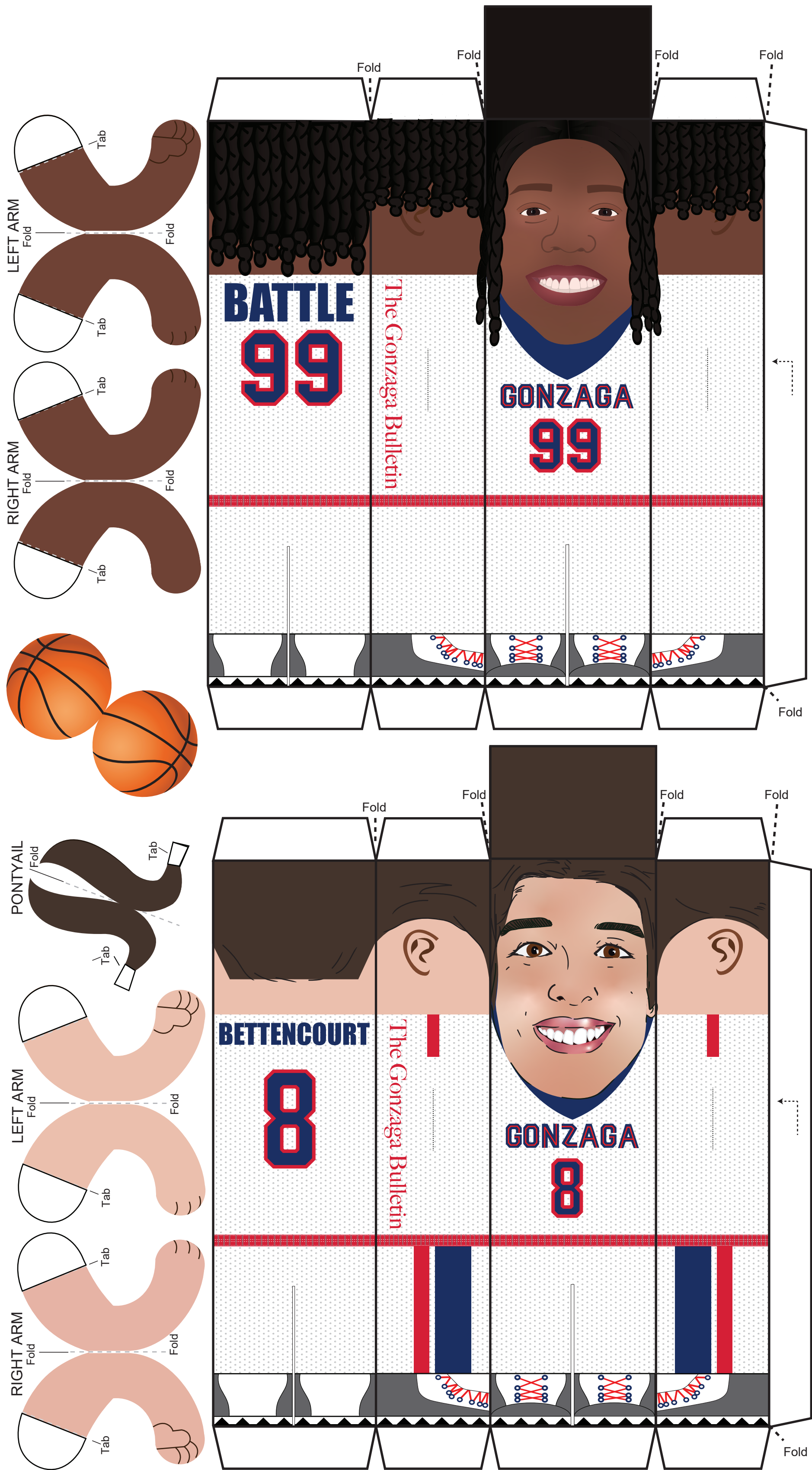


MINI ZAGS

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The Duke Blue Devils punched their ticket to the Big Dance after winning the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament.



Oregon forward Brandon Angel dunks on Julian Reese of Maryland in an 83-79 win for the Ducks on Jan. 5.



Gonzaga celebrates its first win over Saint Mary's this year in the WCC Tournament Championship.

Gonzaga Bulletin Roundtable: Sports writers make their tournament picks

Projected Winner

Choosing the winner is easily the most predictable aspect of the tournament. No. 1 seeds have won 64% of the 68-team tournaments, with 25 total, and seven out of the last eight. No. 2 seeds have been crowned a total of five times, and No. 3 seeds have won four times. Only four other seeds (four, six, seven and eight) have won a tournament.

Zach: No. 1 Duke

The Duke Blue Devils are a team everyone loves to hate. Often maligned but never ignored, Jon Scheyer's group is my pick to cut down the nets in San Antonio. With three potential top-10 NBA Draft picks, the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament and regular season champions are the most talented team in college basketball. The trio of star freshman players Cooper Flagg, Khaman Maluach and Kon Kneuppel highlight a team that boasts top-five offensive and defensive metrics in KenPom. Scheyer has improved his teams' finish in each season as a head coach, and this year his team looks poised to win it all.

Henry: No. 1 Auburn

Recency bias might make some doubt Auburn's championship potential, but I'm not falling for it. The Tigers were so dominant during nonconference play and into Southeastern Conference competition that a 1-3 stretch before the NCAA Tournament had no impact on their placement as the No. 1 overall seed. In March, it's all about star power, and head coach Bruce Pearl has unanimous First-Team AP All-American Johni Broome. A polished scorer and elite rim protector, Broome has everything it takes to lead Auburn through what could be a challenging South Region.

Cam: No. 1 Houston

There are a bevy of legendary NCAA coaches that are in this year's tournament, so it's easy to overlook Kelvin Sampson and a Houston team that doesn't have the pizzazz or flair that the other No. 1 seeds do, but that's why I love them. The top three scorers on the team shoot

efficiently from beyond the arc, and despite a lack of size, the Cougars excel at dominating the glass. This team has been in KenPom's top five all year long and are firmly located within the infamous trapezoid of excellence. Sorry Zags, but the Sweet 16 streak ends here.

Brooks: No. 1 Florida

Over the course of the year, I've slowly fallen in love with Florida, and I believe that they possess every quality necessary for a championship. They have stellar on-ball defenders, bigs that can stretch the floor and pound the offensive glass (Florida's 38.1% offensive rebounding percentage is eighth nationally), a top-tier bench and an elite senior guard in Walter Clayton. Florida also excels in big games, with wins on the road against Alabama and Auburn. The Gators face a gauntlet West region, but this team is so well-rounded and deep that it's nearly impossible to envision it losing.

Kyle: No. 1 Duke

Yes, Cooper Flagg's injury is concerning, but this Duke team is the perfect recipe for a tournament winner. Even without the future No. 1 overall pick in the ACC Tournament, Duke took care of business on the backs of its stellar supporting cast. The Blue Devils can run with 10 guys on any given night, a huge reason why they are top-five in offensive and defensive metrics. Despite an uncharacteristically weak ACC schedule, Duke beat Auburn and Arizona before throttling Illinois by 43 points on Feb. 22. Duke is a perfect blend of size, shooting, starpower and depth, with a good draw in the East Region.

By ZACH WHITE, HENRY KRUEGER, CAM MCCANN, KYLE SWEENEY AND BROOKS COLEMAN

Sleeper Team

A "sleeper team" is a program that most have undervalued, leaving it out of the limelight. This subsection of team genre is one that many use the term "Cinderella team" as well, though that is often saved for the most drastic of sleepers.

Zach: No. 11 Drake

The Drake Bulldogs have hit their stride this season despite losing their head coach and last year's star player to West Virginia. First-year head coach Ben McCollum was named MVC Coach of the Year in his first year at the D-I level as he led his team to its third-straight conference tournament championship. McCollum brought along Bennett Stirtz from Northwest Missouri State, and Stirtz has repaid the move by putting up standout numbers. Drake will face a Missouri team that has lost four of its last five games, so the Bulldogs are poised to show their bite this year.

Henry: No. 12 UC San Diego

The No. 12 Tritons have become a trendy sleeper pick for good reason. Their No. 35 NET ranking is the highest of any true mid-major program after finishing 28-4 this season. UC San Diego also shoots nearly 37% from three and has the fourth-best steal rate in the country — a two-way combination that often translates well to the tournament. While I don't see the Tritons getting past Auburn, Louisville or Creighton in the Sweet 16, surviving the first weekend is quite the feat for a program in its tournament debut.

Cam: No. 5 Oregon

Dana Altman has been known to maximize his teams during the Big Dance, and with a top-40 offense and defense according to KenPom, he'll have plenty to work with this go-around. Leading scorer Nate Bittle is shooting 51% from the field and is one of four Ducks that average double-digit points. Four of the team's top-five

scorers also shoot over 80% from the line, making this team dangerous in a close late-game scenario, as most tournament games end up being. The Ducks have already beaten No. 2 Alabama this season, but a Cooper-Flagg sized shadow looms over this team's ability to make an Elite Eight.

Brooks: No. 11 VCU

VCU is far removed from its run to the Final Four in 2011, but make no mistake — the No. 11 Rams are back atop the Atlantic 10, and they're legit. More importantly, their bracket path is littered with favorable matchups. BYU can certainly score, but it's also highly turnover-prone — an area where VCU's defense excels. No. 2 Alabama could run into similar issues in the Sweet 16, as the team has been sloppy offensively at times and has struggled against slow teams like VCU. I doubt the Rams have enough to advance to the Final Four, but an Elite Eight run is certainly feasible.

