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Students practice sign language as a group as part of the newly created American Sign Language class.

JOSHUA GARCIA IG: @flamedticks

Gonzaga offers first ASL class

Graduate capstone project brings American Sign Language curriculum to the university

By EMILY FROMAN

For the first time, American Sign Language programming is being officially offered at Gonzaga University with new designated elementary courses that started this fall.

"This is an exciting opportunity to be a part of this, as something that's never been offered through the university before," said ASL Professor Rina Clark.

Clark is an instructional technologist/designer in the Instructional Design & Delivery office at GU who recently celebrated her 5-year anniversary with the

university.

According to Clark, her interest in sign language began when she was about nine years old.

She worked as an ASL interpreter for 28 years. Through this role, Clark said she had a variety of different experiences.

"[This included] being present for interpreting births to interpreting people in hospice care and then everything in between," Clark said. "But the bulk of it has been in education and higher education, which I really, really enjoy."

Clark's capstone project for graduate

school involved building the curriculum for ASL programming at GU.

"My capstone project was to develop this course and it coincided with doing my internship in instructional design," Clark said.

ASL programming at GU began this semester with an Elementary ASL I course, designated as ESDE 101. Elementary ASL II, designated as ESDE 102, is being offered this upcoming semester.

Sections will have a maximum of 20 spots for students to fill. The limit on students serves to preserve the integrity of

the course because it is a visual language, Clark said.

According to Clark, with a smaller class size, the instructor can ensure that students are understanding and forming the signs correctly.

These two courses can be used by students to gain language credits and meet the language requirement of the College of Arts and Sciences.

According to Clark, the first ASL section this fall filled in a matter of days.

SEE ASL PAGE 3

Calling all Swifties: Study seeks out dedicated fans

By CLARINNE KIRK

Love her or hate her, it's hard to exist in our society without being impacted in some way by Taylor Swift.

The recent success of Swift's record-breaking Eras Tour coupled with her subsequent documentary are the most recent illustrations of her economic and cultural influence. Associate professor of communications studies Melissa Click and communications student Arianna Tibbs are conducting a study to better understand this influence, as well as the impact not being able to attend the Eras Tour had on fans, their relationship with Swift and others.

Click said this research will serve as a pilot study, testing to see if there is anything significant or interesting to further pursue. The research will include a total of approximately 30 interviews, supplemented with some survey research. To find individuals to interview, Click and Tibbs put out an announcement in Gonzaga University's morning mail, calling on Swifties who had not been able to go the Eras Tour to talk about their experience and their relationship not only with Swift but also with other fans.

In addition to qualitative interview research, Tibbs is also conducting online outreach by finding posts on TikTok and other social media platforms from individuals within the Swiftie community and connecting with them through direct messages, asking if they would be interested in participating.

Click said she became interested in studying the Eras Tour not only because of her history of studying largely female fandoms but also due to the complex interpersonal struggles that resulted from the small supply and extreme demand of Swift's tickets. Because there was such a large fan base who were unable to get tickets either due to a lack of availability or high prices, Click said she was interested to see if fans' inability to get tickets affected their relationship with Swift.

"We could talk to fans who went [to the Eras Tour]

SEE SWIFT PAGE 2



The gifts under the Giving Tree consist of donated items that were dropped off by students.

DYLAN SMITH IG: @d.smithphotos

CCE embraces the holiday spirit

Winter Wonderland provides gifts to Spokane families

By ANTHONY DI MAURO

Gonzaga University's Center for Community Engagement is hosting its annual Winter Wonderland celebration on campus on Dec. 9.

Youth and families from the Campus Kids, Connections and Sparks programs will attend the event alongside GU student mentors. Parents and caregivers will be able to shop for gifts for children and their

families at the Winter Wonderland toy shop and engage in different activities.

CCE Director of Strategic Partnerships Bailey Wootton is one of the organizers for the Winter Wonderland event.

Wootton joined the CCE office in 2011 and began collaborating on the Giving Tree Initiative which led up to the Winter Wonderland event.

According to Wootton, the Giving

Tree started for the Campus Kids and Connections programs and has expanded to Sparks.

"A few years ago, we transitioned to have more family events so that we can engage more families. But the Winter Wonderland event we've done for a long time," Wootton said. "The Giving Tree itself is the way in which we collect the gifts for the event, just

SEE GIVING PAGE 3

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OPINION

Be kind — It's that simple. Staff writer shares his thoughts on this important value.

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Spring Awakening explores timeless themes of coming-of-age and self-expression.

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SPORTS

Nia Damuni provides a spark for a struggling volleyball team in her first season.

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Physics professor sparks creativity with passions that transcend time

By BROOKE BOWEN

Eric Kincanon, a Gonzaga University professor of physics, draws on his tutoring background and storytelling abilities to teach and engage his students.

Kincanon started his college education majoring in English and poetry while taking math and physics courses. His experience in the math and physics department pushed him toward a career in the STEM field.

"I wrote poetry and I thought I might go after this but I wasn't sure," Kincanon said. "I was taking physics and math just because I was good at it ... but then I took a class on poetry to see what it was like, and really, frankly, the poetry professor was a jerk."

Kincanon said his poetry professor did not like his views on poetry to be challenged, but his physics professor was the kind of professor who liked answering questions from students.

Kincanon decided later in his sophomore year of college that he wanted to go into teaching. He said he spent a great deal of time tutoring mathematics in the tutoring center at the University of Missouri, primarily focusing on a course called "Math 3" for people who were struggling in math basics.

"They could not get people to tutor it," Kincanon said. "So I agreed, and I really liked it. I liked teaching and helping the students ... I didn't teach the class, of course, when I was in undergraduate but I started with just explaining what multiplication meant."

Kincanon found the tutoring interesting because it focused on the concept of teaching instead of the difficulty of the concepts.

"It was a challenge in a sense, like okay how do I explain to somebody that 3x plus 2 is not 5x?" Kincanon said.

Kincanon moved from tutoring to pursuing a graduate degree in mathematics. The math department focused heavily on teaching whereas the physics department focused on being a teacher's aide. He then started teaching basic math classes.

"If you wanted to cut your teeth on teaching, you really don't want the subject matter to get in the way," Kincanon said.

Kincanon said teaching always felt like it was his calling. Kincanon worked several part-time jobs before graduate school in groundskeeping, tarring roofs and flipping burgers at a grill for tuition and spending money.

A part-time job that Kincanon particularly enjoyed was his time at the Red Cross delivering blood from their blood center to the hospitals. Another job Kincanon enjoyed was his time working at a country club as a janitor and night watchman. He said that the job could be done quickly and the rest of the time could be spent reading a book or learning something new.

"You can't point to that and get identity from it," Kincanon said. "I really think that I identify myself by what's important to me and that is my family and what I do here."

Kincanon teaches varying levels of physics, ranging from a 100 level class to a 400 level class and a philosophy of time class developed from a core class he created.

"I do like having a diversity of classes," Kincanon said. "I have had semesters where all I taught was the intro classes for STEM. I've even had years where that's all I've done. I liked doing it, it's fine, but I like the variety."

Kincanon developed the philosophy of time class a while ago as a core science class. The physics department



JANNA PRICE IG: @jannapricephotography

Kincanon discovered a passion for teaching in college when he started tutoring in mathematics.

expects faculty to develop their own core class, so Kincanon came up with a core class with time as the unifying concept.

The class looked at concepts like the period of the pendulum and the frequency of sound. As a result of the class, Kincanon started to read more about other concepts about time. Eventually he went to the philosophy department and asked to teach a course on theories of time.

For its first semester, the course was co-taught by philosophy professor Mark Alfino and Kincanon. After the initial launch of the course, Kincanon became an adjunct professor of philosophy teaching philosophy of time.

"I get upper division students that are not physics and engineering majors [in the class]," Kincanon said. "I've got upper division English, business and all these other majors and it's nice to interact with those students."

According to Jake Archambo, one of Kincanon's intro to physics students, Kincanon spends time telling stories and wearing interesting shirts to associate physics concepts to the real world.

"I've never seen a professor with better shirts than professor Kincanon," Archambo said. "From dogs playing poker to Hawaiian 'Aloha' shirts, he shows up and shows

out every class."

According to Archambo, Kincanon has used his shirts to provide connections to important physics topics, engaging students in a unique way.

