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KATIE CARMICHAEL
COPY EDITOR AND STAFF

In a collaborative event between Africana Studies and the English Department, Drew hosted fiction writer, poet and essayist Tiphanie Yanique at the first Writer's at Drew event of the year. This past Monday's event found a large audience, as students and faculty of multiple disciplines filled Founders Room in Mead Hall for the reading and Q&A.

Dr. Tami Navarro, department chair of Pan-African studies, welcomed and introduced Yanique. A former Drew professor, Yanique is an award-winning Caribbean-American writer and professor at Emory University with works including "Monster in the Middle," "Land of Love and Drowning," "Wife," and "How to Escape from a Leper Colony."

Yanique read a chapter from the middle of her novel, "Monster in the Middle," which she described as "a book about falling in love... and about what it's like to be an American." Yanique

captivated her audience with a unique cadence and voice, she explored themes of leaving home, sickness, loss and family.

Following the reading, Courtney Zoffness, department chair of Drew's creative writing program, led a discussion with Yanique, where a multi-

tude of creative insights were shared with the audience.

Zoffness began with a question about Yanique's relationship to genre as a multi-hyphenate writer. Yanique, who has published novels, short fiction, poetry and essays, said, "The world will want you to decide a genre"

and it "likes putting us in boxes that we have to stick to" as a writer, personally and politically. However, she finds it important to "resist that at all times both personally and professionally" and to "reject the idea that I have to be one thing."

CONT. IN TIPHANIE PG. 2



Tiphanie Yanique and Courtney Zoffness read an excerpt from Yanique's book, "Monster in the Middle" then answer student questions. IMAGE COURTESY OF DEE COHEN

Flag Acknowledgement Ceremony Starts Black History Month

NICOLE SYDOR
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

To kick off Black History Month, the Center for Civic and Student Engagement and Africana Studies sponsored the first Black History Month Flag Raising, which will hopefully become a foreseeable tradition here at Drew.

As the presentation of the flags occurred, Zaire Wright ('27) underscored the symbolic nature of these icons, encompassing hope, personal experiences, resilience, hate, silence and trauma. These flags do not just conform to rigid symbolic ideals; their connotations have shifted dramatically throughout

their history, and students and faculty who came to the event gave their own meaning to each flag.

The Pan-African flag, Pan-African American flag and Black Lives Matter flag were introduced alongside an explanation of their distinctive history within the Black expe-

rience, especially in America. The student presenters, Wright, Aniya Gordon-Ellis ('27), Brazil Brown ('26) and Christdia Mensah ('27), shared that the meanings behind these flags are universal, and go far beyond just a single minority's lived experience within the US.

"Black History Month is a time where we can sit back and reflect and know that all of these things did happen, and asks the question: What is there that we are gonna do to further this greatness, this achievement?" said Mensah. "And though there is a heritage of suffering and a heritage of slavery, that there is also a great heritage of excellence."



Mecca Madyun, Director of Civic Engagement, and Tammy Navarro, Chair of Pan-African Studies raise the African-American flag while student Christdia Mensah ('27) gives speech.

IMAGE COURTESY OF DEE COHEN



CONT. IN HISTORIC PG. 4

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

For three hundred years black people have been enslaved and will continue to be enslaved...until people know black history and culture.

—The Acorn 1968 SEE DREW, PG 5

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THE DREW ACORN.
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Drew Night Life Brings Back 99 Nights to Celebrate Seniors

ELISABETH SAUERMAN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER AND
COPYEDITOR

Seniors came together for 99 Nights in the Ehinger Center to celebrate the beginning of the double-digit countdown until commencement. Drew Night Life hosted the annual 99 Nights event on Feb. 2, when the Class of 2024 graduates kicked off their last few months at Drew.

99 Nights is an important milestone for Drew University students. “It’s sort of terrifying, sort of exciting. I’m just ready to graduate, but at the same time, I don’t know what I’m going to do,” said attendee Bri Liggett (’24) when asked about attending an event to celebrate the countdown to commencement.

The Drew Night Life team “tried to find something fun that everybody could enjoy, a little bit of a party, and that’s kind of like what it was in the past, so we’re trying to build back up into what it was before,” said new Drew Night Life Staff Coordinator Megan Fonseca. There were a variety of activities present for the Class of 2024 to engage with at the event.

99 Nights made use of Crawford Hall, The Pub and a portion of the Ehinger Center eatery. The first 100 people who came to the event received a free 99 Nights t-shirt. Students could then paint the backs of their t-shirts with glow paint, which was visible in the low lighting of Crawford Hall. As music played throughout the Ehinger Center, a few students took advantage of the dance floor.

A majority of the students flocked to The Pub, where attendees were al-

lowed one free drink each hour, for a maximum of four drinks. Pizza and deli sandwiches were also provided for students’ enjoyment. Students were seen playing the available board games within The Pub or simply enjoying the event with their friends and classmates.

The free drinks for the night elevated the event, coming from a collaboration between The Pub and Drew Night Life. “[Drew Night Life] wanted to make sure that the seniors felt celebrated and enjoyed it and knew that this is a celebration for them, by them. We wanted to make sure they knew that. So we wanted to amp it up a little bit,” said Drew Night Life Event Coordinator Maddy Hilferty (’25). Providing free drinks for attendees was just the way to do that.

Other activities at 99 Nights included teddy bear stuffing, a Polaroid photo opportunity and a table to create a “Spring 2024 Bucket List.” Students also signed a class flag. “[Drew Night Life is] going to put it up during senior days as a way to recognize you as well and have something to look back on throughout the years,” remarked Fonseca.