Kyle: No. 4 Maryland

The West Region is loaded. With Florida, Saint John's, Texas Tech, Memphis, Missouri, UConn and even talented, middling rosters like Kansas and Arkansas, the region champion will be battle-tested. However, don't count out the Terrapins. Maryland boasts quite possibly the best frontcourt in the country in Derik Queen and Julian Reese and one of the most underrated guards in the NCAA in Ja'Kobi Gillespie (14.7 points, 5.0 assists, 41% from three). With talent galore in the West, any team could lose at any moment. Don't let Maryland fly under the radar.

Hot Take

This section is strictly reserved for opinions that go against the norm and are to shock readers into believing that the unlikely can still come to fruition. With the concept of March Madness, hot takes can seem lukewarm just four days in, allowing for otherwise foolhardy ideas to come true.

Zach: No. 2 St. John's will face an early exit

Though St. John's has made significant strides in its second year under head coach Rick Pitino, the writing is on the wall for the Red Storm to underachieve in March. After its first Big East Tournament win since 2000, St. John's seems primed for a deep run in the NCAA Tournament. However, no top-two seed that started the year unranked has gone on to the Final Four. The Johnnies' 3-point shooting percentage ranks them 335th nationally, a stat that could sink the ship for the Red Storm. Potential matchups against Kansas, Arkansas and Texas Tech could spell trouble.

Henry: Only two SEC teams will reach the Elite Eight

I have both Auburn and Florida in my Final Four, but I don't see any other SEC programs making it that far. I'll even take it a step further and say that no other teams from the conference will make it to the Elite Eight. Despite the SEC sending a record-setting 14 member schools to the tournament, I think the gap between the top contenders and the rest of the field is significant. There's too many questions about teams like Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama to consider them contenders.

Cam: Multiple 11 and 13 seeds will advance

The No. 11 seed has been hot lately, going 28-24 against No. 6 seeds since 2011. Not only this, but they've gone 31-48 against No. 3 seeds and 7-0 against No. 14 seeds in the second round. Those First Four teams are always dangerous, and Drake's program-best year can take the 30-win team well past Missouri. No. 13 seeds have the opposite level of momentum, going 11-41 since

2011, but with programs like Grand Canyon University, Akron and High Point on the rise, the No. 4 seed line has never been in as much trouble as they are in 2025. A double-digit seed has made the Sweet 16 each of the last 15 tournaments, and that doesn't end this year.

Brooks: No. 14 Lipscomb will upset No. 3 Iowa State

The more I look into this, the more confident I feel in the pick. Simply put, Lipscomb is a terrible matchup for the Cyclones. For all of the qualities that ISU's defense has, the one negative is its 3-point defense — and it happens to face a Lipscomb squad that takes almost half of its shots from deep. ISU's defense also centers around creating turnovers, and Lipscomb has the 22nd-lowest turnover percentage in the country. Add in the loss of ISU star Keshon Gilbert, and you have all the trappings of a first weekend upset.

Kyle: No. 8 Gonzaga will reach the Final Four

All bias aside, Gonzaga University is an under-seeded eight seed. The team is ninth overall in KenPom rankings and eighth in NET Rankings. Why? GU hasn't finished close games, with GU's eight losses combining for 41 total points. It's been a perplexing anomaly for the Zags, as they take care of the ball with Ryan Nembhard (NCAA-leading 9.8 assists per game) and are the country's No. 3 team from the line. However, their recent victory over Saint Mary's proves that this team is ready, and with Houston possibly missing big-man J'Wan Roberts, GU has a great chance of winning its region.

See *The Gonzaga Bulletin's* website for NCAA coverage.



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SAMUEL RAINS IG: SAMUEL RAINS

Gonzaga University men's basketball secures its 26th consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance after defeating Saint Mary's in the WCC Tournament championship in Las Vegas. See page 9 to read about the upcoming matchup for the Zags against No. 9 Georgia.

Bye-bye broadcast, hello digital media

By TAYLOR NICHOLS

Gonzaga University's broadcast majors will see an updated curriculum starting next semester. Beginning in the fall, the integrated media department will introduce a new major that will replace the current broadcast and electronic media studies program. Matt McCormick, GU associate professor of art and integrated media, announced the new digital media production major to integrated media students on Feb. 27 via email. McCormick, who was hired in 2018 with the goal of diversifying the broadcast curriculum and offering more film and video production courses, said that talks about the new major have happened for years, and that ideas surrounding it started coming together when he arrived on campus. "[The] courses proved very popular, and we discussed updating the entire major, but then the pandemic hit and slowed everything down," McCormick said. "It's been a long time in the making." John Collett, an assistant professor for GU's integrated media department, said he

gives all his praise to McCormick for the improved major. "Matt McCormick deserves a lot of the credit here. He was the architect behind updating the major and has had exceptional vision for how to best serve our students in media production," Collett said. "He also has put in countless hours in this process of updating the major. His service to the department and vision should be commended." In addition to notifying students of the digital media production major in his initial email, McCormick sent a follow-up email containing additional information regarding the transition between majors. According to the document, current broadcast students have the option to continue with their major, which would be the easiest choice for senior students close to graduation, or transition to the new major if they choose to do so. The current broadcast major requires 36 credits, and the digital media production major requires 39, according to the document. The document also includes both majors' degree requirements, with the new major offering more filmmaking



EMMA LARSON IG: 3mmal Larson

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Broadcast students prepare for a newscast in the Advanced TV Production course.

GSBA's next leaders hope to boost student engagement

By HENRY KRUEGER

The Gonzaga Student Body Association will soon welcome new leadership as President-elect Alyssa Johnston-Guzman and Vice President-elect Charlie MacDonald prepare to take office, championing a vision centered on connectivity, unity and enrichment. The Southern California natives met as second-year students in GU's Comprehensive Leadership Program. Both were actively involved in student government, and MacDonald saw potential in their partnership early on. "I was thinking about how I wanted to grow as a person in GSBA and how I wanted my GSBA to look in the coming years," MacDonald said. "I talked to Alyssa, and we both kind of acknowledged that we wouldn't mind running together. It



Alyssa Johnston-Guzman



Charlie MacDonald

really just grew from there." Johnston-Guzman, a political science and public relations major who serves as GSBA's chief of staff, felt her leadership experiences paired well with MacDonald's perspective studying business administration and representing the School of Business as its elected senator. The two have also held different positions outside of student government. Johnston-Guzman has served as the Spike Nites coordinator, Residence Hall Association president and a student ambassador during her time at GU. MacDonald is a financial analyst in the university's Investment Club and an associate with the Investment Banking Accelerator program. "I feel like that's one of the most obvious things that balances out our ticket," Johnston-Guzman said. "We were just talking about this the other day — how fortunate we are to work well together. A lot of our dreams and visions align, but we have very different leadership experiences on campus. That allows us to bring different ideas and perspectives to the table to best represent students." Johnston-Guzman and MacDonald

SEE GSBA PAGE 3

GU responds to US actions against DEI in education

By NATALIE KELLER

Joan Iva Fawcett, Gonzaga University's dean for social justice leadership and community empowerment, had two words to describe her reaction to the United States Department of Education's recent actions against diversity, equity and inclusion practices: frustrated and challenged. On Feb. 14, the department issued a Dear Colleague Letter calling for all schools that receive federal funding to stop considering race in processes such as admission, hiring and compensation. While the four-page document does not carry the force of law, it said schools found not in compliance with the guidance could lose their federal funding. Since then, statements by Washington's superintendent of public instruction, the American Council on Education and GU's president have pushed back against the letter, creating an air of uncertainty for GU and higher education as a whole. "There is so much confusion and muddiness," Fawcett said. "We're going to continue to stay the course for students, because [DEI] is central to our mission as a university." The Dear Colleague Letter, one of the political shifts coming down from

President Donald Trump's White House, stated that giving preference to someone because of their race is discriminatory — even if these practices are employed to achieve "nebulous goals" such as diversity and social justice. "For decades, schools have been operating on the pretext that selecting students for 'diversity' or similar euphemisms is not selecting them based on race. No longer," Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Craig Trainor said in a Feb. 15 statement. "Students should be assessed according to merit, accomplishment, and character — not prejudged by the color of their skin." Robin Kelley, GU's chief diversity officer, said the letter misconstrued the purpose and importance of DEI practices. "The intention of those programs is to be inclusive, not exclusive, and to make sure that everyone can thrive," Kelley said. "DEI programs, on their face, are not discriminatory." Washington Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal has shared similar thoughts. On Feb. 20, the superintendent issued a statement saying that since the Dear Colleague Letter does

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Creating leaders and connections

Payne Center hires sophomores and juniors as peer mentors

By SEAN COUGHLIN

As the Payne Center for Leadership Development looks to revamp its program, Gonzaga University upperclassmen have a new opportunity for mentorship with the Experiential Leadership Institute next year.

The Payne Center received applications through March 7 to hire student mentors for the institute. The institute is a yearlong program for sophomores and juniors and aims to provide a crash course in leadership.

The institute meets Wednesday nights from 7-9 p.m. For the first hour, students either have a hands-on experience or a lecture, and for the second hour, they work on a Community Impact Project.