"I tell a lot of stories in class," Kincanon said. "I hope that most of them are somehow related to what we're talking about. I want to keep the students engaged, and there's lots of different ways that a teacher can do that. I find if I have a little tangent on a story that's got something to do with physics, it brings them back in"

Kincanon has taken classes in welding, beer making and fly fishing and with his background in poetry, entertaining life stories and other special interests, Kincanon has multiple fields to draw from for his stories.

"I think the thing I like most [in welding] is to make something that looks sort of like a plant, but if you look closer, you realize things about it," Kincanon said. "But then I think it's just fun. It's just, I mean, you melt steel."

During his time so far at GU, Kincanon said he met his wife, created lasting connections with faculty and memories with his students.

Brooke Bowen is a staff writer.

SWIFT

Continued from Page 1

but what about the people that were left out?" Click said. "How did that impact their fandom, their relationship with Swift, their relationship with their family or their friends?"

Click said she was also curious about the impact the Eras Tour documentary had on these relationships and perceptions of Swift, perhaps alleviating some fans' resentment that formed after not being able to see the concert live.

"While we were thinking about that original issue, the documentary was released and then we thought, 'I wonder if the documentary is like a balm to people like, 'oh, now I can finally go' or if it's like, 'that's not good enough. I want to be there live,'" Click said.

Click was not only interested in researching Swift to answer these questions, but also due to her own relationship with Swift as a self-proclaimed "long-term fan" and mother of daughters who are also fans. Click, who was unable to get tickets to the Eras Tour, said she wanted to go to the Eras Tour with her daughters and share that experience. While Click said this relationship with Swift created her interest in the research, she does not believe that it will cloud her ability to conduct a proper study.

While Tibbs is not as big of a Swift fan, she still said she had a prior interest in Swift, largely due to the swarm of posts about the concert — both from those able and unable to go — on her feed.

"I don't think I'm in some sort of in

a group with the Taylor Swift fandom," Tibbs said. "But even as an outsider, I was like, 'Wow, there's so much going on here.'"

Another of Click's interests in this research stems from the significance of Swift within culture, whose influence is made even more impressive due to the traditional devaluing of female-associated interests.

"We see that whatever women and girls are drawn to is seen as less than," Click said.

Despite this typical diminishing of female interests, according to Click, Swift's tour had a large financial impact during a summer when other female-centered narratives also had financial success, including Beyoncé's tour and the release of the movie "Barbie."

"We're talking about two major tours and a major theatrical relapse that heavily impacted the economy," Click said. "And, they were about stories that were critical of the ways women are treated in our culture."

According to Click, Swift's ability to influence and dictate value as a female celebrity is significant given that, historically, men and male-fronted groups such as The Beatles or Elvis have been the ones amassing large female audiences.

"[Swift]'s one of the first times we've really seen a female artist draw that kind of visibility," Click said.

Tibbs added that the economic impact of Swift highlights the power of young women as a consumer base that has typically been ignored. Despite the common misconception of young women as an unprofitable clientele, Tibbs said that the economic boom of any city hosting a Swift concert proves otherwise.

"Any city that Taylor Swift plays in has

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We see that whatever women and girls are drawn to is seen as less than.

Melissa Click, associate professor of communications studies

an economic boom of some sort because so many fans are coming in, staying in hotels, eating out and everything that revolves around them being able to attend these concerts," Tibbs said.

Not only is Swift shaping the economy of cities, Click said she is also impacting the economics of the music industry by trying to maintain control of the ownership of her music. Click added that Swift's influence spans multiple industries, showing her value as a celebrity individuals will listen to.

"Anyone who can connect to her wants to now, because not only is it economic, there's also a sort of prestige or power that comes along with her too," Click said.

Through their research, Tibbs said she hopes to learn more about the relationships of fandoms, both in the traditional fan-to-artist parasocial relationship and also within interpersonal relationships between fans and between fans and other individuals in their lives.

"Where do [fans] place the blame?" Tibbs said. "Who are they upset at? If it is

Taylor Swift, do they start to forgive her as time goes on?"

The study also works to identify how core communications principles, including meaning-making and power dynamics, are present within Swift's relationship to her fandom, according to Click.

"Communication studies is generally concerned with power, and so the relationships of power in the fandom and between Taylor Swift and the fandom are interesting," Click said. "We're always looking at how things become meaningful. So what meaning are the fans making from the tour, from the documentary, from talking with each other? And then also identity, so how are they reflecting on who they are because they got to go or didn't get to go? There are lots of bigger questions about our culture and about justice that are present in the study, too."

Clarinne Kirk is a copy editor.

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Puppers for people

GU club Wags for Zags allows members to press "paws" on their busy schedules

By SHEI MCLAUGHLIN

With around 400 people on their mailing list, Wags for Zags helps students having a "ruff" day connect with local shelter animals who are ready to play.

Formerly known as Man's Best Friend, Wags for Zags rebranded itself to make the club more inclusive and appeal to a larger audience, Club President Alison Linthacum said. The new name was determined during a club meeting last year through a vote.

"We opened it to the club and any member could submit a name," Linthacum said. "Then we had them all vote on it and this one was popular."

Wags for Zags is a service-based club that is committed to helping local animal shelters in need of volunteers. Linthacum said students' main role is to help socialize the animals and prepare them to join new families.

"We try to do weekly outings to the shelter to socialize with the dogs," Linthacum said. "We get them out of their kennel, we walk them, play with them and try to get them adopted."

The club takes anywhere from five to ten volunteers to the shelter every weekend, but club members are encouraged to go on their own time throughout the week as well.

"While you're there, you don't necessarily work with the staff too much," Linthacum said. "You're more just working with the animals."

The main animal shelter the club works with is SpokAnimal, a local nonprofit no-kill shelter. According to Randi Oien, the director of customer relations for SpokAnimal, the organization's primary objective is to help homeless or displaced animals.

Oien said SpokAnimal gets many of their animals from owners who are unable to care for the pets anymore as well as other shelters and rescue groups that have more animals coming in than going out.

She said it is with the help of their volunteers that they are able to support and service so many animals.

"We'll work with pretty much anybody and everybody that wants to help us with the animals," Oien said. "But, we have a lot of things we do aside from just homing animals who are homeless and adopting them out."

Some other services SpokAnimal offers are pet clinics that offer low-cost spay/neuter services, vaccinations and microchipping. Oien said they also have a program called The Guardian Angel program, where the shelter boards animals whose owner is going through a crisis or transition in which they wouldn't be able to care for their pet.

With so many opportunities to service and socialize animals, Oien said SpokAnimal offers bimonthly orientations for volunteers to learn the basics of caring for pets before they choose how they want to help.

"From the orientation, they learn where they want to go and what they want to do for volunteering," Oien said.

Oien said another way volunteers can help the shelter



COURTESY OF @WAGSFORZAGSCLUB.GU ON IG

(Left to right) Liana Dierickx, Alison Linthacum, Natalie Suryan and Molly Kacproicz hold dogs from SpokAnimal.

is by donating food, toys and other necessities.

Wags for Zags is hosting a donation drive from now until Dec. 8 where they will be gathering donations they can give to SpokAnimal to care for the animals as the seasons get colder. The club has a donation bin located next to the welcoming desk on the first floor of the John J. Hemmingston Center.

"They always have a need for things and we'd like to help them out in any way we can," Linthacum said.

According to Avalon Althouse, the volunteer coordinator and foster support for SpokAnimal, the shelter is looking for donations of blankets, both big and small, treats, pet food, cones, peanut butter, kongs, litter and toys. She said they are in need of anything pet related.

"We are a shelter that is not only taking in a lot of owner surrenders, but we're also helping other shelters out and other rescues that are a little overwhelmed," Althouse said. "The donations help the animals stay warm as the winter

comes and brings some holiday spirit."

Other ways Wags for Zags gets involved is through programming and events that involve connecting students to dogs from the shelter. Linthacum said the club does programming with organizations such as Gonzaga University's Housing and Residence Life and the Gonzaga Student Body Association.

"Last year, we brought some animals during finals week just out on the field for people to play with and pet in between studying and taking their finals," Linthacum said.

To get involved with the club or to be notified of upcoming events, check out its Instagram @wagsforzagsclub.gu and sign up to be on their mailing list on Zagtivities.

Shei McLaughlin is an arts & entertainment editor.



JOSHUA GARCIA IG: @flamedflicks

Rina Clark, working with the other department professors, hopes to expand the program.