Liggett appreciated the activities provided by Drew Night Life, saying, “I’m just glad that DNL is doing something to support their seniors, especially because we had a really rough start to college and the end of high school.”

Attendance was slow during the first two hours, though more students began showing up closer to 10:30 p.m. “The great thing about DNL events is that they last for four hours each Friday, so attendees can come and go as they please. We saw that

Tiphonie Yanique Speaks About Writing Black Characters

CONT. FROM AUTHOR PG 1

“You’re going to mess it up, but you have to do it. It’s called bravery. And then to be humble when you do mess it up,” said Yanique.

Yanique explains that to write characters of different backgrounds, you have to connect with, emphasize and love different people. “Change your life,” said Yanique.

Yanique also emphasized the importance of reading.

“To write a good Black character, you have to read good Black characters by Black authors to learn from that craft,” said Yanique. “Read broadly, don’t give yourself excuses.”

Zoffness opened the floor for the audience to ask

questions. One student asked Yanique how she recommends writing fiction from history that doesn’t become historical fiction.

“Do an incredible amount of research, so much so that it becomes banal to you,” said Yanique. “Then you can let go of the big historical stuff and get to the intimate stories, you can move to the personal... get to the flavor and reality.”

In response to another student’s question on how to start reading literature on characters with different backgrounds, Yanique advised students to use their “professors here who can give you lists” and that students should “take classes with them and let them mentor you.”

HAVE A NEWS TIP?

Email News Editor **SIERRA WALKER** at swalker1@drew.edu or Assistant News Editor **EVA ESQUEDA** at eesqueda@drew.edu.

Students at 99 Nights.

IMAGE COURTESY OF ELISABETH SAUERMAN

at 99 Nights; seniors really flooded in around 10,” said Drew Night Life staffer Annabelle Smith (’26).

99 Nights was another Drew tradition lost as a result of virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The senior celebration was last held in January 2020, so this is the first time 99 Nights was held since Drew returned from virtual schooling. Organizers and attendees remarked on the importance of this event’s return, especially for a class in which a majority of students graduated high school in 2020.

When asked what she wanted the Class of 2024 to take from the event, Fonseca said, “I think you all need an outlet for a good time, every once in a while, in a structured way. But also, Class of 2024, you guys didn’t have a prom, right? So also building off of those ideas and hoping to give you some of those good times, a bit of fun.”

99 Nights, for the Class of 2024, became a way to breathe a sigh of relief that the end of everything they had worked for was in sight. It was also a way to remind themselves about how far they had come from their difficult start at Drew during virtual schooling after losing their senior year.

Hilferty remarked, “I was super excited to bring it back, especially because I’m Class of ’21 for high school, so I was a junior when COVID hit, so I knew a lot of people personally, especially a lot of seniors that had their senior year be ripped away from COVID. It’s exciting to bring back traditions that might have ‘died’ during that time.” 99 Nights is an event that Drew Night Life plans to expand in the future.

Student attendees emphasized the importance of bringing back an event that was impacted by virtual learning and the COVID-19 pandemic. “Honestly, I think this is pretty cool. It’s, I feel like, the first time ever I’ve seen our entire class together because of COVID,” said attendee Júlia Oliveira Souza (’24).

Some student clubs and organizations suffered in returning to their regular activities post-virtual schooling, and some events suffered similarly, such as 99 Nights. However, this year has marked this event’s return, and Drew Night Life hopes to keep the tradition going stronger than ever.

Elisabeth Sauerman is a senior majoring in public health and environmental studies and minoring in environmental justice.

have not been told and how can we tell them?”

Following a student question, Yanique offered some final advice for student writers.

“Part of your job as a student is to hold on to your aesthetic but also learn at the same time,” said Yanique. “Poetry is supposed to be changing lives; the way to do that is to change hearts.”



Katie Carmichael is a junior majoring in English creative writing and minoring in education.

Informational Interview Program Offers Students Networking Opportunities

DOMINIQUE COBB
BUSINESS MANAGER AND
SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

The Center for Mentoring and Professional Networks is offering a program that connects students with alumni.

Alumni at Drew are offering their time and resources to help current Drew students with career and resume advice, as well as answering students' questions about their career paths. The program was developed at Drew two years ago by Carol Bassie, the director of the Center for Mentoring and Professional Networks.

The informational interview program is run on Drew Connect, the networking platform that students and alumni can use to connect with each other. There are currently 82 alumni participating in the program from a variety of fields including journalism, communications, data science, politics and theater.

The program is run on a rolling basis, which means that students can



The Center for Mentoring and Professional Networks logo.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DREW_ALUMNI ON INSTAGRAM

sign up throughout the month of February and into March to be matched with alumni. The student only needs to read the profiles of the alumni participating, find three to favorite and obtain a match made by Bassie. Some alumni are even willing to speak to multiple students, allowing students to develop more connections. Students interested in speaking to more than one alumni can

email Bassie to determine if this is an option for them.

When talking about how the program can help students, Bassie said, "It offers the students valuable networking opportunities, with the ease of practicing on Drew alumni. Students are able to build their network in order to increase their knowledge and prospects within their career field. While the program may not offer stu-

dents a job on the spot, the connections that students are able to make may help them obtain a job or an internship in the future."

Bassie has even included sample questions on the program page to help students facilitate conversations with alumni. She offered a few clear pieces of advice for students looking to network and build more connections through the program.

"Be authentic and be yourself," Bassie said. "Ask about five to 10 questions, do research on the alumni through LinkedIn and research on the company the alumni works at. Be flexible and an active listener while letting the conversation flow. Don't be too nervous; these were once Drew students just like you are now. They have provided their time to help students and offer their advice. Afterwards, always make sure to send a follow-up note or email thanking them for their time and sharing a couple of things you learned."