“It’s kind of like a service project but they work with campus partners or off-campus partners to collaborate and find that common good to create the project,” said Jon Williams, the institute’s program coordinator.

Mentors play an important role in guiding and leading mentees’ projects. Many of them have previous experience with the institute, which helps steer students in the right direction when they are brainstorming and executing their projects.

“As a mentor, you’re just like ‘OK that’s great, here are the potholes and the fences and the brick walls you’re going to be running into when you’re trying to do that,’” said student Juliana Peterson, a Payne fellow who supports the program.

However, the Payne Center is looking to reimagine the institute for the 2025-2026 academic year to increase retention and involvement in the program. The yearlong program can cause issues with projects as small groups can lose a member or two in the spring if mentees choose to study abroad. The program’s time has also been an issue.

“We’ve seen that late night [can] be really difficult for a lot our students and staff,” Williams said.

To address these issues, the institute is looking into transitioning to a single-semester system and moving the program’s time to Thursdays from 4-6 p.m. It is also considering changes to the program’s content, particularly with the projects. While the Payne Center is planning to keep the Community Impact Projects as part of the institute, Williams said the institute hopes to condense the project into a three-to five-week-long activity. After the program concludes, mentees will be free to continue pursuing their project but with less oversight and guidance than the current model.

“They’re welcome to come back to the Payne Center to look for guidance into the next semester, and we’ll still fund their project into the next semester, but we won’t actively be working with them anymore,” Peterson said. “We’ve given them all the tools to self-do it.”



JULIA SCHLECHT PATINO IG: @schlecht_tino_photog

(From left) Payne Center staff Maddie Simmons, Jon Williams and Ayaka Dohi guide the student leadership program.

The institute is also looking to add a more reflective element to the program. Next year, during the second hour of the program, mentors will be responsible for leading small groups of about six to 10 people in a reflective dialogue about the meaning and personal practice of leadership. The Payne Center is hoping that

“

First and foremost, we really want students to have those leadership skills that they can use in a leadership position.

Jon Williams, program coordinator

these reflections will help mentors connect students with leadership positions on campus that fit their leadership style, whether that’s being a resident assistant, Gonzaga Student Body Association senator or club president.

The ultimate goal is still to develop mentees’ knowledge and confidence in the art of leadership.

“First and foremost, we really want students to have those leadership skills that they can use in a leadership position,” Williams said.

Mentors typically spend about three to five hours a week in the role and will be paid — a first for the program. While applications were open to everyone, Williams said he believes that the position is an especially good fit for involved upperclassmen who are looking to step back while still supporting the community during their last years at GU.

“We think that there’s so much experience they’ve gotten at Gonzaga, and we would love to have them give back in the program and talk to younger students and create that next generation of student leaders,” Williams said.

Sean Coughlin is a staff writer.

LETTER

Continued from Page 1

not hold legal power, Washington schools should disregard it.

“While the words have unfortunately been weaponized, diversity, equity, and inclusion have long been core components of our educational system,” Reykdal said in the statement. “There are legal paths for the federal government to restrict federal funding, and a Dear Colleague Letter is not one of those paths.”

GU President Thayne McCulloh has also responded to the letter. In a Feb. 26 email sent to GU students and faculty, McCulloh said he and his colleagues have been monitoring shifting national policy and participating in “efforts to actively respond” to the Dear Colleague Letter.

McCulloh pointed to a Feb. 25 response letter submitted by the American Council on Education to Trainor on behalf of 71 higher education associations. One of these groups was the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, of which GU is a member.

“We are a university community called to be people with and for others — especially those whom society has historically discriminated against, marginalized, and ostracized,” McCulloh said in the email. “These values are entirely consistent with federal and state law, and are reflected in Gonzaga’s commitment to inclusive excellence and our longstanding Policy on Non-Discrimination.”

Kelley said that, for the time being, not much has changed for GU as a result of the Dear Colleague Letter. However, she said the letter presents an opportunity to conduct an “internal audit” and explicitly state that even if GU’s programs are focused on a particular group, they are still open to all.

“You don’t want to be out of compliance,” Kelley said. “Even though the language [of the Dear Colleague Letter] is troubling, you want to make sure that your programs are not exclusionary.”

However, the conflicting messages from federal and state leaders have left some question marks for GU.

Andrew Newman, GU’s Title IX coordinator and director of harassment and discrimination prevention, said the situation is a “waiting game.”

“There’s a lot of confusion about what’s going to happen and a lot of people waiting with bated breath,” Newman said. “It makes me feel tired. It makes me feel like I’m constantly trying to get my feet under me.”

Meanwhile, Fawcett said she is concerned about the effects on students if DEI measures were hypothetically suspended.

“It’d be horrible,” Fawcett said. “We need this space for students who are experiencing the university in different ways because of their various backgrounds and cultural upbringings.”

For students concerned about a possible loss of DEI programs or federal funding, Kelley said they can “have confidence” because she believes GU has not discriminated against anyone and that DEI practices are a part of the university’s mission.

“I can’t say, ‘Oh, don’t worry about anything,’” Kelley said. “But I think Gonzaga is a place that you can be assured that your identities will be affirmed, your dignity will be affirmed.”

Natalie Keller is the managing editor.

MAJOR

Continued from Page 1

video production courses while overlapping the basics of broadcast.

Collett and McCormick, in addition to the rest of the integrated media department, have expressed their excitement for the start of the new major in the fall.

“I’m most looking forward to students taking DGMP 205, where the first day of class in our major, students will get their hands on the cameras,” Collett said. “I also think DGMP 369 multi-camera production becomes a more dynamic class because we can blend the field production of shooting and editing along with live, studio production. That’s something we can’t currently do in our course layout.”

With the new major having designated intro, intermediate and advanced classes, McCormick said he is looking forward to seeing students progress throughout their time at GU.

“I can’t wait to see the projects that students produce in those advanced courses,” McCormick said. “Once students reach those advanced classes, we won’t be spending as much time learning new equipment but rather focusing on making bigger and better projects. I think the overall quality of student work will raise exponentially.”

According to the email, moving forward, all existing

and new broadcasting classes will be listed under the course code DGMP, and any DGMP class that has the same name and number as a BRCO course are equal in value.

Certain courses from the broadcast major will be deleted and substituted with new ones, affecting current juniors. The soon-to-be-replaced broadcast courses include Fundamentals of TV Production, Intermediate TV Production, Broadcast Leadership, TV and Social Justice and Advanced TV Production. The new courses replacing these will include Multi-Camera Production, Digital Video Production I, Digital Video Production II and Documentary Filmmaking.

There will still be a capstone course. However, it will be altered to fit the new major.

The new DGMP Digital Video Production courses will be replacing BRCO 303, which will “allow for a deeper and more advanced look at video production,” McCormick said in the email.

In addition to these changes in requirements, McCormick said students will also be required to take either Journalistic Writing or Intro to Filmmaking, and several new upper-division electives will also be available for students to choose from. The new electives will include Advanced Audio, Creative Filmmaking, Sports Media, Documentary History and Analysis, Public Affairs Reporting and Digital Animation.

Taylor Nichols is a contributor.



EMMA LARSON IG: @3mmal Larson

Students in the Advanced TV Production course run through a practice newscast for their “Bracketology” show.

Jesuits celebrate Mardi Gras

By SEAN LIVESAY

Candy fell from the balcony of Gonzaga University's Jesuit residence on Fat Tuesday. Although the new candy-throwing tradition is seemingly simple in nature, Tim Breen S.J. said it's a chance for Jesuits to carry out their spirit and mission.

"This is a great opportunity for us to do something to connect with people on campus," Breen said. "We have to be really intentional about how we engage with the community and engage with the students. We wouldn't be Jesuits if we didn't enjoy connecting with people."

Despite attending an Ignatian university, many students at GU will never interact with a Jesuit during their time on campus.

Several decades ago, there was a steady count of about 100 Jesuits on campus. Since then, this number has declined due to a decrease in the desire among young people to pursue religious vocations in the United States, Gilbert Sunghera S.J. said.

"We only have six Jesuits working at the university, and so there's a very good chance that most students are going to graduate without encountering a Jesuit," Sunghera said.

In light of this, campus Jesuits have



SAM RAINS IG: @samuel.rains

Members of GU's Della Strada Jesuit residence threw candy in celebration of Mardi Gras.

begun creating new traditions while expanding on old ones to foster a stronger relationship with students.

Brought to GU by Sunghera, this year's Mardi Gras celebration marked the second year the Jesuits' newest tradition unfolded on campus. For Sunghera, creating opportunities for the Jesuit tradition and spirit to be accessible for all students is particularly important.

GU's new Mardi Gras tradition dates back to Sunghera's time at the University of Detroit Mercy, he said, where there was a similar practice. Breen said the structure of

the Jesuit house on GU's campus was similar to buildings in New Orleans with its many balconies, providing a great opportunity to bring a taste of the Mardi Gras experience to GU.

Breen also said that many students, staff and faculty, including himself, are often locked into their own world when traversing across campus, listening to music with headphones on or simply not paying attention to the people around them. He stressed that it is often beneficial to be open to the world and people around on campus.

"We were trying to make the campus

community say, 'Hey, let's snap out of our own little world for a second and be communal together like this,'" Breen said. "It's something fun for us as the Jesuit community to do together, but it's also a fun way for us to interact with the broader campus community."