ASL

Continued from Page 1

Clark is teaching one of the ASL sections this semester and the other section is being taught by Melissa Pilant, Clark said.

"We have a beautiful team," said Kimberly Weber, a professor and chair of the GU special education department. "Rina utilized what we had and her own expertise and now this semester, they actually have done stuff to improve because we've got an additional adjunct [Melissa], who is a native deaf speaker."

This semester has been about updating the 101 course and working on how to extend it to 102, according to Weber.

The special education department, in combination with the modern languages department, had been looking to expand ASL programming for some time, according to Weber.

"Sometimes, having a language like sign language that's physical becomes an easier mode, because [students] have certain physical movements that they do that make sense [to them]," Weber said.

Christina Isabelli was one of the people who helped to make the ASL programming at GU happen, according to Weber. Isabelli is the associate provost for global engagement at GU.

Sign language was previously taught at GU on a smaller scale, although it was a different type of sign

language called Signing Exact English. SEE is a system of signing that doesn't use the full language component that ASL does, Weber said. ASL has a distinct syntax and grammar structure, unlike SEE.

There are two sections of ASL II planned for this spring semester, as well as the continuation of the ASL I curriculum with one section.

While some details of the new ASL programming have been finalized, there are still plenty of plans being made for its future, Weber said.

In the works is a mechanism for students who have some proficiency in ASL prior to arriving at GU, though the details have yet to be determined, Clark said.

According to Clark, her experience is that when students get to the end of the course, they have gained perspective through their new knowledge of ASL. The curriculum involves vocabulary, grammar structure and cultural aspects of ASL.

"In doing ASL, like other modern languages, we have to look at the cultural component that comes with it," Weber said.

According to Weber, the value that the new ASL programming adds to the GU community with its curriculum is clear.

"I do think that sign language hadn't been emphasized [at GU], but that folks are starting to look at as, this really is a cultural component that can enhance our diversity on campus and in our community," Weber said.

Emily Froman is a staff writer.

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Winter Wonderland has crafts, food and all sorts of fun kinds of activities for kids and their families.

Bailey Wootton, CCE Director of Strategic Partnerships

GIVING

Continued from Page 1

recognizing that the Christmas or holiday season can be tough for families."

The way the Giving Tree works, according to Wootton, is that members in the GU community sponsor and collect gifts for the holidays. Those gifts are then set up in a toy shop at the Winter Wonderland event. The parent or guardian can then go shopping in the toy shop so that they are able to choose the gifts for their family members.

"To have a wide variety of toys along with the right amount to collect, the CCE office follows trends from previous attendance as well as tracks the feedback on toys that kids are into these days," Wootton said.

Wootton said that CCE created a tag to put on the Giving Tree for each gift, and the CCE office staff tabled for a few weeks leading up to Thanksgiving. Students, who grabbed a tag with a gift item on it, then dropped off the donated items in the office.

"Winter Wonderland has crafts, food and all sorts of fun kinds of activities for kids and their families," Wootton said.

Avery Kain, secondary AmeriCorps program specialist, is a graduate of GU who has been involved in Winter Wonderland in the past.

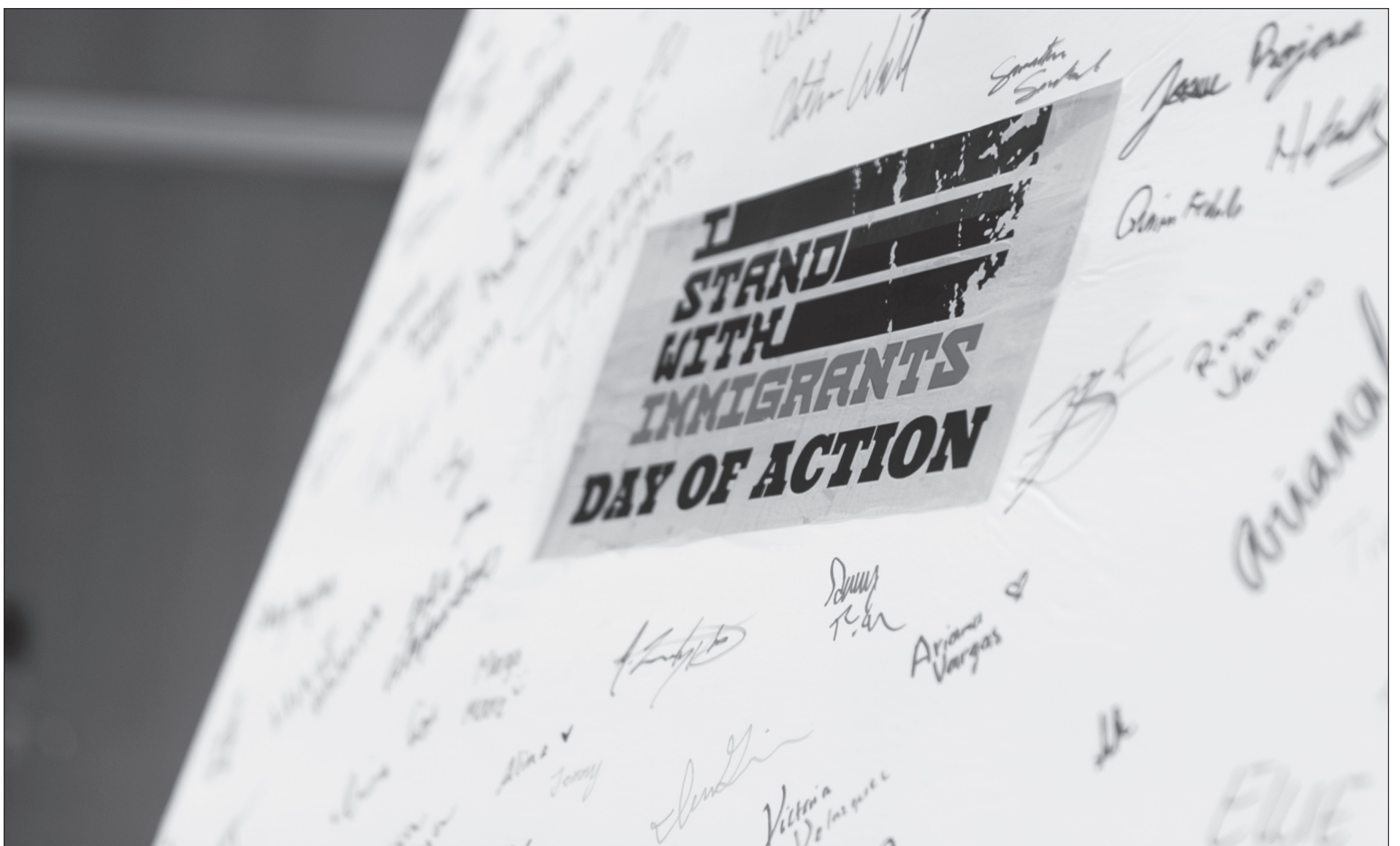
"The Giving Tree is kind of an opportunity for the Gonzaga staff, students and faculty to give back to their community and just provide a warm item and gift that they're looking forward to for the holidays," Kain said.

Kain, alongside her AmeriCorps team members, is responsible for setting up the decorations along with hosting various activities.

Kain said they will offer 14 different activities for kids and their families, ranging from STEM activities to different arts and crafts. She also said that they have planned some sports and STEM activities.

"I would love the community to know that Gonzaga cares and wants to be involved with them, wants to hear their opinions, and just wants to be a space for them to be involved," Kain said. "We don't want to be seen as separate. We really care about the community and what they have to say."

Anthony Di Mauro is a contributor.



JOSHUA GARCIA IG: @flamedflicks

Dream Week celebrations included a poster board for students to sign in solidarity.

Dream Week spreads awareness of immigration and equality

By MADELEINE REED

From Nov. 6 through Nov. 10, organizations across campus gathered to celebrate Dream Week 2023, acknowledging those students who are impacted by immigration within the Gonzaga University community.

Headed by the Gonzaga Student Body Association, students, faculty and staff joined together for a week of education and acknowledgment with daily events.

GSBA's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Director Odalys Sanchez Cedillo planned the events for her second year in a row and aimed to create an impact on campus.

"I really wanted to invest more time into putting it together this year and making it more meaningful and more educational," Sanchez Cedillo said.

The week began with a webinar on Monday where United We Dream, the largest immigrant youth-led network in the country, Zoomed in to students and faculty to discuss immigration and how it exists on campus, as well as how community members can create a more inclusive environment for undocumented students.