The Center for Mentoring and Professional Networks frequently hosts programs and networking events to help students build their networks. The Center also works with clubs to provide presentations and workshops to assist students with networking. For those interested, the Center will be hosting a panel on International Alumni on Feb. 28 from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. More upcoming events will be posted on The Path.

Dominique Cobb is a junior majoring in marketing and minoring in history and law, justice and society.

Andrew Brehm, A New Artist-in-Residence, 'Crawls' into the Korn Gallery

ANNABELLE SMITH
MANAGING EDITOR

The Korn Gallery is hosting "Nightcrawlers," a sculptural exhibition by visiting artist Andrew Brehm.

Through the double doors of the Dorothy Young Center for the Arts and straight back into its art enclave rests the softly-lit, four-cornered Korn Gallery. An often understated feature of Drew's campus, its quarterly rotation of resident artists grants students a unique glimpse into the contemporary art world. This connection is two-way; the visiting artists also get the opportunity to experience Drew.

Now, sculptures that span all shapes and sizes flood the gallery space, bursting in explosions of texture and color, both mechanical and natural.

"In my mind, 'Nightcrawlers' is a little ambiguous. On one hand, you

could have an association with nightcrawlers—fishing—which is really sort of wholesome," the exhibition's creator, multimedia artist Brehm, said. "And then there's also 'nightcrawlers,' like creatures of the night... characters or people out in the evening who might present a darker, more sinister vibe. I'm interested in attaching words that have the same sort of ambiguity as what's presented; things aren't always what they first appear. 'Nightcrawlers' was able to represent both those things."

The show's namesake, an aluminum piece that rests just beyond the gallery doors, encapsulates this juxtaposition. A salmon-colored worm snakes its way through recycled soil, a subtle smile on its oval face.

"I think of it as an ouroboros. An ouroboros is typically a snake consuming its own tail. [The piece] is anything but a perfect circle... the worm is examining its

own tail, not consuming it. A nearly ouroboros. That symbol means the regeneration of life," said Brehm while describing the piece's thematic context.

This creative use of medium, found objects and discarded waste paper, is purposefully identifiable throughout Brehm's works. The large, black shell, titled "Red Roe," that sits further into the gallery, when lifted to display its pearl, uses parts from a pair of crutches in its mechanics. The funky-patterned animal-print carpet spread out across the floor proudly displays the places where Brehm cut out its stains.

With this technique, he not only repurposes the objects but also allows their previous lives to transform the overall work through their individuality.

When asked about how he conceptualizes this relationship, Brehm gave an easy explanation. "There's a conversation [between the

artist and the object] that if you can get good at, is very real—there's a real give and take. You're in your studio talking to yourself—and a couple of inanimate objects. To me, that's a dynamic that's really important."

The dynamic between artist and medium is an essential aspect of the artistic process. In both his words and work, Brehm emphasized the importance of respecting an object's past and the value of reusing rather than purchasing.

"A lot of these materials were really close to being gone forever... floating down the river after breaking from a barge, fragments of foam that are on their way to being pure waste, retiring in a way," he said. "I'm grabbing them right before they go, saying 'you're not done, you've got more work to do,' and pulling them back into another organism. I like thinking of the work as being part of a cycle as well, and for some of the found objects, part of that cycle is finding their way back to a starting point."

Although Brehm's expansive art practice often extends past the reaches of physical reality—frequently including video and audio experiments—his love for found objects has a notable influence on almost every piece he creates.

Brehm said he always worked with found objects. He explained that even before he went to school to learn about art, he was repurposing objects in ways that were different from their

original function. Finding new life for the objects he sculpted is like a puzzle for him.

"It's a very satisfying puzzle to solve. It's something about seeing a lot of potential in objects. The puzzle is more interesting when the objects have history... when it's an old object, it might have a history which gives the object a whole different layer of interest that could charge the object in some way because you know it's been serving a function for a long time, and you're stepping into its life cycle. I welcome things becoming deeper, richer, mysterious... they've lived their own lives."

Another important part of this cycle is the exhibition's interactive elements. Colorful lights spin out from behind an accordion-paneled floor piece. A wooden door frame, built of recycled paper bricks, invites a viewer to open and close it—to step into the unreal reality of "Nightcrawlers." To be a nightcrawler, it seems, is to be open about life's inherent duality; new pieces from old materials, history as the future purpose of an object and simultaneously the foundation of its diverse identity.

The Korn Gallery is open Wednesday to Saturday from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m., and also by appointment. For more information, please contact korngallery@drew.edu.

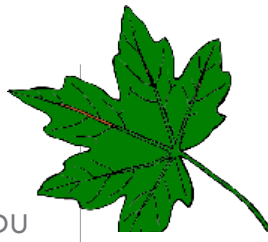


Annabelle Smith is a sophomore majoring in studio art and media and communications.



Andrew Brehm (right) talks to students during "Nightcrawlers" opening reception. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DREW ART DEPARTMENT ON INSTAGRAM

4 STUDENT LIFE+ARTS



Learn the history behind the origins of Drew's black history courses and the student group behind it all!
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Historic Flags and Modern Meanings: Drew's Black History Month Flag Raising

NICOLE SYDOR
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

CONT. FROM FLAG PG. 1

One student, Krishell Williams ('27), expressed how events like this at Drew made her feel seen, as opposed to her previous experience at a predominantly white institution.

"I've never even really seen my people's representation in my life, you know, besides my mom being the walking, breathing version of success, coming here when she was 12.

This event helped students feel seen and honored...but besides that, just thank you," said Williams.