The Jesuits' other efforts include attending basketball games, handing out candy on Halloween and hosting ice cream parties in conjunction with their Mardi Gras event, Sunghera said. Sunghera also said these activities are meant for all students, regardless of their religious background.

"We're involved with the sacramental life, and that impacts a number of the Catholic students," Sunghera said. "But we also want to be out there for all the students ... our desire isn't to convert them, but to let them know that the Catholic Church is always available and welcome."

Student outreach events can also give the Jesuits a sense of what students are going through in the modern world, Sunghera said. Sunghera highlighted the aging community of Jesuits and the importance of breaking the generational barrier to connect with students most effectively.

"We're not always sure what students are interested in. If we're going to preach, which we often do like a service, it's good to know what students are going through," Sunghera said. "Now that COVID is pretty much under control, we're able to kind of go out and expand again."

Sean Livesay is a staff writer.

GSBA

Continued from Page 1

built their campaign around practical initiatives aimed at improving student resources. Among their proposals is the introduction of mobile ZAGCARDS, allowing students to store their campus identification on smartphones.

MacDonald drew inspiration for the idea after speaking with a friend at Duke University, where digital IDs are already in use.

"I was like, 'Wow, why don't we have that here?'" MacDonald said. "I would hear about other GU students who would be out and lose their ZAGCARD in the Logan and can't get back into their residence hall. So how do we avoid that issue? Also, how do we be more climate friendly? Not having to print 1,500 ZAGCARDS per year is huge for eliminating plastic waste."

To further elevate the use and influence of ZAGCARDS, the future GSBA leaders are looking to increase the number of locations that accept Bulldog Bucks, GU's form of student currency.

"That kind of connects to our unity pillar, which is enhancing cultural programming," Johnston-Guzman said. "And so through that, we're hoping to bring Bulldog Bucks with that and expand to culturally diverse restaurants within the Spokane community as well."

In addition to economic initiatives, Johnston-Guzman emphasized the importance of supporting cultural clubs on campus, pledging to meet with student organizations early in her tenure to better understand their needs.

"We plan to meet with cultural clubs our first semester to figure out how we can truly elevate them," Johnston-Guzman said. "Each need is going to be different, and we want to listen and we want to take action and recognize that change is more than just conversations."

As Johnston-Guzman and MacDonald assume the helm of student government, they acknowledged that GU's leadership is also going through a transition, with Katia Passerini set to become the university's 27th president this summer. Passerini, who served as Seton Hall University's provost since 2020 and interim president last school year, is replacing GU President Thayne McCulloh.

"It's a great opportunity to really kind of shape how we want GSBA to interact with the new administration and how we want the new administration, GSBA and the students to all interact in that triangle," MacDonald said. "And we honestly couldn't be more excited for the opportunity presented in front of us."

For Johnston-Guzman, improving campus life starts with enhancing GSBA as an organization internally. One of her goals is to boost student engagement in student government, particularly in the senate. All students are welcome to attend senate meetings on Mondays at 8 p.m.

"I think one of the first things Charlie and I are going to be working on over the summer is finding a way to engage and immerse the senate into the student body experience," Johnston-Guzman said. "They are part of GSBA, where they pass legislation and different policies and club recognition and whatnot, and I think something GSBA has struggled with over the past years is student engagement within the senate."

Johnston-Guzman hopes to build on the latest election's momentum, which saw a record 25% voter turnout — high enough to meet the threshold for constitutional amendments. GSBA's "Spring into Voting" event helped drive participation, contributing to one of the most competitive student elections in recent years.

"I think it's still a very overwhelming moment that we got over 1,400 students to vote," Johnston-Guzman said. "We're both in GSBA right now, so I think we were able to see a different perspective — a behind-the-scenes perspective. It truly was all hands on deck."

In the coming months, Johnston-Guzman and MacDonald will focus on assembling their cabinet, with applications open to all students through Zagtivities. They are also set to work approximately 160 hours this summer, meeting with community members from all parts of campus, including the incoming university administration.

Henry Krueger is a news editor. Follow him on X: @henrykrueger.

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Nanny needed!

South Hill family seeks a nanny Monday- Thursday (2:30 - 6pm, could be flexible with hours/days if need be) to pick up our 4th grader from Hutton and help him complete homework and wind down from school and then pick up our 4 year old from daycare around 5pm. If you love to cook, dinner prep would be appreciated but definitely not required. Must be a very good driver with reliable transportation. We had another Zag nanny who graduated 2021. Would gladly connect you to her as reference.

Hoping to hear from you!
Kate (202) 431- 2230

Seeking summer nanny

Our Zag nanny is going home for the summer, so we are looking for a spring/ summer nanny (with the potential to extend to next school year) for our 7-year-old daughter on the lower South Hill. Starting May 12th, we are looking for someone M-Th, 2:30 - 5:30 that could help with school pickup, homework, and transporting to after school activities. Once school is out (June 17th), we are looking for additional care - typically M-F, 12:00 - 5:30.

Please contact Collin Harper at charper89@gmail.com if interested.

Please stop the music: Silence is a blessing in the DJ DeSmet era

Hear ye, hear ye — if you can. I write this without malice toward the current individual or past individuals — but the DJ DeSmet regime must end.

I have two main arguments to make my case against DJ DeSmet: the politics of the aux cord and noise pollution. I will begin with the former.

Consider the concept of DJ DeSmet. An anonymous student living on the top floor of DeSmet Hall is given a huge speaker and blessed with authoritative control over the campus soundscape at the busiest times of the day. You do not get input; DJ DeSmet speaks for you.

I believe this is anti-democratic. Anyone who has a few friends and has been in a car with said friends can understand the issue here. Do you give aux to the same friend every time? No. You rotate. Everyone gets a turn. If this is not the case, you might consider finding new friends. I don't know what happens behind the scenes in DJ DeSmet's room or where that music is coming from, but it is not coming from you or me. Does this music really embody the campus community or just the interpretation of one person? This is not an inclusive model of music sharing.

My second argument concerns noise pollution — a serious concern.

Noise pollution entails disturbances caused by excessive noise, which affects human health and



By MADDOX REIMER

the natural environment. Under the Clean Air Act Title IV, the United States Environmental Protection Agency defines noise as an “unwanted or disturbing sound.” I will keep matters of personal taste to myself, but if ever there was a way to describe “Piano Man” echoing across Foley Lawn during a beautiful sunset, this would be it.

DJ DeSmet usually keeps the volume at tasteful levels, but that is beside the point: we are surrounded by too much noise in the hustle and bustle of mid-semester life. It is hard to realize this until the noise stops.

Anyone who has stayed at Gonzaga University during the summer knows the lazy buzz of silence

when a college campus depopulates. It is profound and peaceful. The campus will never be quiet during the academic year — I accept that. But if there is a time for a bit less stimulation, it is during the trenches of the semester. This is the best time to learn to enjoy silence.

We should also be mindful that sound affects everyone differently. For many, music is not just a mere annoyance but can become a legitimate cause of stress. Bulldog Alley is crowded enough at noon — do we really need more noise? Quiet public spaces, however boring they might seem, are often the most inclusive.

The beautiful thing about music is that it can be shared, but also kept to oneself. If you need to get pumped up with some tunes before your Friday afternoon classes — I've been there, and I'm happy to give some headphone recommendations.

And please: keep bringing a personal speaker to your Spikeball circle on Foley. Resist aux authoritarianism at every turn. Music tastes and the identities behind them can coexist, and that brings vibrancy and life to a college campus. It is not a hidden speaker that is louder than all others.

Maddox Reimer is a staff writer.

Happy Zag month: Welcome the Madness with a schoolwide March holiday

March Madness is one of the best times of the year, especially on a college campus. But with college classes interfering with the first, most action-packed days of the NCAA Tournament, it begs the question of what's more important: one day of classes or making lifetime memories with friends while cheering on our Zags?

My proposition: Gonzaga University should make March Madness weekend a school-wide holiday as long as the Bulldogs have qualified for at least one of the men's or women's NCAA tournaments.

The NCAA Tournament brackets came out on Sunday and are the go-to conversation for many across the next four days. "Who's gonna win your bracket? What's the best upset to pick? Are the Zags cooked?" These questions will permeate the halls of GU these next couple of days. But as students build their brackets, plan their watch parties and cast their eyes ahead to Thursday's tipoff, one problem arises.

The two most action-packed days of the beloved NCAA Tournament fall on school days.

Back in high school, it was easy for students to follow the morning session throughout the school day. Most, if not all of my classes allowed the use of some technology, making it easy for college basketball fanatics and bracket bozos to keep up on scores. Some teachers even put on the games during work periods, knowing that the tournament would be on many of their students' screens anyway.



By HOBY MILLER

But in college, this becomes harder. University classes often demand a higher level of focus, making it more complicated to follow these games in class. Furthermore, many students have labs, which run multiple hours and can encompass entire games if you're unlucky. For example, I've already talked to multiple students who have a lab on Thursday during GU men's basketball's 1:35 p.m. first-round game against No. 9 Georgia.

It feels unfair that studious college students have to miss what could be their school's final game of the season, just because it got scheduled at an inopportune time.