On Tuesday, events turned to a focus on the stories of immigrant families and students through a display in the basement of the John J. Hemmingson Center.

"A lot of our stories highlighted family separation, which is a huge problem that occurs due to our current legislation," Sanchez Cedillo said.

Other events followed throughout the week, including a film showing on Wednesday and an interactive photo booth on Thursday. Sanchez Cedillo said GSBA received good feedback from the week and said she felt that it was powerful for people to hear the stories of families and individuals within the community.

"It's so meaningful to my life, especially being a daughter of immigrants," Sanchez Cedillo said. "It's

meaningful to be able to put something together that really represents not just other people in our community but the people that are in my community specifically."

Events for the week were largely informed by Sanchez Cedillo's trip to Washington D.C. for the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice last month where she, alongside a delegation of students from the Unity Multicultural Education Center, University Ministry and the Center for Community Engagement advocated for immigration reform at the capital.

Sanchez Cedillo said she looks forward to working in GSBA next semester, where the organization will work to collect stories from GU students who are immigrants, aiming to create their own publication of "hidden stories" that aren't typically acknowledged from day to day.

"Something super important to me is not just acknowledging these identities throughout the one week, or a specific month, but also being able to acknowledge and shine light onto them throughout the year," Sanchez Cedillo said. "They are existing in our community every day — not just in a single week."

The GU administration, faculty and staff are also working towards this goal. Assistant Chief Diversity Officer Shawn Washington has been working within the Office of Inclusive Excellence to raise campus awareness on the topic and to better support impacted community members.

These efforts are linked to the recent developments to the Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan, which was published earlier this year. The plan, headed by Chief Diversity Officer Robin Kelly, outlines the university's goals and priorities in creating an inclusive and equitable institution.

Alongside the new goals set forth through the strategic plan, Washington hopes to expand on previously-established groups of staff and students in order to create greater campus support for students impacted by immigration.

"My hope is to really continue to do this work, because it's an important work for Gonzaga to be a part of," Washington said. "Thinking of other Jesuit institutions ... is something that is on our mind [as we] continue to show that care to many different populations, so more will definitely come."

One of these groups was the Undocumented Community Support Coalition, which consisted of faculty and staff that aimed to support GU's undocumented community, provide education to the greater GU community and invite advocacy for those impacted by U.S. immigration policies. The coalition has come to reside with him in OIE and Washington said he hopes to reevaluate, reassess and revamp the group within the upcoming terms.

"It's been tricky," Washington said. "It's been tricky, but members of the coalition in the past created different documents in terms of information awareness, training."

In the past, training like the UndocuAlly training was provided to faculty and staff in order to better prepare them for helping students succeed on campus and in their professional lives. Though it is not currently being provided, the Office of Inclusive Excellence looks toward bringing more awareness to campus.

"Just being mindful [of] how we show that support is something — that's key," Washington said. "For me, [I] want to figure out what the best solutions, best case support for folks or community members impacted by immigration [are]."

Madeleine Reed is a digital editor.

Academic advising focused on improvement from student feedback, forums and open dialogue

By NATALIE KELLER

In response to a growing number of student complaints about academic advising, Gonzaga University will hold feedback forums this spring to listen to students' concerns and potentially revamp its academic advising system.

The forums, which are being organized by the Gonzaga Student Body Association and the Center for Teaching and Advising, will be open to all students with a goal of facilitating candid discussions.

"We're really hoping, more than anything, to reinvigorate the role of advising across campus," said Kristina Morehouse, a professor of communication studies who works with the CTA.

Morehouse said the conversation about revamping academic advising started this spring. She said that while the CTA knew some students felt they were not able to meet with their advisor often enough or that they were not receiving enough guidance, the department did not have enough specific student feedback to make changes.

"One of the things that we are missing is the student voice about how advising goes," Morehouse said. "We want to go straight to the people who know what's happening."

In order to gather additional information, GSBA and CTA began planning student feedback forums that will be moderated by a GSBA student with no faculty present. While the forums were originally planned for fall, Morehouse said there were few students interested in attending and the forums were postponed

until spring 2024.

When the forums' specific dates are set, information on how students can get involved in these sessions will be communicated via email, GSBA's Instagram and Zagtivities.

GSBA advisor Andrew Mercer said that when the forums do happen, it will be a way for the CTA to gather and address students' complaints in a more structured, productive way.

"I know that there seems to be some frustrations at times, and the CTA and other academic advisors are very much recognizing that," Mercer said. "And instead of just putting their heads in the sand and being like 'We know what we're doing,' they really want to get students' involvement."

GSBA President Griffin Reittinger said that while he personally has never had any negative experiences with GU's academic advising, he has heard fellow students voicing various concerns about the system.

"If you have an advisor that is maybe not the most knowledgeable or doesn't have the most time, it can be a huge burden on students," Reittinger said. "It can be vastly impactful on your whole student career."

Having been involved in organizing the upcoming forums, Reittinger said he is looking forward to hearing the feedback and suggestions his peers have to offer.

"Since it impacts us so greatly, it matters to have student voice," Reittinger said. "Because if something is negatively impacting us, we may have solutions or

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We want to develop an awareness of what students need and how we, as faculty advisors can respond to those needs in healthy ways

Kristina Morehouse, professor of communication studies

knowledge about how to best go about changes in the area."

One of the changes Morehouse said she hopes to see in GU's academic advising is advisors providing students with an increased level of guidance. While students are ultimately responsible for their own academic success and timely graduation, Morehouse also said that advisors' insights and assistance can be invaluable to students.

"We want to make sure our advisors are prepared," Morehouse said. "We want to develop an awareness of what students need and how we, as faculty advisors, can respond to those needs in healthy ways that don't supplant student autonomy, but guide it."

As a faculty member who said her "most cherished role" at GU is being an advisor, Morehouse also said she wants students to form relationships with their advisors. She said that she hopes the student feedback forums will bring that vision closer to fruition.

"In a magical world, I would like to see advisees being able to approach their advisors about some of the complexities of university life that might be befuddling to them," Morehouse said. "I think an advisor can play a pretty important role in helping students craft their futures."

Natalie Keller is a staff writer.

Financial crisis in the U.S.: Untangling the issue

The United States government has and will seemingly always have a problem with money. The federal budget has consistently run on a deficit, with more expenditures than tax revenue. The U.S. has always had debt, but it began to accelerate during the Reagan era and has ballooned to a crisis point over the last two decades.

The problem with the federal government having debt is that it severely hampers potential economic growth for the country, since any unpaid debt is added to the next budget as interest. As interest payments snowball, they will take up an increasingly large share of the budget; as this happens, all future taxes and spending cuts will need to be taken into account, meaning that economic activity will continue to slow.

This growing fiscal crisis will start to make other countries — and their investors — worried, which will likely cause the dollar to fall out of favor; this will cause the financial sector to collapse and contribute to inflation and recession.

Much of the debt problem can be explained by the way Congress appropriates funds during each fiscal year. Mandatory spending, which takes up more than 60% of the budget, consists of programs that the government is legally required to fund and includes many entitlement programs, like Medicare and Social Security. The rest of the budget, once interest is paid, is free to be appropriated according to Congress' desires.

At the same time, tax revenues have not made



By JACKSON HUDGINS

up for the extra spending, so debt has ballooned. In addition, Congress cannot cut any mandatory spending; the share of the budget entitlement programs take up will grow as our population ages and younger Americans fail to fill the gaps. In fact, the Social Security Board of Trustees have said that the entirety of Social Security will be insolvent by 2033.

As part of the younger age groups in this country, we will be saddled with this future debt. I know that the Social Security benefits I pay now will likely not be there for me when I retire. Just like climate change, the problems of the present will inevitably fall on the future.

However, we should not be without hope. The power of change does lie with future generations, and there are several potential solutions for our blooming debt. That being said, it can only happen by understanding that we need to deal with some short-term pain for long-term prosperity.

Increasing tax revenue would be a good starting point; how this could be done is a matter of debate, but it is one of the most immediately accessible powers that Congress has at its disposal.

The other — and much more painful — option is to cut mandatory spending in some way. In the case of Social Security, there are really three options: raising the retirement age, cutting benefits or raising payroll taxes. The fiscal concerns of Medicare and other entitlements can be remedied with a variety of other fixes. There also needs to be accountability in military spending, and a way to root out federal corruption among the political elite.