Drew has taken the time and initiative to give all kinds of students a sense of strength and unity in regard to identity. Muthoni Githinji, the head coordinator of Black History Month at Drew, spearheaded the creation of the entire month's events and collaborations to make sure that the BIPOC community on campus felt seen and heard.

"I attempted to bring together different departments on campus," said Githinji.

"Such as the CAE, African Studies, the Bookstore, the theater department, academic department, faculty, staff, even The Commons; every department had a role to play because Black History Month is about everyone, especially everyone who identifies as a person of color."

Amira Mutakabbir ('25), Andrew Lora ('24), Jahiem Azeez ('25), Khyri Fortenberry ('24), Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion Programming Monica Madera and alumni Rouguie Camara (C'23) were also key players in the creation of Drew's Black History Month celebrations, and they made sure to emphasize the key role Githinji had in making all of this happen. "She put so much of her own love into this project," said Lora.

The vision for Black History Month at Drew has grown immensely since 2023 when the celebration lasted only a week. Now this group of students is giving Black History Month its time to shine on campus. Student leader collaborations—along with faculty support—were the cornerstone for this se-

ries of events' success. Organizations contributing to events this month include: Drew African Students Association; the Racial Justice Committee; Black Student Union; ARIEL; African, Black and Caribbean House; La Casa Latina; the English department; the theater department; the Center for Academic Excellence; the Drew Bookstore; the Department of Residence Life and Housing; the Center for Civic Engagement; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Drew Night Life; First-Steps and the NAACP.

Mutakabbir, Lora and Azeez hoped that this event would set a precedent for how to celebrate Black History Month at Drew in the future, especially as a community.

"It's not just us trying to do something for our community," Mutakabbir said. She wants this event to become a campus-wide celebration in which all students support each other. Students like Gordon-Ellis want to keep this tradition alive and expand its reach.

"I think traditions like this should keep going. It

should not just stop this year or with this group of people. It should continue. And it is also something that Drew has to foster for other ethnic groups as well," said Gordon-Ellis.

Lora added that the support of Drew's faculty was a major inspiration. Some of these faculty include Dr. Tami Navarro, department chair of Pan-African studies; Mecca Madyun, associate professor and faculty director of civically engaged teaching and learning and Sean Hewitt, director of the center for civic engagement. Hewitt also stressed the significance of this event in fostering a community for all students.

"I hope you all see each other and how beautiful it is that you are making a place where you can make this community and that you have partners," said Navarro, reminding students of the people amongst them who are here to support and uplift them.

"What are you going to do?" said Madyun, calling students to action, hoping that this event would open up discussion and a place

for asking questions beyond Black History Month.

"It takes one person to start a movement," said Githinji, "but it takes the magnitude to continue it, to grow on the cultural significance that people of color have on Drew's campus and out in the real world. What we do now and how the school shows they care and how people from different departments can come together for one cause can show people that they can unite people in such a polarized society in the world beyond Drew's campus."

To round out the month, other Drew Black History Month events include Professional Day, an NAACP talk and A Touch of Soul, which will feature live music, cultural food and dancing. For more information about Black History Month events being hosted, check the calendar below.



Nicole Sydor is a senior majoring in English and French and minoring in psychology and education

Black History Month		February 2024					
WEEK	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	28	29	30	31	Flag Raising ⁰¹ & Reception @ Faulkner	THEATRE ⁰² Performance @BLACK BOX	03
	04	05 JEOPARDY	06 Shea Butter Baby	07 Spirit Day: Decades Day	08 Black & Brown Cultural Appription	09	10
	11	12 Writers @DREW	13 FIRST-STEP &CAE	14 Valentine's Day	15 Black Student Union & DASA	16	17
	18	19 Racial Justice Committee EVENT	20 ABC House EVENT	21 Ariel EVENT	22 Black & Brown	23	24
	25	26 LA CASA	27 National Association for the Advancement of colored people	28 Spirit Day: Black out Day	29	01 A TOUCH OF SOUL	02

DYTT: Hyera's Historic Fight For A More Inclusive Drew

JOCELYN FREEMAN
STAFF WRITER

In a December 13, 1968 edition of *The Acorn*, a Hyera member was quoted as saying: "For three hundred years black people have been enslaved and will continue to be enslaved...until people know black history and culture." Entitled "Hyera asks for courses in black history," the short article serves as the start of a year-long conversation regarding the topics Drew students felt mattered in their classrooms.

Hyera was a group of undergraduate students dedicated to voicing concerns of their Black peers on campus. The discourse they began eventually resulted in the first courses to focus on Black history and anthropology.

The group and their allies expanded course offerings, encouraged the hiring of the College of Liberal Arts' first Black professor and worked hard to ensure Black students had their voices heard on Drew's predominantly white campus. The effects of these student's actions is still seen on campus today.

To celebrate Black History month this article is dedicated to breaking the silence of this story in an attempt to display the value of Black history education at Drew.

Hyera, today's Black Student Union, first emerged at Drew in the late 1960s. Throughout this tumultuous period, colleges diversified, the Civil Rights Movement garnered national attention and students increasingly

sought ways to ensure their voices were heard on college campuses.

The group started out as a part of the undergraduate Student Government, originally called the Student Committee of Racial Awareness, and is credited with initiating the conversation about student desire for courses pertaining to Black history and culture.

The organization circulated a list of names of prominent Black figures who have had an influence on American history to gauge the student body's knowledge of Black history. The results must have been unimpressive; Hyera spoke out in the *Acorn* shortly thereafter, voicing the need for a course in Black History to be added to Drew's course offerings. The initial article from December 1968 even goes on to list courses in Black music and literature the group hoped to see offered in the future.

The previous summer, a discussion on how to make "white colleges" a more sensible choice for Black students took place in the *Drew Magazine*.