As a university and community, GU places a high importance on student involvement by watching and supporting the basketball team in the regular season, so why should this change now? If GU made the first Thursday and Friday a holiday weekend, it not only would make GU's opening-round game a huge, campus-wide event but also encourage more students to fly out to wherever the Zags' first-round matchup is. This would raise the level of Zag spirit on campus and the rowdiness of the Kennel in Wichita, as loyal Zags could fill up the student section without having to worry about catching up on missed studies.

Let's be realistic. There will be many college students opting to skip their classes around 1:35 p.m. on Thursday and instead root on GU's biggest team with their friends. Rather than punishing students for showing school spirit, GU should allow them to celebrate the most renowned college sporting event.

I know this wish is unrealistic. In all other months, college classes should come before anything else, including our social lives and sports viewing habits. But maybe, just for two days in mid-March, GU should let classes take the back burner and prioritize another key element of the Zag experience — winning in March when it counts. GO ZAGS!

Hoby Miller is a staff writer.

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Supporting Ukraine remains fundamentally American

Following a press conference with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, or let's say it as it is, a disgusting ambush orchestrated by Donald Trump and JD Vance, the Trump administration has decided to suspend all military aid to Ukraine — an absolutely crushing blow to democracy and the values we as a nation claim to strive for.

We are facing an age of extreme political polarization and losing cohesiveness within our nation's identity. The principles of being American that we have been taught since grade school involve the core pillars of democracy: freedom, the right to pursue happiness and to seek independence. We do not pride ourselves on the outcomes of these goals, but that they remain in place, constantly seeking realization.

Trump's withdrawal of aid not only damages our reputation on an international scale but is completely contrary to the values we have outlined within our previous foreign policies. Instead of supporting a democratic government, Trump's administration has now aligned the United States with Russia, an unquestionably authoritarian regime.

Our government has failed our values on numerous occasions in the past. However, we have pursued actions to realign with America's dreams, or at the very least, have operated under the guise of pursuing them. After all, wasn't our involvement in the Middle East and South America under the claim that we were "promoting" democracy? While



By LILY PEARSE

this wasn't ultimately true, we feebly stood on our visions of what America is supposed to be all about. Democracy was so important that we used it to justify retrospectively harmful interventions.

Ukraine needs our assistance. Our principles urge us to support democracy, especially when threatened by a tyrant's (Putin's) agenda. It is crucial to support sovereignty, independence and freedom. Beyond that, it is obtuse to separate ourselves from the rest of Europe. We have a longstanding relationship with European nations and have called on them during times of need, fighting alongside their soldiers in wars. How could it possibly be beneficial to America to create new and needless enemies?

Paving the way for Russia's annexation of Ukraine is a disaster. This suspension will deeply affect the Ukrainians, who are suffering and dying in bleak, muddy trenches. This will also affect the families whose husbands, brothers and fathers risk their lives by the hour for the very freedom of their

homeland, causing grave loss of life as well as potential territorial acquisition for Russia.

We certainly have a plethora of domestic problems as well. I understand why Americans are desperate to have government attention focused on the issues that impact us daily. These problems remain relevant and pressing. Cutting aid to Ukraine will not solve these issues. As we've regularly witnessed from Trump and the Department of Government Efficiency, our plights are not prioritized or valued by this administration.

If we cut aid to Ukraine, we effectively hand Ukraine to Russia. Who's to say that Russia will not continue to press onward into the former Soviet Union, now sovereign states? This is not just about Ukraine. Ukraine is a domino precariously poised at the precipice of a larger conflict. When the domino falls, a broader-scale conflict could break out. If that happens, I guarantee Americans will have more significant issues than the cost of eggs.

We need to remain strong in our values and foresee how our foreign policy will not only impact us now, but months or years down the line. As a longstanding representative of the dream of democracy, we cannot let ourselves falter. We cannot support regimes that directly suppress their media and have maniacal expansionist visions. We must urgently consider if this decision coincides with our beliefs.

Lily Pearse is a digital editor.



RACHEL TRUSSEL IG: racheltrusselphotography

New Love Coffee offers many drinks alongside its pies and pastries at its Kendall Yards location.

New Love brightens up Kendall Yards

By MOSES O'CONNOR

Perched at the edge of Kendall Yards and overlooking the Spokane River, New Love Coffee serves up local art and connections alongside its coffee and pie.

Owner Ike Bubna said building relationships with the customers was his initial motivation to open the business.

“The reason I love coffee shops is the community aspect,” Bubna said. “We have tons of regulars. The baristas get to know you by name and stuff, so that’s probably my favorite part of it.”

New Love began in 2022 as a single coffee shop in Liberty Lake. It later merged with local bakery Bean & Pie

and opened new shops across the Spokane area.

The Kendall Yards location opened in April 2023, serving coffee and handmade pastries.

“All the pies are made fresh locally at our bakery in Coeur d’Alene,” Bubna said. “It’s not mass-produced with the machine because you can get a pie machine that presses the pies and everything. The fruit pies, like the marks in it, the ridges — those are made by hand.”

As the business has moved into Kendall Yards, so has its ability to bring people together, said Kolby Swanson, a barista at the shop who’s worked in the area for five years.

“It is a very social job, which I love doing,” Swanson said. “I used to work down the street at the little grocery store, My Fresh Basket, and then moved over here just because I wanted to do something new and different. I see all my regulars that I saw at the grocery store over here too, so it’s just cool to see them still in the neighborhood.”

Along with a strong sense of community, Bubna said this shop in particular provides a great view of the city and has a prime location along the Spokane River.

“You just look out and it’s downtown Spokane,” Bubna said. “Especially this time of year, when it starts to get nice out too, it’s a sweet spot to snag a coffee and go hit the

Centennial Trail.”

New Love showcases different local artists at some of its locations, and the Kendall Yards location partnered with Neicy Frey to help design the shop and exhibit her art.

Inside, the walls are turquoise and eggshell blue, with one large floral painting behind the counter. Other smaller works are showcased as well, scattered across the shop. The side facing downtown Spokane is made of large glass windows, allowing plenty of natural light to illuminate the shop.

According to Frey’s website, her work focuses on storytelling through dynamic shapes, colors and value, and Bubna said their collaboration included choosing the colorful walls, glossy red brick counter and how these elements would work with each other.

“I knew it’d be different,” Bubna said. “It was really kind of meant to pop. As opposed to ‘Oh, it’s all super white,’ it’s still bright and fun.”

The shop hosts many events and opportunities for students to enjoy, including a “study hall” from 3 p.m. to closing on Wednesdays and 2 p.m. to closing on Sundays, with special activities, deals and discounts for students. Along with these special events, Bubna said he believes the food itself is a great draw for students.

“Unlike a lot of places where it’s just coffee and maybe a pastry, we have all the hand pies,” Bubna said. “There’s savory ones, there’s the breakfast ham pies, the chicken pot pie one, the biscuits and gravy. So you can come and get something to eat if you’re studying — not just coffee.”

The shop also makes a special effort to accommodate dietary needs, Bubna said, as most of the baked goods are gluten-free, vegan or both.

“It is an option [for] a student who maybe is gluten-free and vegan to come get a cookie and a drink,” Bubna said. “In support of all of that, we don’t upcharge for any of our alternative milks. Whether you get cow’s milk, macadamia nut milk that’s unsweetened or oat milk, there’s no upcharge for it.”

For anyone looking for recommendations, Swanson and Bubna both had some go-to suggestions. Swanson said that a good option is an iced pistachio latte while Bubna offered a more savory suggestion.

“I love the biscuits and gravy [pie] because I can have it for breakfast, I can have it for lunch, I can have it at four o’clock for a snack,” Bubna said. “The flavor kind of just works whenever.”

The shop’s ability to bring people together seems to be its most enduring characteristic, said Laura Bubna, Ike Bubna’s mother and a regular customer. She said the shop has brought her closer together with her family.

“The best day ever spent here is bringing the grandkids here,” Laura Bubna said. “They love to have hot chocolate with toasted marshmallows. My favorite part is that it’s really sunny and open and a friendly atmosphere for hanging out.”

New Love is located at 1102 W. Summit Parkway, Suite 102. It is open on weekdays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturdays and Sundays from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Moses O'Connor is a contributor.

Bagel shop's legacy continues

Little Garden Cafe opens in former home of The Ultimate Bagel

By MACKENZIE ESTEP

All good things come to an end, but sometimes, the end isn’t really the end.

The go-to bagel spot for the Gonzaga University community, The Ultimate Bagel, closed its doors in December at the end of the fall semester. But its homemade bagels and homey campus atmosphere still live on in the business that took over the space — Little Garden Cafe.

Little Garden Cafe is a longstanding Spokane business with multiple locations, including one near Whitworth University. When The Ultimate Bagel began its decline, the owners approached Faith and David Alderete, owners of Little Garden Cafe, to ask if they would be willing to take over under one condition.

“They came into the Whitworth location and just said, ‘Hey, we’re thinking of retiring, and instead of just closing our doors, we would love it if you would want to turn it into a Little Garden Cafe and serve Ultimate bagels,’” Faith Alderete said.

Faith Alderete said it was perfect because everything they served in their shops is homemade — except for their bagels.

“We were ordering those elsewhere, so we kinda jumped at it because we wanted the bagel recipe and to learn how to make bagels in house,” Faith Alderete said.

The Ultimate Bagel owners, Christi Chapman and John Manlowe, had been hand-making bagels for 32 years. Faith Alderete said she and her husband worked with Manlowe for six weeks to learn their recipe and perfect the bagel-making process.