The national debt has helped to contribute to the inflationary period we find ourselves in and will continue to be an albatross around the neck of every citizen until it is resolved. However, Americans are nothing if not resilient, and when we find the political will to do so, this will eventually become a problem relegated to the history books.

Jackson Hudgins is a staff writer.

The kind choice: A reminder of the necessary change

Kindness is an emotion often forgotten about in our society. Amid the anger, drama, hatred and other negative emotions that fill up our screens and our minds, I find myself asking a question that the Black Eyed Peas once set out to answer, "Where is the Love?"

There is really one way to fight all of this and contrary to the way we humans are inclined to act, it is through sheer kindness. If there is one thing we should bring into our habits and everyday life, it's more kindness to others.

How is it possible to be kind all of the time, even in the face of somebody not reciprocating that attitude? This is a difficult question that does not have an easy answer, but there are numerous ways people have sought to dive into the implications of this question.

For inspiration, we can look toward some notable figures. The miracle maker and proclaimed son of God, Jesus offers a great perspective into unconditional kindness and love. Regardless of religious status, the story of Jesus is something anybody can read and be inspired by.

"Love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back," he said.

This is a difficult task, how can an everyday person be able to put these heavy words into action? There is



By CAM MCCANN

only one way, and that is to start. Start with something small, like imagining somebody who has done wrong to you. Forgive them, whether to yourself or to them and make sure that you experience the beauty of unconditional kindness.

Thorfinn, a character in the hit television show "Vinland Saga," is based on the Icelandic explorer Thorfinn Karlsefni who sought to explore into the New World with the famed viking Leif Erickson, but in the show, we see a different approach to the warrior's history.

"I want to be a kinder, gentler person," is a quote we hear come from Thorfinn that can sum up the

character's mindset. Aimed toward finding ways to fight hatred and violence with kindness in an era where these harsher attributes were glorified, the pacifist refuses to fight fire with fire and shows that turning the other cheek is the kindest but often hardest decision a person can make.

Choosing the kind decision can help you to realize that this way of life is astoundingly cathartic and will lead to an improved mood. Pick up a piece of garbage you see on the road, tell somebody you don't know to have a good day — many simple kind deeds can be done in less than a minute of your time, so why not?

Doing good things not only is good but also feels good. When you do something nice for others, endorphins light up in your brain and you can get a high from the pleasure center in your brain.

According to a 2013 study by the University of Buffalo, volunteer work and giving back to your community can lower blood pressure and the study found tremendous evidence that selfishness leads to a longer life expectancy. There are numerous other studies that all have the same message: doing good is good.

We often have stories of times when we were indirectly rewarded for

kindness. Earlier this year, I found out what doing good and being nice can do for your life. In downtown Spokane, there was a dog running through the streets — nobody was chasing after the dog, so I ran after it. For almost a mile this dog evaded being caught, but when she was, the poor puppy had marks all over her paws.

When I was able to contact the owners, they wept from their gratitude that their dog had been saved and decided to give me all the cash in their wallet as a reward, even after I politely declined. When you do good things for others, the world finds ways to do good to you.

Other people around you will notice kind gestures, and oftentimes will be inspired and start their own kind gestures, our actions affect so much more than we think and it all can start with a single act of kindness.

Cam McCann is a staff writer.

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Spice up your playlist with some holiday flavor

As we head into the last months of the year, it seems like you can't go anywhere without hearing the familiar chimes of Christmas songs that get replayed every year.

Even as a Christmas-music-lover, I get sick of certain songs by mid-December. Sometimes the only thing that feels more repetitive than the same handful of songs that get revisited is people complaining about hearing the same songs again and again.

While there are numerous songs that are abusively overplayed, there are plenty of underrated hits that may spice up your yearly listening routine. They can provide the necessary reprieve from your usual listening without feeling convoluted and awkward.

Christmas movie soundtracks and scores are often looked past, but they're a treasure trove of hidden gems.

Although most versions of "Baby It's Cold Outside" have started to feel slightly creepy and predatory, Zoëy Deschanel and Leon Redbone's version from the "Elf" movie soundtrack seems to transcend this criticism. Her sultry, alto voice compliments his jazzy vibrato, and the whole piece seems to connect the listener with snowy nights back at home.

Another deep-cut is "There's Always Tomorrow" from the unsettling stop-motion Christmas classic, "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." The sense of hope from the lyrics is synonymous with the meaning of the season. A similar feeling is evoked in Dolly Parton's "Hard Candy Christmas," which was made famous by its addition to the musical "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas."



By EMILY NIEMANN

If you're studying and you want holiday music that is relaxing and still feels magical, the musical scores for both "The Holiday" by Hans Zimmer and "Love Actually" by Craig Armstrong are perfect for romanticizing your studying for finals. I find myself enjoying those pieces year-round.

Even classical pieces like Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker," or the jazzy "A Charlie Brown Christmas" by the Vince Guaraldi Trio are great options for studying music that isn't too invasive.

But perhaps, movie soundtracks aren't for you. Even if you're a country music fan, Alan Jackson's "Let It Be Christmas" and "Tennessee Christmas" by the band Alabama are sure to bring listeners to a world where Santa drives a red pick-up truck.

While I'm not a huge fan of pop Christmas music, there are a couple tracks that don't feel entirely motivated by cash. Justin Bieber's "Mistletoe," is a catchy fan-favorite to throw in your Christmas playlist.

Unfortunately, the Christmas pop music conversation is

dominated by "All I Want for Christmas is You," which is ruthlessly overplayed and criminally overrated. Even though her outfit in the music video is something I wish I had in my own closet, there are plenty of other tracks that feel more genuine and aren't so annoying.

If you're looking for something that feels like classic Christmas, there are a couple songs that evoke this hometown spirit. This season "When My Heart Finds Christmas" by Harry Connick Jr. has been a repeat on nearly all of my Christmas playlists. It may be technically a New Year's song, but Ella Fitzgerald's seasonal croonings in "What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?" prompts listeners to think about the people they miss that season.

It's also a mistake to think that we must confine ourselves to the months of November and December to enjoy holiday music. Arbitrary dates don't control what music I listen to; sometimes a chilly morning in September calls for a Christmas tune or two.

You can even throw in a little Gonzaga University spirit with Bing Crosby's "White Christmas."

Holiday music doesn't have to feel repetitive and annoying by the end of December. Mix up what you're listening to, and you'll enjoy it throughout the season.

Emily Niemann is a staff writer.

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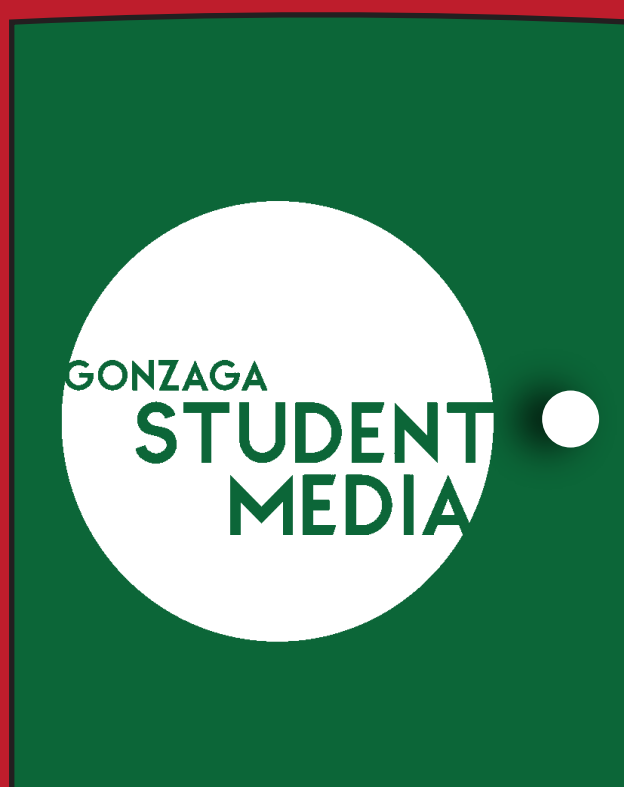
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What's in a Recipe: Life-changing Betty Crocker scalloped potatoes

The staple side dish is the perfect indulgence as the holiday season approaches

COMMENTARY
By SHEI MCLAUGHLIN

Some people grow up with recipes that have been passed down in their family from generation to generation. Other people are the test subjects of freestyle recipes that fashion stomachs of steel. I experienced something closer to the latter.