Richard Cheshire, an aid to Drew's Director of Development, noted in his article "A Plan for Negro Colleges" that predominately white institutions, such as Drew, must be willing to do their part in pursuing equality through access to education.

Cheshire made it clear that in order to attract and retain Black students universities must be willing to not only provide funding and scholarship opportunities but

also educational environments that Black students feel welcomed in. Cheshire argued for the importance of ensuring Black contributions to society are intertwined with the white narratives which already saturated classroom lectures and discussions. The conversation of integrating Black narratives into the educational environment was erupting in academia and being reproduced in *Drew* publications.

Hyera students used the momentum of this larger conversation to continue their pursuit for a representative education. By March 1969, Hyera gained the approval from Student Government to move forward with their pursuit.

Following coordination and collaboration with the Educational Policy and Planning Committee, a two semester series of courses in Black history were officially approved by the university by May of the same year. This victory is reported in large bold letters on the cover of the May 2, 1969 edition of *The Acorn*. Two weeks later, *The Madison Eagle* also covered the story and quoted newly elected student body president Robert Smartt saying "The student voice is listened to at Drew: but we must keep it articulate and resolute so that it won't become listened for."

The two semester series of courses was an interdisciplinary pursuit shared between the Anthropology and History Departments. The first semester featured "Peoples of Africa and the African Legacy" taught by professor of Linguistics and

Anthropology Dr. Roger Wescott. The second semester, taught by associate History Professor Dr. Charles Wetzel, featured a course titled "The Black Legacy in America." It is important to note that while both of these courses promised to dive into Black history and culture, they were taught by white faculty, as the CLA would not hire the first Black professor, Chester Williams, until 1970.

Hyera spent months working through the systems of adding courses at Drew to ensure the Black student voice was heard. *The Madison Eagle* praised Hyera for pushing forward in their pursuit "without fanfare" and not using the demand for Black history courses as a "cry for battle," as similar situations created tensions on other campuses nationwide.

This is not to say the conversation about representation in *Drew* classrooms was without its conflict and tension. In an October 1969 letter written to President Robert Fisher Oxnam, Hyera president Reginald Parris worked within the system of the university and "respectfully submitted" various requests for apologies for racial profiling incidents, the demand for a Black dean to represent Black students, desired revisions to be made to the newly added courses in Black history and, importantly, the hiring of a Black professor to teach said Black history courses. Oxnam's response refuted most of the requests and allegations of racial profiling concerns. He even went so far as to say he

did not "foresee a college, school, or department for black studies for primarily academic reasons."

Oxnam was not an oracle by any means. Hyera's continued pursuit of integrating Black narratives into an increasingly diverse academic setting proved to be successful.

The late 1960s was an era of activism in which students learned lessons not only from their professors but also from organizers across various campuses and cities in the United States. These valuable lessons shaped the rhetoric of actively seeking representation in academia in hopes of further promoting racial equality beyond *The Forest*.

This story of Hyera's student-led advocacy is rich and inspiring. Hyera provided an avenue for the Black voices on *Drew*'s campus to be heard. The classes the students first called for in 1968 are now core parts of *Drew* University course offerings that consistently draw in students. In the next edition, I will work to connect the history of Hyera's efforts to the way classrooms have been changed by their aspirations. Interviews with professors from various different departments and disciplines will explore how *Drew*'s faculty grapples with this legacy today and how they intend to deal with it tomorrow.



Jocelyn Freeman is a junior majoring in history and English and minoring in Chinese



Headline from a May 2, 1969 edition of *The Acorn* proclaiming Hyera's victory.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE DREW ACORN

Volunteers Without Borders Plants Seeds of Hope in New Orleans

LINDSAY ORR
STAFF WRITER

This winter break, the traveling volunteer organization at Drew University, Volunteer Without Borders, partnered with Common Grounds Relief to help restore New Orleans' wetlands. Through this partnership, the 16 participants planted an estimated 2,000 trees.

Founded in 2005 shortly after the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina, Common Grounds Relief is a volunteer organization with the current mission statement of restoring the wetlands of New Orleans, which are disappearing due to flooding and human activities, such as dredging wetlands for canals or draining and filling for agriculture. In the initial months following the storm, Common Grounds Relief focused its efforts on providing basic supplies, such as food and water, and cleaning garbage and debris off of streets. Now, members of the organization focus on environmental restoration work, from planting marsh grasses to soil remediation.

Partnering with this environmental restoration group, Drew volunteers worked at the locations Bayou Sauvage and the Woodlands Conservancy,

planting bare root seedlings and replacing flagged areas. Members of Volunteer Without Borders, Ange Wunderle ('24), Anna Marino ('24) and Elliot Franklyn ('25), organized this trip so that volunteers could assist New Orleans' community and learn more about historic environmental damages.

By 9 a.m., the 16 volunteers were up and ready to go, excited for the day and potential trees to be planted. Each location was at least a 20-minute drive from the Common Grounds Relief volunteer house, so every day there was an opportunity to see the city and the surrounding area.

The volunteers shared their opinions on their inner-city experience: some aspects of New Orleans were familiar, while others were foreign and new.

Arriving at the locations, the group separated into smaller teams and designated tasks of digging, planting and putting protective covers around the seedlings. Each day there was a target amount of trees that would be planted, and the enthusiasm of the teams allowed the volunteers to surpass this goal almost every day.

At the beginning of the week, the goal was 1,000 trees, and by the end of the

week that goal was doubled and the volunteers finished by planting the 2,000th tree. After working each day and exceeding the quota of bare root seedlings planted, there was time to explore the city and become immersed in the local community.