Being so close to campus, The Ultimate Bagel was a hub for GU students. Adriana Alexander, a first-year student at GU, said it will be nice to still get the bagels students knew and loved.

“When I heard that The Ultimate Bagel was closing, I was really sad because I do love their bagels,” Alexander said. “After break, when I came back to try Little Garden, I was really excited to see that the bagels were alive and well and that this was



ISABELLA WOLFSON

Little Garden Cafe offers coffee, pastries, bagels, sandwiches and more in the location that formerly housed The Ultimate Bagel.

still a great place on campus to come hang out, study and eat.”

Faith Alderete said the cafe accepts Bulldog Bucks and is in the work study program. She said that with having business closer to campus, they wanted to orient the cafe to be accessible and welcoming to students.

Little Garden Cafe has a mission of serving its community, which Faith Alderete said is why they wanted to integrate the work study program into their business.

“We want students working because we believe in serving our community, but part of serving our community is also employing our community,” Faith Alderete said. “It’s very important to us, so we want Gonzaga students and Gonzaga people working here, and the same goes for the Whitworth location.”

Moving into where The Ultimate Bagel stood only a few months ago was a bit of a quick turnaround. Because of this, Little Garden Cafe will gradually be making updates to the business. Faith Alderete

said that they removed a lot of GU sports decorations left by The Ultimate Bagel, but they have plans to reinstate them into their shop later on.

“There’s gonna be more changes,” Faith Alderete said. “We have plans to make bar seating and shellac some of [the sports] articles into the bar and have some professionally framed and hung around the cafe, so there’s still a part of it preserved.”

While keeping elements of the shop that honor The Ultimate Bagel as well as the Zags, Faith Alderete said there are many more plans for the Little Garden Cafe before it’s fully complete.

“At our Whitworth location, we have a beautiful mural of all things Spokane,” Faith Alderete said. “It has Mount Spokane in it and a bunch of lilacs painted by a Whitworth student. We are hoping to do the same thing here. We are going to try and get somebody from the art department to submit some murals and have them paint here.”

The inclusion of a mural is another way Little Garden Cafe wants to integrate

the GU community into this location. Faith Alderete said they plan to make it a longstanding tradition, with the murals changing every four or five years.

“It could be fun,” Faith Alderete said. “They could sign it or put their year up there. It could have a lot of Spokane in there, but have more Zag stuff to really make it special to Gonzaga.”

Having Little Garden Cafe take over The Ultimate Bagel is the best of both worlds for many, with the new ownership working to keep the love for bagels and GU alive in the shop.

“They had such a reputation here. I mean, we have people come in — students and alumni alike — that are so thankful that the bagels have stayed on,” Faith Alderete said. “It is such a privilege to be able to carry their legacy and bagels on.”

Mackenzie Estep is a staff writer.



A display in Kitty Cantina recognizes the restaurant's work, which has helped over 2,000 cats find homes.

Feline friends find fur-ever homes

Kitty Cantina brings unique dining experience with cats

By NATALIE KELLER

Plastered on the wall of Spokane's Kitty Cantina is a collage of photos that show cats finding their fur-ever homes. Each photo of people smiling and holding their newly adopted feline friends represents one of over 2,000 cats that have been adopted from the cat cafe in its nearly five years of business.

"Incorporating rescue, family, food service all together — that's just what I wanted," said Justyn Cozza, who co-owns the business with his wife, Tori. "At the end of the day, we want to get cats in homes."

Although the business opened its doors in 2020, Cozza said it was in the works for fours years. Cozza had been looking to start his own bar or restaurant, but when his daughter was born, he wanted to run a business she could enjoy as well. When the family visited a cat cafe in Portland, Cozza said he was inspired to start a feline-focused coffee shop of his own.

"[The cat cafe] just landed in my lap," Cozza said. "I had an epiphany that this is what I'm going to do."

As Cozza and his wife worked toward opening their business, they partnered with SpokAnimal, a local

nonprofit organization that works to get homeless cats and dogs adopted. Cats from SpokAnimal are housed at off-site locations, and all the cats available for adoption at Kitty Cantina come from the organization.

"It's been a wonderful partnership," said Randi Oien, SpokAnimal's director of public relations. "The environment is just ideal for kitties."

The business is split into two spaces: a room for the cats and an area for people to order food and drink, eat and observe the felines. The restaurant offers beverages such as coffee, tea and smoothies, and food including breakfast items, bagels, sandwiches and wraps. The business also offers alternative milk options.

Meanwhile, in its busy summer season, the "Kitty Lounge" houses around 25 cats that freely roam around the space. Visitors must make a reservation and be at least 7 years old to enter the room and interact with the cats. Cozza said these guidelines keep the cats from becoming overwhelmed by visitors.

"This thing would be a cash cow if we say, 'Anyone at all, any ages, come in, whatever,'" Cozza said. "It's just not worth the compromise to the cats' safety."

Cozza said this model also allows prospective adopters

to get a feel for a cat's natural behavior and ensure that the adoption will be a good fit.

"We don't do the window shopping thing," Cozza said. "You have to interact with that cat before putting in a claim for an application. Prolonged, successful, lifetime adoption is the goal."

Over time, Cozza said he and his wife have learned, grown and made some changes to their cat cafe. One of these adjustments was doing away with same-day adoptions and requiring hopeful adopters to wait at least a day to contemplate the decision. This measure, Cozza said, has helped prevent cats from being returned.

The business temporarily suspended its adoption efforts in February to renovate the Kitty Lounge. Cozza said the renovations included removing some hanging cat structures from the walls, making the room's layout more open and generally sprucing up the space.

"Justyn and his crew, they go above and beyond for these cats," Oien said.

The business, Cozza said, entails a lot more than playing with cats all day. He said that he and his staff take detailed notes on each cat, promote adoption via social media and thoroughly clean the cats' space daily. Cozza said the business goes through as many as 80 pounds of litter per day and that he buys it in 2,000-pound pallets that he keeps in his garage.

"It's such a scramble on a daily basis," Cozza said. "It's like the work is never really done."

However, Cozza said seeing the cat adoptions makes the work worthwhile. While Cozza said he has many fond memories of the over 2,000 cats that have temporarily called the cafe home, there is one particular feline that stuck out to him.

About two and a half years ago, Cozza was visiting a local dump when some employees showed him a cat that had been hanging around the area: a big, orange tabby they had christened George.

George had seen better days.

"He's all bloodied up, his ear's ripped off — he's in really bad shape," Cozza said. "One of his eyes was milked over, one of his ears is limp — he looks like a pirate."

Cozza took George to a shelter, and he said the cat needed a hefty load of surgeries and medical attention. Afterward, Cozza fostered George in his garage until he was healthy enough to take up residence at the cafe. The business also promoted George's story on social media, and people donated about \$5,000 for the vet bills.

Ultimately, George was adopted by one of the employees who had found him at the dump.

"It was just one of those Cinderella stories of just a ball of blood and fur to just a beautiful, gorgeous cat," Cozza said. "That was one of the more impactful ones for me, seeing it from just a bummer situation all the way to the happiest ending."

Oien said she appreciates the work Kitty Cantina has done for cats and hopes people will take advantage of the cafe's fun, family-friendly atmosphere.

"It's amazing to me how many people still don't even know about it," Oien said. "I would encourage anybody and everybody to go there and support them and maybe bring home a new family member."

Kitty Cantina is located at 6704 N. Nevada St. in Spokane. Its drive-thru and cafe are open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends. Reservations to enter the Kitty Lounge can be booked on the cafe's website.

Natalie Keller is the managing editor.

Los Angeles Times

Sunday Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Patti Varol

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MADE TO MEASURE

By Gary Larson & Amy Ensz

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32 Viscount's superior

33 Discombobulate

34 Capital that replaced Istanbul

38 Paddock pace

41 Spilled the beans

43 Percentages of alcohol in shipboard grog?

46 Washstand toppers

50 Stunt performer

51 Swiss chocolate brand

52 Three-spot in a hand

54 WWE wrestler — "Freakin"

61 "Whoopie!"

62 Feathery wrap

63 D.C. baseball team

64 "Heavens to Betsy"

65 Units of force required to bite into a Mediterranean fruit?

72 Volumes of toppings poured over movie theater popcorn?

74 Divvies up

75 Like a phone in need of a charge

77 Fly catcher

78 Pride members

79 Sent an emoji

81 Italian dessert

86 Wash up

87 Tick off

88 Bishop's agent

90 Seemingly forever

91 Hold back

93 Lengths to which some teenagers will go to procure fake IDs?

96 Origin

98 World Cup cheers

99 Chalkboard accessory

100 Persian potentates

104 Many a Riyadh resident

106 Diving positions

109 Areas of land bought and sold by savvy real estate investors?

111 Condition

113 Some PC ports

117 Figure skating biopic

118 Thermometer readings at a major golf tournament?

122 Chops finely

123 Mystery prize?

124 Eroding

125 Knights' mounts

126 Coffee order

127 Some sporty Pontiacs

DOWN

1 Song opening, often

2 Biology lab supply

3 Purple shade

4 Ration (out)

5 Spanish "that"

6 Original Dungeons & Dragons co.

7 Safe places

8 Takes the count

9 Primer material

10 Spoils

11 Have possession of

12 "___ Gabler": Ibsen play

13 Classify

14 Military vehicle

15 Vents

16 French cookware

17 "Still da Baddest" artist

18 Advances

19 "Good grief"

24 Singer Sheena

29 Geography class spheres

30 "___ you joking?"

