about a minute left to play.

The Grizzlies held on and secured the game from the line with a couple of free throws, winning 84-77.

Despite a slower fourth quarter, the Golden Grizzlies never fell behind. They never trailed after taking a 20-16 lead in the first quarter, and shot really well from three point range, scoring seven of 15 shots from behind the arc. The Grizzlies were also dominant on the defensive side of the ball.

On top of a victory, head coach Jeff Tungate tallied his 100th win with the program. With four games left in the season, Tungate says the team is in a good position.

"We have to keep this momentum going, it's hard to believe we only have four regular season games left," Tungate said. "We just have to keep improving and keep getting better every day."

The Golden Grizzlies are currently 7th in the Horizon League with a record of 10-9 overall and a 10-6 conference record.

This week, the team faces a road test as they take on the second ranked team in the conference, the Milwaukee Panthers. The two game series starts Feb. 12 at 6 p.m.

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Oakland women win vs. RMU, Dean scores 25



PHOTO COURTESY OF GOLDENGRIZZLIES.COM

Kahlaijah Dean directing the offense against Green Bay. Against Robert Morris, she scored 25 points and hit four 3-pointers.

MICHAEL PEARCE

Editor-in-Chief

After back-to-back losses against the Cleveland State Vikings, the women's basketball team returned home for a two-game series against Robert Morris University (RMU), starting Friday, Feb. 5.

With six games remaining on their schedule, the Golden Grizzlies added another win to their record, defeating the Colonials 83-71. Once again, Kahlaijah Dean led the way for Oakland, scoring 25 points.

Coming into the game, the Golden Grizzlies sat at seventh out of 12 in the conference at 8-6, needing as many wins as possible to get into the top half of the conference. In an unusual season, where not every team will play the same amount of games, every win counts.

"February's when you want to play your best basketball," Head Coach Jeff Tungate said. "Robert Morris is a good team, and I'm really pleased with how we're running our offense, we shot the ball really well."

Both teams took their time getting warmed up in what turned out to be a shootout. The first quarter ended, knotted up at 16 apiece. Autumn Kissman played a pivotal role in the first, grabbing two offensive rebounds, scoring four points and dishing out two assists. Kissman would finish with 18 points and four rebounds.

Kayla Luchenbach came off the bench and provided some instant offense for the Golden Grizzlies, hitting a 3-pointer to tie the game at 16, then hitting two free throws to start off the second quarter.

Despite the game being within one possession for nearly 11 minutes, the Colonials pulled out to an eight-point lead after three and a half minutes in the second quarter. A 10-0 run prompted Tungate to take a timeout to adjust.

Following the timeout, the Golden Grizzlies went on a run of their own, scoring 11 unanswered points to take a 29-28 lead.

Dean hit two 3-pointers during the run, heating up after a slow start by her standards.

Dean would score 13 points in the second quarter, propelling the Golden Grizzlies to a 44-40 halftime lead. Not only did Dean have 16 at halftime, she had three steals, four rebounds and two assists.

"She's playing with so much confidence right now and everybody feeds off of that confidence," Tungate said. "She has the three, she can take it to the basket and she knocks down free throws. That's what makes her such a special player."

Other Golden Grizzlies with an impact in the first half were Teneea Heston (six points, two 3-pointers), Breanna Perry (four rebounds) and Breanne Beatty (three points, three rebounds).

Two more Golden Grizzlies got in on the 3-point party in the third, as Beatty and Perry hit threes to increase the Oakland lead to seven with five minutes remaining in the quarter. In total, seven Oakland players hit at least one 3-pointer.

The precipitation from range let up to start the final quarter, with both teams working the ball inside more as the game continued. Robert Morris was able to get back in the game as the Golden Grizzlies turned the ball over twice and fouled three times to start the fourth.

After the team's sluggish start to the fourth, Dean hit her fourth 3-pointer to keep the Colonials at bay. As she has done all season, Dean led the Oakland offense to a winning fourth quarter, recording six points, two assists and three rebounds in the last quarter alone. Kissman also had a big fourth, with eight of her 18 coming in the final quarter on 4-4 shooting.

The Golden Grizzlies will travel to Milwaukee for their final road series of the season on Friday, Feb. 12 and Saturday, Feb. 13. They close out the season at home against the Northern Kentucky Norse the following weekend, Feb. 19-20.

Vikings top Golden Grizzlies in Friday night battle

MATTHEW SCHEIDEL

Staff Reporter

The Cleveland State Vikings defeated the Oakland University Golden Grizzlies 80-72 on Friday, Feb. 5 at the O'rena.

Leading the Grizzlies with 20 points, Jalen Moore added 11 assists, giving him his eighth double-double of the season. Micah Parrish had a double-double of his own with 13 points and 12 rebounds.

The Vikings got off to a hot start from the field, hitting their first five shots. However, they quickly got into foul trouble, with the Grizzlies getting into the bonus with over 12 minutes left in the first half.

Oakland's zone defense started to settle in at the halfway point of the first half, as Cleveland State went about three and a half minutes without a basket. Then some missed opportunities and turnovers swung momentum back into the Vikings' favor.

The Vikings shot 63% in the first half, getting out to a 46-33 lead at the break. Head Coach Greg Kampe blamed himself at the half for poor game planning.

"That's not the kids' fault, that's my fault," Kampe said to ESPN3's Genna Rose.

In the second half, the hot shooting from the Vikings continued — they started 5-6 from the field.

The Grizzlies also started out hot in the second half, then went cold. It seemed like every time Oakland tried to close the gap, the Vikings had an answer.

"I think every time we closed the gap, we [then] had a stupid play," Kampe said. "We were closing the gap in the first half, and we come down and we fire a bomb in transition. We had gotten [stop after stop], we cut [the lead] to five points, we got the basketball, let's go get it to [Daniel] Oladapo. They haven't guarded him down there so let's go get a good

shot. [We didn't do that]."

This trend continued all the way until the final media timeout — Oakland had the lead down to 10 with the ball coming out of the timeout. Moore was fouled behind the three-point line, resulting in three free throws to make it a seven-point game.

After a couple made free throws to make it a nine-point game, Oladapo slipped and lost the ball, leading to a Vikings' layup on the fast break for the dagger, despite a late surge by the Grizzlies.

After the game, Kampe continued to pin the blame on himself.

"I did a really bad job tonight," he said. "Our game plan was awful. Maybe I didn't have enough respect for their ability to score. And I knew they were defensive oriented — but what we did in the first half, it was not a good game plan. They executed very well and they were ripping us apart."

Kampe said his team made adjustments in the second half, but it wasn't enough.

"I thought we did everything we could to get us back in the game," he said. "We just couldn't make shots."

According to Kampe, the game was a learning experience for the team.

"We made a lot of mistakes," Kampe said. "We'll figure it out, we'll get better. I got great kids — right now they're mad at me and I'm mad at them and they're gonna continue to be mad at me because I'm not gonna let situations like this go by without correcting them and learning from it. And they'll learn, I like my team and I like our chances. I like our chances tomorrow, so we'll see what happens."

The Grizzlies fell to 8-7 in conference play and 8-14 overall.

Against the Vikings again on Saturday, the Golden Grizzlies dropped the second game, losing 80-78 in the final seconds.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSE JUAREZ

Kevin Kangu was honored this past weekend as Oakland men's basketball's only senior.

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