The second day, the volunteers went to the French Quarter where they tried Cafe Du Monde's famous beignets and walked around the historic surroundings. It is important to note that volunteering was the primary focus, but taking the time to learn about the cultural aspects of the city and understanding the history of the community was also very important. Most of the Drew students volunteering had never had this type of opportunity, so this involvement in the New Orleans community was something very remarkable.

To close out each day, there was a reflection to express everyone's thoughts about what they were contributing to.

Volunteer member Jonah Fine ('26) said during one of the reflection sessions, "It's fascinating how different the culture is in New Orleans, versus the Drew University campus, and even my home in suburban Massachusetts. It's amazing how

a week of work can open your eyes to different ways of living and experiencing the world around us."

The group went around in a circle talking about memorable moments, the importance of the work and how they were making a difference in just the short time they were there.

For many of the volunteers, this was the first time any of them had planted a tree, so to be a part of a group that planted 2,000 trees was a shared unique experience that will be unforgettable. Original members of Common Grounds Relief informed Drew volunteers that the environment would look healthy and proper again

thanks to their assistance and the trees planted in the past week.

The grandiose efforts that both Drew students and Common Grounds Relief put into restoring the beauty of New Orleans will not be fully realized for about 10 years, when the trees will start to grow and sprout up from the desolate ground. Just as the seeds of environmental progress have been planted in Louisiana, the experiences of these volunteers will foster warm memories of the time they spent together.

Lindsay Orr is a sophomore majoring in psychology and minoring in philosophy.



Volunteers Without Borders pose for the camera

IMAGE COURTESY OF CGR

Calendar of Events

Takeout Social by BIPOC Peer Mentoring

Thurs. Feb. 22 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in Crawford Hall

Launch Your Major

Mon. Feb. 26 from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in EC 1867 Lounge

Sex Toy Bingo

Mon. Feb. 26 from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. in EC Main Dining Area

Pre-Health Society Blood Drive

Wed. Feb. 28 from 12:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in Crawford Hall

Madison Ave Meets Wall Street: Alumni in Finance

Thurs. Feb. 29 from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. in S.W. Bowne Hall

The Super Smash Bros. Tournament

Thurs. Feb. 29 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. in McLendon 118

Jamfest Acapella Concert

Fri. March 15 from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. in The Concert Hall

More Unique Events Like Roller Rink to Diversify Campus Life

LEAD EDITORIAL

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Drew Night Life hit it out of the park with their make-shift Roller Rink in the Ehinger Center. Students had the opportunity to try a new activity and connect with others, making this the epitome of what any Drew event should be.

Drew Night Life hosts a variety of events on campus to appeal to a wide range of students. Bingo is a traditional hit, and their iconic Reptile and Boardwalk Nights are also events that students look forward to. However, these events can become repetitive for upperclassmen, despite how enjoyable they are.

The Roller Rink in Crawford Hall on Jan. 19 seemed to gather the attention of students in all class years. It was new and unique, which made it extremely appealing. Even for students who may not be expert roller skaters, curiosity about how a roller rink would be created was enough to get students to leave their rooms and mingle at the event.

Not only did the event engage students, but it also nudged them out of their comfort zones. For many students, this was the first time they were ever able to go roller skating. Although there were many falls involved, the event allowed people to learn a new skill and face their

fears. It also gave students the opportunity to get closer together and build trust.

Roller skates inherently make people vulnerable. Especially as a newbie, or even as a novice skater, you do not necessarily have the stability to which you are accustomed. This is the perfect way to grow emotionally closer with a friend as you help each other learn how to skate, or you both fall down together and make lasting memories. Just the possibility of falling and having to reach over and grab a nearby friend caused plenty of laughter during the event. Ultimately, it is a win-win situation.

On top of it all, the music and the glow-in-the-dark theme made it feel like you were not in Crawford Hall at all. Getting off campus can be difficult for many students, so creating an environment that makes students feel like they are not at Drew, without the inconvenience of travel, is a fresh change of pace.

Events like the Roller Rink, which had great ambience and served as a unique learning experience, should continue to happen on campus. The tried-and-true Drew events do not need to disappear, but these creative events allow special memories to form. They can even become Drew's new traditions.



A woman rollerskating in front of a colorful wall.

IMAGE COURTESY OF RDNE STOCK PROJECT ON PEXELS

NOTE: The Lead Editorial reflects the collective opinion of the Drew Acorn's editorial board. All other opinion pieces represent solely the opinions of their respective authors.

The Spring Semester Schedule Needs A Change: More Breaks

EMILY PIECZYRAK
OPINIONS SECTION EDITOR

Drew students should get more time off during the spring semester in addition to the spring break in March.

The spring semester is a challenging time. Although called the "spring" semester, the majority is spent in the dreary cold of winter. Seasonal depression is amplified with the sun hiding behind gray clouds.

Even without an official diagnosis of seasonal depression, the lack of sun combined with the cold makes one feel tired and unmotivated. Tasks take longer to finish and more breaks are necessary.

This is why students need more breaks during the spring semester. The fall semester consists of three long weekends dispersed throughout the semester. The first break is provided by Labor Day in September. In October, students get fall break, which is two days off. The third break is for Thanksgiving in November.

There is a small break each month during the fall

semester. Conversely, in the spring, students only receive one week that splits the semester in half.

This is not to suggest that the spring semester should be shorter. With extra breaks, the semester could bleed an extra week into May, which is exactly when other colleges and universities end their semester.

For example, Fairleigh

Dickinson University has their last day of classes on May 4, compared to Drew's April 30.

This cannot be remedied for this semester; however, students can take precautions now in order to take care of their mental health.

The first step towards a healthy mental being is recognizing when something is wrong. Students should take

the time every day to check in with themselves and reflect on their mental health.