31 Kentucky Derby month

32 Dark forest hypothesis subjs.

34 Keeps in a cellar, perhaps

35 Pews locale

36 "Castle and Sun" painter Paul

37 "___ Well That Ends Well"

39 Engine parts

40 As a rule

42 Nonprofessional

44 Tennis skirt fold

45 Clear (of)

47 Oscar of "Dune"

48 Jacket named for an Indian prime minister

49 Walk noisily

52 Ballet attire

53 Sabbath activity

55 Tilling tools

57 Helps run a scam

58 Blows away

60 Make small talk

61 ___ Buena Island, California

64 Bambi, e.g.

65 Pumpkin spice season

66 Trojan War saga

67 Part of a fitting simile?

68 Nine-piece band

69 Poetic exaltations

70 Call from a till

71 Did nothing

73 Flower girl's dance move, perhaps

76 Pitchfork wielder

79 Quality of one who can't sing on pitch

80 Chow down

81 2022 Cate

82 Blanchett drama

82 Ginormous

83 Letters of debt

84 Old-fashioned blade

85 Space race initials

87 Golf ball position

89 One who shares the bill

92 Evaluated

93 Unruly group

94 Sound of surprise

95 Horace's "___ Poetica"

97 Multitool maker

100 Stays afloat

101 Water-skier's "Go!"

102 Collectively

103 Thus

105 Came ___

107 Unexpected sports outcome

108 Chest material

110 Pop's Mama

111 On the double

112 "Take this!"

113 Banquet coffeepots

114 Genesis creator

115 Skyscraper support

116 Fast fliers no longer flying, briefly

119 Title of a Beatles song?

120 Pilot's approx.

121 ___ rummy

Sudoku By The Mepham Group

Level **1** **2** **3** **4**

7		3	6	9				1
			7				9	
		4			5	6	8	
						8	1	
			4		3			
	5	6						
	4	8				1		
	3				4			
2				6	9	3		5

Solution to last Sunday's puzzle

2/16/25

1	5	8	6	4	7	9	3	2
6	9	3	5	2	8	7	4	1
2	4	7	1	3	9	6	5	8
7	3	1	9	5	2	4	8	6
5	6	4	8	1	3	2	9	7
9	8	2	4	7	6	3	1	5
4	1	6	2	9	5	8	7	3
3	2	9	7	8	1	5	6	4
8	7	5	3	6	4	1	2	9

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit sudoku.org.uk.

Connecting creatives in new club

By RUBY GROSS

Over the past year, two students have designed a club meant to nourish the creativity of Gonzaga University's digital community and add a layer of community to what they saw as negative space. Founded by Joshua Garcia and Luca Gillis, the Gonzaga Creatives Club supports students working with digital media, including photography, videography, graphic design and animation.

Gillis, a sophomore, is a videographer for GU Athletics and the club's vice president. Gillis said the club's goal is to create a welcoming space for digital creatives to learn from one another and explore new mediums.

"Our mission is to bring people together and provide opportunities for creatives of all different digital, creative mediums to grow, learn, share and be inspired together in a comfortable space," Gillis said. "Whether it's a photographer that just wants to try video, a person that loves video and wants to try taking a photo or someone that has never picked up a camera in their life ... anyone who falls into a digital, creative medium should come to the meetings. They're gonna find a good community."

Garcia is a sophomore, the club's president and a staff photographer for *The Gonzaga Bulletin*. He also works for the university's Marketing and Communications department and does freelance photography. Garcia said that the opportunity for students to share their knowledge and ideas in a safe space is what makes the club unique.

"There's nothing else like it," Garcia said. "Say you're an aspiring photographer, and you want to pick up a camera, but you don't know what you're doing. You could be self-taught and learn on your own, but I think it's much better to learn with other people that have similar interests."

The idea for the club came to Garcia last summer after he struggled to find a similar community during his freshman year.

"When I got on campus and started taking photos, I was looking on campus and on Zagtivities like, 'I wonder if there's a photography club or anything like that,'" Garcia said. "And I was bummed out to find that there's nothing of that sort. It



LUCY BOOTH IG:@photo.b00th

Luca Gillis, left, and Joshua Garcia, right, co-created Gonzaga Creatives Club for students looking to grow their digital media portfolios.

got me upset because I would see people taking photos for *The Bulletin* or doing it for fun, but I never really got to connect with them. I didn't know how to reach out."

After failing to find an accessible community for digital creatives, Garcia decided to make his own. Last summer, Garcia reached out to Gillis and began the process of getting the club approved by the Gonzaga Student Body Association.

At a typical meeting, club members may learn about a given form of digital media or simply share creative inspiration with one another. Gillis said the club has taught the basics of camera settings and analyzed the artistic techniques behind their favorite music videos. However, Garcia said the meeting structure is not strict and that the club's atmosphere is casual.

"It's nothing formal," Garcia said. "Sometimes we just chat. We get to know each other and see what projects people are working on. We have pizza every once in a while."

Along with a laid-back space to share ideas, the club provides its members with technological resources for creating content. Gillis and Garcia said the Creatives Club has access to the GU computer lab and the Adobe Creative Cloud, giving students cost-free opportunities to use

expensive software.

"Anyone who's interested in using Adobe programs can join our club and learn Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere Pro, After Effects, that sort of thing," Gillis said.

Gillis said that as of now, there is no fee to join the club, though they are looking for ways to raise funding. Much like software, Garcia said that students don't need their own photography or videography equipment to join. Members are often happy to lend one another gear, he said, and it's not always necessary to use professional equipment. In fact, Garcia got his own start in photography by using only a cellphone camera.

"I took a class in high school, but it was during COVID, over Zoom. So I was taking photos on an SE," Garcia said. "A friend let me borrow his camera freshman year, then I just started messing around with it and found out that I really like it."

Garcia said that he wants the club to not only be a welcoming space for beginners, like he found in high school, but a haven for collaboration. He said that along with its regular meetings, the club is working on making a music video together. Through that project, members get to combine their strengths and create a finished piece as one.

"The song we're doing is 'St. Chroma'

by Tyler the Creator," Garcia said. "It's just going to be us on campus — something fun."

To be a part of the club's brand of fun, imagination and community, Garcia said all you need to do is show up to a meeting. There is no formal application to join the club, but he and Gillis do recommend reaching out to one of them or messaging the club's Instagram account if you would like to be added to the email list.

The club has generally been holding its meetings on Tuesdays from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. in College Hall 245. However, Gillis said that since the club is still in its early stages, the meeting schedule may change. Gillis said that the best way to stay updated about the club is to follow its Instagram @gonzagacreativesclub, where they post agendas before each session.

Editor Note: Joshua Garcia is a photographer for The Gonzaga Bulletin.

Ruby Gross is a staff writer.



NEW MENU

MID-DAY SALAD ENTREE

SIMPLE SERVINGS

MONDAY

CHICKEN QUINOA SALAD

WEDNESDAY

SIMPLE STEAK HOUSE SALAD

THURSDAY

SIMPLE CHICKEN TACO SALAD

FRIDAY

GREENS WITH COLD SALMON

TUESDAY

MOROCCAN SPICED CHICKEN SALAD

FISH SANDWICH

BLACK BEAN BURGER

ROTATING DAILY SPECIAL

CHEESE BURGER

LUNCH, MID-DAY & DINNER

Spike's DINER



SAM RAINS IG: @samuel.rains

After cutting down the nets at the WCC Tournament, the Zags hope to do so again in the NCAA Tournament, but first need to beat a series of teams including No. 9 Georgia.

Zags set to face UGA in first round

By KAYA CRAWFORD

It will be a battle of the bulldogs today when the Gonzaga University men's basketball team takes on Georgia in the first round of the NCAA Tournament at the INTRUST Bank Arena in Wichita, Kansas.

No. 8 GU (25-8, 14-4 WCC) is dancing for a 26th-straight season, the third-longest streak in the nation. The Zags earned an eight seed in this year's NCAA Tournament, playing in the Midwest region.

Some expected the Zags to earn a seven seed, but their eight losses — the most since the 2011 season, in which GU lost 10 games — led to the lower seed despite being ranked No. 9 in KenPom. Any disappointment with the eight seed by GU was shrugged off by the excitement to play in the tournament.

"I hope our fans and people that follow the program understand after a year like this, nothing is given to you," said head coach Mark Few. "You earn your way into this tournament. That's what makes it so special."

Coming off a West Coast Conference Tournament championship, the Zags are looking strong entering the first round. They returned to the Associated Press Top-25 poll at No. 24 and are ranked No. 8 in the NCAA NET rankings. GU is the second-best scoring offense in the nation, scoring 86.6 points per game and is first in assist/turnover ratio (2.09) and total assists per game (19.7).

Five Zags average double-digit scoring, led by Graham Ike with 17.1 points per game. Ike was named to the All-

WCC first team, alongside Nolan Hickman and Ryan Nembhard, and was named WCC Tournament Most Outstanding Player.

"You see the work he puts in every single day and how he comes ready to play every single day in practice," Nembhard said following the WCC Tournament. "He's had a huge year for us. He's a huge part of what we do, and when we get it to him down there, he's going to deliver."