As the child of a young mother of two, we were no stranger to delicacies such as Kraft Mac & Cheese and Hot Pockets; on special occasions, we would even have ramen with a pea, carrot and corn medley. It wasn't until my mom was given her very first Betty Crocker cookbook that she was able to tap into an unknown and untouched skill.

She started with some easy recipes — a homemade spaghetti sauce, meatloaf, even a homemade mac and cheese. I wouldn't say my brother and I were ever picky eaters, but this was a big adjustment for us, and there were many new flavors and consistencies.

After my mom had been practicing and honing in on this new skill for a while, she invited the neighbors over for dinner and tried a new recipe unlike anything we had ever had: scalloped potatoes.

At this point in my life, I knew potatoes as either the salty, stick-like side dish to a burger or the "just add water" mashed potato packets. As someone who has four names that are all Irish, I am sure this reality had my ancestors turning in their graves. That being said, I was intimidated by this new take on potatoes.

I remember my mom meticulously slicing the potatoes for what seemed like forever. She would buy a mandoline sometime after this, and it would revolutionize her cooking. As she prepped the sauce, our house filled with the smell of buttery onion and garlic. While I was wary of many of these new recipes, this scent had this one review starting to feel like home.

As we sat down to eat that night, I was intimidated by what was on my plate. While the adults ate away, complimenting the dish and making small talk, I just pushed the food around my plate. When I mustered the courage to take my first bite, I knew what others meant when they said nothing matched a homemade meal.

Ever since my mom first made this



DYLAN SMITH IG: @d.smithphotos

Potatoes are a diverse ingredient that forms the base of this dish.

dish, I continue to request it for birthdays and holiday celebrations. As soon as it is "oven weather" — as my mom calls it — I pester her to make it. Now, being the same age she was when she was raising my brother and I, I have this newfound appreciation for her commitment to bettering herself and the food she fed her children.

Whether you are attending a holiday party or just looking for a reason to use the oven as we head into the colder part of the year, this recipe is guaranteed to fill you with warmth and cheesy potatoes.

Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 yellow sweet onion
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder

- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 2 ½ cups of milk
- ½ cup of Colby Jack cheese
- 6 medium potatoes

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 350F. Grease or butter a 9x13 casserole dish.

1. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Finely chop the whole onion and add it to the saucepan. Cook the onion in the butter for about 2 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onion is tender.
2. Stir in the flour, salt, pepper, garlic powder and onion powder. Cook, stirring constantly, until smooth and bubbly.
3. Remove the saucepan from heat and add in the milk. Heat on low to medium heat, stirring constantly until the sauce thickens.
4. Once the sauce thickens, remove from heat and add in Colby Jack cheese.

Do not add too much cheese, otherwise the sauce will become too thick.

5. Finely chop or mandoline the potatoes and spread them in layers in the casserole dish. Pour the sauce over the potatoes and spread. Ensure the sauce is evenly spread over all the potatoes.

6. Cover and bake for 40 minutes. Uncover and bake for another 40 minutes or until the top has become a golden brown. Garnish with your favorite seasoning— I recommend onion salt. Let stand for 5 to 10 minutes before serving.

Shei McLaughlin is an arts & entertainment editor.



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BULLETIN FILE PHOTO

Cold winter days can mean either cozying up inside or adventuring outdoors.

Winters in Spokane can be frightful, but the activities are so delightful

From skiing to snowball fights, the Lilac City offers an array of winter extracurriculars

COMMENTARY
By GARY FLEISCHMANN

Spokane winters can be a tough time, where bone-chilling temperatures, strong winds and icy roads really slow us down. Rather than focusing on winter's obstacles, focus on the time for some of the year's most memorable activities.

Here are some fun ideas for activities you can look forward to when that winter coat starts to become your daily driver.

Snowball fights have to be a crowd favorite for students at Gonzaga University. Whether you and your friends organize a fight filled with tactical flanks and choreographed strategies or you just want to ambush your friend when they get out of class, snowballs are a staple in the

winter.

If you are engaging in snowball fights, it's best to wear a waterproof jacket, or else you'll find yourself soggy in class. It should also be mentioned not to throw snowballs at strangers and never put ice in your snowballs.

Icy roads do make for a driving hazard, but they also mean it's time to go skating. Students looking to get their carve on enjoy taking advantage of the Numerica Skate Ribbon, located downtown at Riverfront Park at 507 W. Howard St. Ice skating is a great group activity, especially if it's your first time. Experienced skaters often lend out tips and tricks at the Ribbon, but be sure to wear a helmet if you're concerned with your ability to stay upright.

Sometimes getting outside

for an activity in the winter is easier said than done. On those days you can find it hard to just get out of your room, a simple quiet activity like reading can really help you enjoy your time indoors. Picking up a new book that you find interesting is a great way to exercise your mind and get some serotonin without having to battle the elements.

Hemm Den, in the John J. Hemmingson Center, is one of my favorite places on campus to squeeze in a chapter between classes. It has a cozy atmosphere, plenty of plush sofas and chairs and it's always quiet. For those struggling with keeping up with school as it gets colder, reading can help your mind from becoming stale, helping you tackle those long essays and final exams with confidence.

Skiing and snowboarding are the top-rated winter sports for students at GU. From weekly shuttles to Schweitzer and Mt. Spokane to weeklong club trips to British Columbia and Wyoming, GU offers plenty of ways to get to the top of the mountain.

Don't have your own gear? GU Outdoors has you covered with plenty of equipment and sizes to choose from. Don't have a ride to the mountain? Ski & Snowboard Club is always organizing day trips, weekend trips and even weeklong trips that can help you progress your riding to the next level.

Winter is also the time for ski and snowboard movies. New edits start to drop as soon as resorts have their opening weekend, so on those off days go

ahead and relax with a big bowl of popcorn and some brand new content. The highly anticipated film "Magma 3" by Alex Hall and Hunter Hess premiered this fall. Ski Carnage, a collective out of Montana, released its final movie on Oct. 20th.

Whether you're getting outside or staying in, facing the winter is hard on everyone. The best way to face the intimidating weather is to take advantage of the opportunities available instead of focusing on the challenges it creates.

Gary Fleischmann is a contributor.

SUDOKU

THE SAMURAI OF PUZZLES By The Mephram Group

Level 1 2 3 4

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

Solution to Last Week's puzzle 12/10/23

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

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

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Los Angeles Times Sunday Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Patti Varol

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18			
19					20					21				22						
23				24						25				26						
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120						121					122	123	124							
125						126					127							128		
129						130					131								132	

REINDEER GAMES

By Robin Stears

ACROSS

- Monastery head
- Unrefined
- Devilish creatures
- Like some reports
- Swap
- More vast
- Awkwafina's real first name
- Fried combread
- Men's clothing retailer
- Action in Uno
- Sicilian volcano
- 2-Down companions
- Elton John hit with the misheard lyric "Hold me closer, Tony Danza"
- Not the worst
- "... I say more?"
- Give comfort to
- Lunch hours, e.g.
- Messy handwriting
- Teakettle output
- Hanover Ivy
- ... alai
- Fitness method with "a springy, rhythmic way of moving forward"
- UPC bar code developer
- Public persona
- Cereal grain
- "Orinoco Flow" singer
- Mythological fox destined never to be caught
- Circle widths
- Agnus ...
- Org. created by the 1957 Treaty of Rome
- Suffix akin to -ule
- Physicist Newton
- Permanent marks
- Longtime PBS "Mystery" host Diana
- Digital asset: Abbr.
- Dent or scratch
- Office supplier
- Sicilian volcano
- Celestial object next visible from Earth in 2061
- Sign
- Singer DiFranco
- "Middlemarch" novelist
- Polish tennis champ Swiatek
- Connie Francis hit with a rhyming title
- Wall St. takeover
- Some errand runners on a yacht
- Starts a fresh pot
- Northeast people of Thailand
- Cat hair, pollen, dust mites, etc.
- One held for questioning
- Plastic shoe wearer
- ... Bora: Afghan region
- Thor's son in the role-playing game Scion
- Greeted with a ceremonial bow
- Dublin Murder Squad
- Series novelist French "Shining Vale" actress Sorvino
- German roadster that once held the world speed record
- Trains for a marathon, say
- U.S. passport holder
- Flood defense
- Tank nuisance
- "What ... can I say?"
- Turner and Knight
- Stadium levels
- Celestial object next visible from Earth in 2061
- Marsh ducks
- Carpentry debris
- Game 1
- Campus mil. group
- Celebrity chef Burrell
- King who says to Cordelia, "Nothing can come of nothing"
- Portuguese title
- End-of-unit classroom event
- Gmail option
- "Rugrats" mom
- Go back to Chapter 1
- Ceremony host
- Counterpart of fem., in grammar
- "Stronger than dirt" brand
- Payment for labor
- Property claim
- Name in fine china
- Eye color, e.g.
- Trouble
- Does impressions
- Honor given by HM King Charles III
- Actress Thurman
- Thing
- Some deli loaves
- Irene of "Fame"
- Extremely small
- ... Moines, Iowa
- Fit snugly inside
- ... Park: Edison lab site
- Polynesian language
- Word with sky or spy
- Upon
- Malek of "Oppenheimer"
- Hardly appropriate
- "Your wish is my command" speaker
- Formula 1 starting positions
- Went to collect
- Fix a worn-out shoe
- Quechua speaker
- Command post
- "Dark Angel" star Jessica
- King of the jungle
- Member of the fam
- Like the dinos in "Jurassic Park"
- Texter's "I'm out!"
- Thrill shop condition
- Not firmly fixed
- Bygone coin-op eatery
- Boxer Max
- Jewel box
- List
- 104 Sugarcoats
- 105 Vogue rival
- 107 "Demon Slayer" genre
- 108 How Santa dresses, mostly
- 109 Approaches
- 112 Luxury timepiece
- 113 Kidney-related
- 114 Carving tools
- 115 Reason d'...
- 116 "The Addams Family" actor Julia
- 117 Road-trip stops
- 119 Future dr.'s class
- 122 Diner fave
- 123 Luau neckwear
- 124 "... seen worse"