The next step is to do something to improve that mental health. Students should take a little bit of time to do something they enjoy, hang out with the people they love or something as simple as sleeping.

Taking a break can help increase productivity, im-

prove concentration and maintain focus when getting back to work, according to BioSpace. A break can provide a fresh mind, which can help students produce new ideas or push through a mental block.

Taking time out to relax can be difficult with a busy schedule and assignments piling up. However, if mental health is interfering with academic performance, students can always reach out to professors to ask for a short extension on assignments. However, students should not take advantage of the kindness of professors, and ask only when truly necessary.

We live in a fast-paced society that can easily become overwhelming, and that is reflected in the pacing of the spring semester. So, it is important to recognize when there is no brainpower left and a recharge is necessary.



Messy desk with scattered papers.

IMAGE COURTESY OF COTTONBRO STUDIO ON PEXELS

Emily Pieczyrak is a junior majoring in English literature and French.

Groundhog Day: The Best Day (of the Year) and the Best Holiday

JOCELYN FREEMAN
STAFF WRITER

KATIE CARMICHAEL
STAFF WRITER / COPY EDITOR

Groundhog Day is underappreciated by the Drew community and by society at large. If you do not believe Groundhog Day is the best holiday of the year then we are sorry, but you are simply wrong. The integration of this fascinating American cultural tradition into campus life would benefit not only the student body, but also the resident groundhog population. In these cold winter months, it might just be the one thing Drewids are missing.

Groundhog Day reportedly made its way to the United States via German immigrants who settled in the Pennsylvania area. Historians speculate that the Pennsylvania Dutch (an English mishearing of the word “Deutsch,” meaning German) brought the tradition with them from Europe.

Groundhog-related celebrations have been recorded in Pennsylvania communities as early as the 1840s, according to a diary from a resident of Morgantown, Pa., but the event as we know it today—which features masses of up to 40,000 people descending on Gobbler’s Knob in Punxsutawney, Pa.—has been the tradition’s hallmark since 1887.

Burrowing animals’ uncanny abilities to accurately predict weather patterns were well-utilized by European cultures to forecast when spring would arrive and crops could be planted. Our furry friends depend on their understanding of the environment to survive, and for this reason, their human counterparts respected them.

Thus, the tradition of consulting these animals for their predictions became ritualized as part of the Pagan holiday Imbolc, later adopted by Christians and renamed Candlemas. These holidays



Phil making his prediction at Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, PA.

IMAGE COURTESY OF ALEX WONG ON GETTY IMAGES

fall on the first few days of February every year and coincide with the age-old tradition of ripping the hog out of the ground and asking him for weather advice.

The same groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil, who is definitely an immortal weather god who only drinks the elixir of life, has been predicting the weather since 1887. His predictions are shared by the Groundhog Club, clad in their traditional hats and tuxedos for the ceremony. The president of the club’s inner circle speaks to Phil in “groundhogese” to get the inside scoop on his prediction.

He is then tasked with sharing the news with the crowd since our furry friend still gets a little shy all these years later. After sharing his prediction, the Groundhog Club triumphantly raise Phil above the heads of the gathered crowd for one last hurrah and plenty of photo ops for awaiting weather channels (sadly, the Acorn did not have the budget to send a photographer of our own). The celebration usually lasts a while in Punxsutawney,

and the major events occur on Feb. 3, including lunch with Phil, a winter celebration held by the Punxsutawney chamber of commerce and the Groundhog Ball at the Punxsutawney country club for those over 21.

And perhaps you are thinking, “If Drew students want to celebrate Groundhog Day, they could simply visit good old Punxsutawney Phil and join in the fun the next state over.” Unfortunately, it takes five hours to travel from Drew to Punxsutawney, and any decent spot to view the event must be secured by 3 a.m., which means getting out of class and driving all night long. Not to mention the ceremony takes place around 7:20 a.m., so even after securing a spot, you would be standing for a while, just to get back in your car to make the trek home. It’s too far for any sane student to consider, and yet just close enough to tempt.

So if we can not go to Punxsutawney, what should we do? The answer is simple—we must bring Groundhog Day to Drew. A New Jersey all-seeing ground-

hog weatherman would not be that out of the ordinary, because at one point, we had two! Lady Edwina of Essex county is a resident of the Turtle Back Zoo. Edwina replaced Ed the groundhog, known for oversleeping on his big day in 2022. 2022 was quite a year for the groundhogs, as Milltown Mel died only days before the big ceremony. A replacement groundhog has yet to step up into Mel’s place... so the role is still open.

Despite the Punxsutawney propaganda, groundhogs other than Phil can provide us with predictions. Weather is not the same everywhere, especially as climate change plunges us into the extremes, and we need a localized weather predictor extraordinaire here at Drew. Not to mention that our groundhogs actually hibernate, unlike Phil, who is on a Punxsutawney press junket 24/7. Actual hibernation allows our groundhogs to be more attuned to upcoming weather patterns. Since we humans do not know exactly when the weather will turn warm, maybe a groundhog could tell us when we should turn off the heating and prevent students from melting come spring.

We have at least two resident groundhogs living on campus; one under Faulkner House and another under Sycamore Cottage are confirmed to exist (a few more may be living in the ceiling of Sitterly, but the rumors have yet to be pursued). We are absolutely sure that one of them would be willing to assume the role of “weather predictor extraordinaire.” And while our own groundhogs may not have over a century’s worth of training in the field, we understand there’s no better time to start than the present!

In addition to its practicality, Groundhog Day is

simply an amazingly wacky holiday chock-full of cultural significance. Drew has a large international population that has never had the chance to feel the joy (or sadness) of discovering whether four or six more weeks of winter is to follow, and it is prudent to share this fun piece of the American experience with those who are joining us from around the world.