Nembhard leads the nation with 9.8 assists per game. He broke the WCC record for most assists in a single season (325) and most assists in conference play (181). Currently, Nembhard is eight assists away from being in the top five for single-season assists in Division I history.

GU will start its March Madness campaign against No. 9 Georgia (20-12, 8-10 SEC), one of the 14 Southeastern Conference schools that made the tournament. Georgia is making its first appearance in the tournament since 2015.

Despite a first round exit in the SEC Tournament following a loss to Oklahoma (81-75), Georgia developed an impressive resume this season with eight wins over top-10 competitors, the most of any school in the nation, including victories over No. 1 Florida, No. 2 St. John's and No. 3 Kentucky. Georgia ranked No. 33 in the NCAA NET and No. 34 in KenPom.

Georgia is led by freshman forward Asa Newell who averages 15.3 points and 6.8 rebounds per game. Newell was named to the SEC All-Freshman team and is a finalist for the Kyle Macy Award, presented to the top freshman

in Division I each year. Newell was heavily recruited by GU, and Few has watched him throughout his freshman season.

"We [GU and UGA] have an interesting connection," Few said. "We recruited the heck out of Asa Newell, who's just a fantastic freshman, their leading scorer, and just an even better person and a great family. And he's had a heck of a year."

The only other player scoring double digits for Georgia is sophomore guard Silas Demary Jr. with 13.4 points per game. He leads the team in assists (99), steals (54), made 3-pointers (56) and made free throws (120).

GU will lean on experience throughout the tournament. While some Zags are playing in their first NCAA Tournament, the program has a history of success and veteran leaders to lean on as they work to qualify for their 10th-straight Sweet 16.

"I know how special this moment is, and that's why I don't take any of it for granted," said senior forward Ben Gregg. "We're one of 68 to have this opportunity to play. I'm super excited for these guys to experience it, and we have a lot of veteran guys that have been through it and can help them out."

Tipoff for this first round matchup is 1:35 p.m. today. The winner of that game will play the winner between No. 1 Houston and No. 16 SIU-Edwardsville on Saturday.

Kaya Crawford is an arts & entertainment editor.



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Nembhard excels for GU

By BROOKS COLEMAN

As Ryan Nembhard barreled down the lane against Santa Clara on Feb. 25, he saw yet another opening for a highlight-reel play. GU forward Michael Ajayi was wide open underneath the basket, eagerly awaiting the inevitable entry pass from his point guard.

Nembhard could have opted for a typical feed — but a special occasion deserved a special play. Nembhard threw an alley-oop for Ajayi, and the Pepperdine transfer slammed it home in emphatic fashion — logging Nembhard's 285th assist of the season and breaking the West Coast Conference's all-time record for single-season assists.

GU head coach Mark Few was eager to laud his senior point guard after the game. "I go to bed every night and thank the Lord that he's our point guard," Few said. "You sleep a lot better when you've got a point guard like that who can just manage the game."

But long before the praise from coaches, record-breaking assist numbers and NBA aspirations, Nembhard and his older brother, Andrew, were growing up in Aurora, Canada, a suburb of Toronto, and learning to love the game of basketball. Ryan Nembhard said both of his parents were supportive of the two boys' budding basketball talent.

"It's just good to have that support system. My dad was a coach growing up, always loved the game, [and] my mom loves the game," Nembhard said. "I'm very lucky and blessed to have people that care for me that much."

Two years before Nembhard graduated middle school, his older brother left Canada for Florida's Montverde Academy to play high school basketball. Montverde is one of the nation's premier high school basketball programs, and his brother's success there prompted Ryan Nembhard to consider and ultimately attend the school.

At Montverde, Nembhard played alongside several future Division I prospects. Nembhard found that playing with such skilled athletes helped him improve his all-around game. However, attending Montverde also introduced him to a new family off the court and helped him adjust to adult life.

"I thought it was one of the best decisions I ever made — leaving home early, growing up, learning how to do things on my own and just growing up as a man," Nembhard said. "It was just fun to be around such a great group of guys who loved basketball and loved each other and [be in] such a family atmosphere."

Following his junior season at Montverde, Nembhard reclassified to the class of 2021 to begin his college career a year early.

Despite playing for a highly regarded prep school and being ranked 68th in 247Sports' top 100 recruits, Nembhard wasn't heavily recruited. He said that GU reached out, but Creighton was the only program that seriously pursued him.

But that didn't mean Creighton was a



ASH ELLIOT IG: @ashpotatophotos

Senior guard Ryan Nembhard averages an NCAA-best 9.8 assists per game.

bad landing spot for Nembhard — rather, Nembhard felt that the Blue Jays' up-tempo play style suited him as a scorer and playmaker.

"It was a great spot for me. It was a place where they like to get up and down," Nembhard said. "I thought it was a good place where they put the ball in my hands and let me grow as a player and live through my good times and mistakes."

When Nembhard entered the transfer portal following his sophomore season, Arizona and GU were top contenders for his talents. Both schools offered similar fast-paced systems that put plenty of responsibility in the hands of a playmaking point guard like Nembhard.

But when the time came to make his decision, Nembhard once again gravitated toward a close-knit, familial environment — one he found at GU.

Nembhard said that his brother's experience as a Zag also helped pull him towards the school — but ultimately, he made the decision to come to Spokane of his own volition.

"Obviously I talked to him about it [and] I've been around it," Nembhard said. "He told me some things in the recruitment process, but at the same time, he kind of wanted me to do my own thing, make my own path and not do just what he did."

While outside observers may look at Creighton and GU and think that the two fast-paced teams run similar offensive systems, Nembhard said that the two programs are very different schematically and that it took some time to adjust to GU's system.

He cited a key stretch around Christmas in 2023 as the point where he began to feel comfortable running Few's system.

"Anywhere you go, it's going to be an adjustment period," Nembhard said. "There's gonna be some things that go well for you [and] some things that don't go well for you."

This year, Nembhard has made a sizable leap on the offensive end, both in his playmaking and his efficiency. Nembhard's career-high mark of 9.8 assists per game leads the country, and he could move into the NCAA's all-time top five in single-

season assists before the end of the year.

"He sees it all," said senior forward Graham Ike. "He knows how to put the right passes through the right loopholes and whatnot. So I'm always expecting the ball."

Nembhard has also improved as a 3-point shooter. Coming into the year, his career-best from deep was 35.6%. This season, he's shooting 39.3% from beyond the arc.

"I definitely wanted to make some jumps in that area this summer and be able to score off the bounce," Nembhard said. "Me and [assistant coach Stephen] Gentry worked a lot on creation and getting shots off."

Ike said Nembhard's improved shooting has put defenses under greater stress in ball screens.

"It's definitely opening up our offense because now it's hard to get under his ball screen — you've got to get over because he's shooting the ball so well," Ike said. "So it's like, pick your poison. He's gonna pass it, or he's gonna hit you with a midrange or three, or a nice little floater. He has it all in his arsenal."

While Ike heaped praise on his senior point guard, Nembhard was just as eager to give props to his pick-and-roll partner. The two have had a symbiotic relationship on the court this season, with Ike averaging 17.1 points per game — thanks in large part to Nembhard's playmaking.

"It took a little bit of time to figure that out, but once we did, we hit the ground running, and it was special," Nembhard said of the bond he shares with Ike. "All I've got to do is get the ball in a lot of times, and he figures out the rest."

Nembhard has formed close bonds with all of his teammates during his two seasons at GU, and he credits the program's culture as a reason why.

"[GU is] a special place where you can be a part of a family and a tradition like no other," Nembhard said. "This is a place where guys get along and guys all rock with each other and care about each other."

Outside of game action, Ike has noticed that Nembhard's hardworking habits have positively impacted the rest of the team.

"Anything that you do with a close group of people, spending this much time

GU SPORTS
CALENDAR
Thursday, March 20
➤ Men's basketball vs. No. 9 Georgia, Wichita, Kansas, 1:35 p.m., NCAA Tournament first round
➤ Women's basketball vs. UTSA, 6 p.m., WBIT first round
Friday, March 21
➤ Track and field at Buc Scoring Invite, Spokane, Washington, (2-day event)
➤ Baseball at Pepperdine, Malibu, California, (three-game series)
Saturday, March 22
➤ Women's tennis vs. Washington State, 1 p.m.
Sunday, March 23
➤ Men's golf at UC San Diego Invitational, La Jolla, California, (three-day tournament)
➤ Men's tennis vs. Portland, 10 a.m.
Monday, March 24
➤ Women's golf at Dr. Donnis Invitational, Lahaine, Hawaii, (three-day tournament)
Tuesday, March 25
➤ Baseball at Washington State, Pullman, Washington, 6:05 p.m.

Home games in bold

with them ... whatever you do or they do, it becomes contagious, good or bad," Ike said of Nembhard's work ethic. "So it's definitely worn off on me and the way that I approach the game, and some of my teammates as well."

As Nembhard prepares to close his collegiate career, leave his GU family and potentially join a new one in the NBA, questions abound from draft pundits about his height and ability to match the league's physicality and size.

But Nembhard doesn't pay much mind to those concerns.

"I don't really care, honestly," Nembhard said. "I've played basketball my whole entire life at this height, so it is what it is ... it's just what I am, and who I am."

Judging by his success thus far, maybe we shouldn't care either.

Brooks Coleman is a copy editor.

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