Timeless themes bloom in GU's rendition of 'Spring Awakening'

REVIEW

By CLARINNE KIRK

The tale of "Spring Awakening" blossomed into a rich and complex narrative of love, grief, coming-of-age and coming to acceptance in Gonzaga University's Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center during the show's opening night on Nov. 16. While set in the 1890s and drawing inspiration from German playwright Frank Wedekind's 1891 play, these themes, though challenging and starkly raw at times, seem fresh, modern and more relevant now than ever.

This rock'n'roll, coming-of-age tale was first created by Duncan Sheik and Steven Sater in 2006 and quickly rose to prominence within the theater industry, winning eight Tony Awards. To tackle this highly decorated musical, GU's dance, theater and music departments joined forces, allowing the cast and crew to produce a rendition of "Spring Awakening" that was diverse in its talents and thoughtful in its handling of mature and sensitive topics.

"Spring Awakening" describes a group of young German students' struggle to understand their sexuality, their bodies and their values within repressive education institutions while navigating unsympathetic and, at times, abusive relationships with their parents.

The story unflinchingly grapples with conflicts of violence, power and repression while grappling with more controversial topics such as suicide and abortion. Ultimately, these questions of sexuality, aging and rebelling against the traditional forces that oppress the youth read as deeply relatable, likely striking a chord with many young audience members grappling with these tumultuous themselves.

Strong vocals, thought-provoking set design, well-crafted costumes and innovative choreography bring these



COURTESY OF @GUTHEATREDANCE ON INSTAGRAM

"Spring Awakening" is a coming-of-age story about self-discovery and expression.

complex, dark stories to life in a genuine, heartfelt way. Ranging from shockingly dramatic, to brutally honest, to uncomfortably dark, to witty and humorous, the characters feel complex and fully developed, showing off the range of the talented performers.

Lead performers Rachel Gotvald and Taye Reiss, playing Wendla Bergman and Melchior Gabor respectively, shined with heartbreakingly honest, raw performances, buttressed by technically beautiful and emotional vocals. Sam Morehouse, playing Moritz Stiefel, also gave a standout performance, navigating the complexity of his character

with an authentic portrayal of curiosity, naivety and inner turmoil.

Another highlight of the show was the hauntingly beautiful and tragic duet between Mia Foster, who played Martha Bessel, and Ellie Williams, who played Ilse Neumann. The rich power of Williams' voice coupled with the emotional depth of Foster's acting created a heart-shatteringly emotional and candidly powerful depiction of domestic and sexual abuse in the song "The Dark I Know Well."

A large contributor to the success of the songs' impact are the talented musicians who provided live accompaniment

to the actors. Tucked behind the actors, the musical ensemble sat center stage and rightfully so, as the music beautifully shifted between intense rock numbers with fast-paced drum solos and poignant folk melodies, complete with the sorrowful harmony of strings.

The historically accurate costumes juxtaposed the modern, avant-garde set design. Featuring suspended windows and door frames spray painted with graffiti, the stripped-down, abstract set provided the perfect backdrop for powerful storytelling, the open space for the actors themselves to convey the scene through their bodies and dancing. Further, by taking

a more abstract approach to set design, audience members were better able to use their imagination and to create their own interpretations of the scene's symbolic significance.

The choreography and dancing proved instrumental to the plot, conveying the play's messages as clearly as the songs and dialogue. Through contemporary, interpretive movements and sharp, fast-paced moves, the ensemble blew me away with dancing that was at once completely individual to each character and in perfect synchronization with the rest of the dancers.

Another strength of GU's "Spring Awakening" was their thoughtful depiction of abortion and the danger of a lack of safe access to abortions, a topic perhaps even more relevant now than when the play originally was released in 2006. This conversation also seems important within GU, a Catholic institution that has at times shied away from such honest depictions of controversial topics. Given this content, "Spring Awakening" was by no means a safe choice. Yet, the riskiness of the musical makes its messages all the more impactful and necessary.

"Spring Awakening" serves as a brave and much-needed reminder that, whether in Germany in the 1890s or Spokane in 2023, the struggles of growing up, self-discovery and the rebellion against repression and censorship within education transcend place and time, remaining core strifes of humanity. While dark, the show also serves as a reminder that throughout this struggle, love, camaraderie and the commitment to change can be a beacon of hope to all, a reminder needed now more than ever.

Clarinne Kirk is a copy editor.

'From Excess to Empowerment' with Rethink Waste

New workshops blend information and hands-on activities surrounding sustainability

By RUBY GROSS

This year, Gonzaga University's Office of Sustainability is modifying its Rethink Waste workshops to include the series "From Excess to Empowerment." Introduced by Waste Reduction Educator Tristy Osbon, "From Excess to Empowerment" looks to make waste workshops more approachable.

"A lot of people are saying that they learn great things, but it's really overwhelming," Osbon said. "So that's the reason I started these — they're supposed to be more bite-sized."

The sessions are hour-long blends of information and hands-on activities surrounding sustainability.

"Each session looks a bit different because the topic for each session is different," Osbon said. "Last month, we did 'From Harvest to Table' and it was about food waste reduction. In future ones, it might be more hands-on."

People who are interested can look at the description of each session to get a sense of the format beforehand.

"Waste is something that connects all of us," Osbon said. "The main goal is to educate about waste and about how that contributes to the climate crisis, then also give information on how you can participate."

The workshop series reaches this goal by covering data from a broad scope of issues, but making sure to translate the advice they give to the personal scale.

"I go fairly in-depth on what the global waste crisis is and how that's exploiting climate change and affecting us, then also what the university is doing, the resources that students or anyone that's participating could use on campus or in Spokane," Osbon said.

Along with sharing personalized resources, strategies and tangible solutions toward



MYERS GORRELL IG: @myersgphoto

"From Excess to Empowerment" workshops are put on by the Office of Sustainability and take place monthly.

reducing waste, "From Excess to Empowerment" seeks to counter certain misconceptions about sustainability. Primarily, Osbon and the Office of Sustainability look to dismantle the idea that individual action doesn't have an impact on our planet.

"It's really easy to feel despair and hopeless and like you're not doing anything," Osbon said. "Being able to having a very open conversation — students being able to ask questions and just giving proper information is a great way to counter that."

She emphasized that "From Excess to Empowerment"

workshops are non-judgmental spaces.

GU senior and Sustainability Engagement Coordinator Andie Rosenwald led "From Excess to Empowerment's" prior session this semester "From Harvest to Table: Maximizing Freshness and Minimizing Waste." The lessons shared centered on food waste, food preservation and individual impact on sustainability.

"All we can do is be as intelligent and intentional with our behavior as possible and encourage the other people around us to do the same," Rosenwald said.

Attendees left with a list of strategies for minimizing food waste such as meal planning, shopping with a grocery list, measuring your servings before cooking, writing down what's in your fridge and saving your produce scraps to make snacks like broths or smoothies.

Such changes may seem trivial, but Rosenwald and Osbon agree that they do add up in the long-run.

"Even immediately, by leading by example, we can impact other people then that can create a ripple effect of change," Osbon said.

The topic in waste reduction changes with each session. Information is updated on the Office of Sustainability's Instagram, @zagsgogreen. Questions can be sent to Tristy Osbon at osbon@gonzaga.edu.

Ruby Gross is a staff writer.



MAKOA DE ALMEIDA IG: @makoaddealmeida

GU volleyball finished last in the WCC, but underclassmen players provide hope for the future.

Volleyball looks ahead after concluding worst season since 1981

By KAYA CRAWFORD

Gonzaga University volleyball concluded its season with a Nov. 18 loss against San Diego, ending one of the worst seasons in program history.

It was a season of growth for the program. Head coach Katie Wilson's second year with the Zags ended without a win in conference play and on a 19-game loss streak (3-24, 0-16).

The team finished last in the West Coast Conference rankings.

The Zags recorded wins against Florida International University, Cal State Northridge and Eastern Washington. Despite its struggles in conference play, the players saw improvement with each game.

"Nobody really sees the work that we put in during practice," said freshman setter Nia Damuni. "We've been working really hard. The outcome hasn't been there during conference but we've improved a lot."

The season allowed upperclassmen to showcase their experience while also preparing underclassmen to step into core roles.

"I thought there was a lot of growth from a lot of different players having to come in, step in at young ages," said graduate student defensive specialist Alisa Kim. "We have freshmen and sophomores playing on the core in multiple positions. I think being able to mesh together

really well was something that I really liked this season."

The Zags said goodbye to four seniors this season, all of whom played important roles in the development of the team.

Team captain and outside hitter Zoe Thiros played her final season with the Zags. Thiros led the team with 241 kills this season and was an integral leader on the court.

Kim proved her defensive prowess as she joined the 1,000 digs club in the final game of the season against San Diego. She had 313 digs on the season, with a season-high 29 digs against Air Force in early September.

Graduate student defensive specialist Viktoriya Ivanova broke the program record for most single-match service aces during the rally-scoring era with seven aces against Saint Mary's in November.

Senior outside hitter Grace Ehler had a strong showing in her final season as a Zag, recording 56 kills. In the Zags' game against Saint Mary's, she recorded eight kills, the most of any of her games over the season.

Despite losing some key players on the team, the Zags have a number of promising returning players and future prospects.

Freshman setter Nia Damuni had a strong outing in her first season with the Zags. She recorded 854 assists over the course of the season, with a season high 65 assists in the November game against Saint Mary's.

As the only setter on the team, Damuni stepped into the role and became an integral part of the team's development over the season.

Senior blocker Juliette Russell will return for her final season with the Zags next year. This season, she was a key player in the Zags' offense, recording 175 kills and a season-high 16 kills against Air Force.

Jody Smith also played an important role in the Zags offense, recording 139 kills over the season.

Freshman outside hitter Maggie Rickert had a strong showing in her first season for the Zags. She stepped up on offense when the team had injured players and developed to become a key player over the course of the season.

Rickert recorded 118 kills and 74 digs over the season. Despite recording a difficult season, the Zags persevered and continued to put in work in the gym.

"I'm not so focused about our record or what happened but the amount of lessons we've learned," Russell said. "Learning and coming together as a team means so much more to me than the winning or losing."

The team is looking forward to next season and hopes to continue to grow as a team and as a program.

"Honestly, I'm just really grateful for this opportunity," Russell said. "How close we got this season and how we worked some things out. I'm ready for next year."

Kaya Crawford is a staff writer.

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* DAILY FRESH *

Nia Damuni's play in 2023 fuels optimism about future

By HENRY KRUEGER

The Gonzaga University women's volleyball program had a record-breaking 2023 season, but it was for all the wrong reasons.

The Bulldogs lost their final 19 games and finished with a 3-24 record, the program's worst mark since going 2-33 during the inaugural 1981 season. GU went winless in conference play (0-16) for the first time since 2004.

In many ways, the future of the team appears uncertain. Fifth-year outside hitter Zoe Thiros, one of two Zags to receive All-West Coast Conference recognition, is set to graduate after leading the squad with 241 kills and 273.5 points. Thiros received her second straight honorable mention nod from the league.

Defensive specialists Alisa Kim and Viktoriya Ivanova, both graduate students, will leave the program after finishing the season tied for first and third in sets played, respectively. Kim ends her collegiate career with third-most service aces in GU history at 89 and is No. 7 in digs at 1,015. Ivanova is eighth all-time with 72 service aces.

With several key contributors headed out, it's easy to have a negative outlook on the future. But on the positive side, the departures open up more opportunities for GU's up-and-coming talent, including freshman setter Nia Damuni.

Damuni, who earned All-Freshman honors from the WCC last week, racked up the fourth-most assists in the league with 854. She also finished third on the team with 179 digs and fourth with 46 blocks.

As the squad's only setter, Damuni had an immediate starting role and was involved in nearly every offensive attack for the Bulldogs. It's uncommon to see a first-year orchestrating an offense, but Damuni embraced the challenge, according to her teammates.

"She's our only setter, but she's a freshman and she's owning this role," Thiros said of Damuni in October. "Being the only setter is really hard. It's like being the only quarterback on the team."

Damuni dished out at least 30 assists in six of the first eight matches as GU got off to a 3-5 start to the season. However, just when it seemed Damuni had found a rhythm, the Bulldogs completely cooled off and didn't win another match for the remainder of the year.



MYERS GORREL IG: @myersgphoto

Damuni took home All-Freshman honors from the WCC after racking up 854 assists in 2023.

GU's losing streak didn't stop Damuni from being productive. She registered 65 assists in a 3-2 loss to Saint Mary's on Nov. 9, just one shy of the program's rally scoring era record. One week later, Damuni dished out 52 assists against Portland in the final home game of the season.

Damuni began attacking more often as her first year progressed, averaging 3.63 attacks the 19 consecutive losses the Bulldogs suffered to close out the season. She attacked just 2.63 times per game through the first eight matches.

"I love setting my hitters, I think they do a better job than me," Damuni said after GU's 3-2 loss to Portland on Nov. 16.

"[But] if I see [the other team] pulled up then I'll put it down."

Before coming to GU, Damuni led Ridgeline High School in Millville, Utah, to back-to-back 4A State titles. She is the program's all-time assist leader and was named 4A Player of the Year by Deseret News in 2021.

Damuni signed with the Zags on Nov. 9, 2022, after visiting Spokane during a club volleyball tournament. She met with second-year head coach Katie Wilson and took a tour of the campus.

"Katie had just gotten here and ... when she talked to me, she mentioned 'building a winning program,'" Damuni said. "Her saying that stood out to me

GU SPORTS

Wednesday, Nov. 29
 ➤ Women's basketball at Eastern Washington, 6 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 2
 ➤ Track at Sharon Colyear-Danville Season Opener, Boston, Massachusetts
 ➤ Men's basketball vs. USC, Las Vegas, Nevada, 7 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 3
 ➤ Women's basketball vs. No. 3 Stanford, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 5
 ➤ Men's basketball vs. Arkansas-Pine Bluff, 6 p.m.

Home games in bold

because I love to win and I wanted to make history by putting Gonzaga volleyball on the map."

The Bulldogs have defeated two WCC opponents in Wilson's first two years at the helm, but Damuni remains optimistic about the program's future.

"I'm really confident in my team and our coaches," Damuni said. "I think we have the best coaches in the country. Our practices are really competitive and it's exciting."

Aside from Damuni, Wilson's 2023 freshman class included Maggie Rickert and Brianna Martin. Rickert, an outside hitter, was fifth on the team with 129 kills and 80 digs. Martin had the sixth-most digs with 60 as a libero and defensive specialist.

Wilson has already secured more talent for next season, announcing four signings on Nov. 9. She nabbed libero Maddie Cugino from Ohio, outside hitter Shelly Dykstra from Arizona and middle blockers Hayley Ogden and Taylor Walsh from Southern California.

As Damuni and the rest of GU's young talent develop, the Bulldogs will look to make 2024 their first winning season since 2016.

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

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