On a more serious note, we owe the Drew groundhogs the respect they deserve, especially after our previously violent interactions with them. In 2019, according to a Feb. 22 edition of the Drew Acorn, “three shots were fired by an officer by the Madison Police Department, between Gilbert House and Sycamore Cottage.” This followed reports of it “acting strangely,” according to an email sent from the office of the president on Feb. 19 at 5:28 p.m. Not only was this a shocking moment for students and staff at the time, but it was also widely upsetting to the other groundhogs that have taken up residence here in the forest.

It is our hope that we can find a way to coordinate efforts between us humans and the groundhogs on campus to facilitate the celebration of the best holiday of the year. We understand that these changes cannot happen overnight, but if we start to take action now, maybe in 150 years or so, Drew University will be the new Gobbler’s Knob.

Jocelyn Freeman is a junior majoring in history and English and minoring in Chinese

Katie Carmichael is a junior majoring in English creative writing and minoring in teaching



A groundhog sits outside of Sycamore Cottage, awaiting his appointment with the Center for Career Development in order to pursue his dream of being a weatherman.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOCELYN FREEMAN

Percy Jackson Can Show Us the Importance of Representation

SKYLAR ANDERSON
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The “Percy Jackson and the Olympians” series recently wrapped up its first season on Disney+. The series excited new and old fans alike for various reasons, with one of the most notable reasons being its representation.

Rick Riordan, the author of the original “Percy Jackson and the Olympians” book series and one of the executive producers of the TV series, said in an interview with *The Guardian*, “I made Percy Jackson ADHD/dyslexic because my son is ADHD/dyslexic. Percy Jackson began as a bedtime story for him.”

A majority of the other characters in the novels also have various learning disabilities, which are normalized as part of being a demigod. Riordan removes the stigma surrounding learning disabilities while simultaneously showing that he and his characters understand the struggles that accompany them.

These traits helped many young readers feel seen and understood, and it provided an exciting, magical perspective through which readers could view themselves. Riordan ensured



Young teens posing with TVs

IMAGE COURTESY OF COTTONBRO STUDIO ON PEXELS

the books were accessible to people with learning disabilities, and many people have expressed that the books in the series were the only books they could finish when they were younger.

Now, with the premiere of the TV series, Riordan used the show as an opportunity to include even more representation. The cast is largely made up of people of color, and they are all age-appropriate in relation to

their book characters (around 12 to 13 years old). This allows the intended audience—children the same age as Percy and his friends—to fully relate to the characters and immerse themselves in the storyline. It also provides young children of color with an opportunity to see themselves represented as interesting, exciting characters.

Along with the great representation in the series, the Disney+ adaptation took

the fandom by storm because it brought the stories that so many fans were obsessed with since childhood to life.

Since Riordan had such a large role in writing and producing the episodes, the storyline stayed very true to the books. There were some deviations from the original plot, but these were done with the intention of clarifying things for new viewers or adding more depth to the characters and story.

Many fans were upset that the episodes did not adhere completely to the original plot of the book, but it would be almost impossible to fully translate every action in the book to the screen because of problems like perspective, timing and world-building. Even with the new changes, the series was still a faithful adaptation, and it gave fans the opportunity to see their imagination made into reality.

The “Percy Jackson and the Olympians” TV show provided a new adaptation for old fans who grew up reading the original novels, but it also brought in a whole new group of young fans who are now able to love and admire Percy and his friends, seeing themselves finally represented as a member of something as magical as Camp Half-Blood.

Regardless of the occasional complaints or critiques of the show, it served as a reminder of how important representation is for everyone, and how necessary it is to have well-made and compelling children’s and young adult literature and media. So here’s to demigods, new and old.

Skylar Anderson is a first year majoring in studio art.

Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom: The Let Down of the Century

SAMANTHA DE FALCO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

“Aquaman” (2018) was an all around hit. It grossed over a billion dollars in the box office and was an overall well-liked movie that broke DC’s bad movie streak.

What was there not to love? You had Jason Momoa playing an underdog that ended up becoming the king of Atlantis. There was a brother rivalry, romance and even Nicole Kidman in a relevant role.

With everything that the first film had going for it, how could “Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom” have turned out so terribly?

Firstly, the actress who played the love interest,

Mera, was caught in one of the biggest controversies of the past few years.

Amber Heard and Johnny Depp were in a very public, and what many considered absurd, divorce and defamation case in 2022.

This drastically changed the public opinion on Heard. The audience went from loving her to never wanting to see her on screen again, causing Mera’s scenes to be drastically cut. The movie was already on thin ice with just this one change.

Other than that, a new plot seems to be thrown at the audience every five seconds. In the beginning of the movie you learn that Aquaman is now a father,

where no context is given to the story of how he became a parent. In the undisclosed amount of time that passed between the first and second movie, Arthur, on top of all his other responsibilities, is now a father.

Does the audience see a lot of his son? No, only in the beginning to show that yes, there is a son. He is also shown towards the end of the movie when Black Manta kidnaps him: another plot that was just thrown out there.

The main idea for the movie is that Black Manta is trying to get his revenge on Arthur for killing his father. He now wields “the Black Trident,” a weapon of

ancient evil. To combat this, Arthur breaks his brother, Orm, out of prison to enlist his help. They go on a side quest together and they share moments of brotherly reconciliation.

Those moments were arguably the best parts of the movie. Other than that, the ending arc where Black Manta kidnaps Arthur’s child was mildly interesting; however, the way they went about it ruined a lot of the potential.

It seems like within the last hour of the movie they threw in extra conflicts for fun.

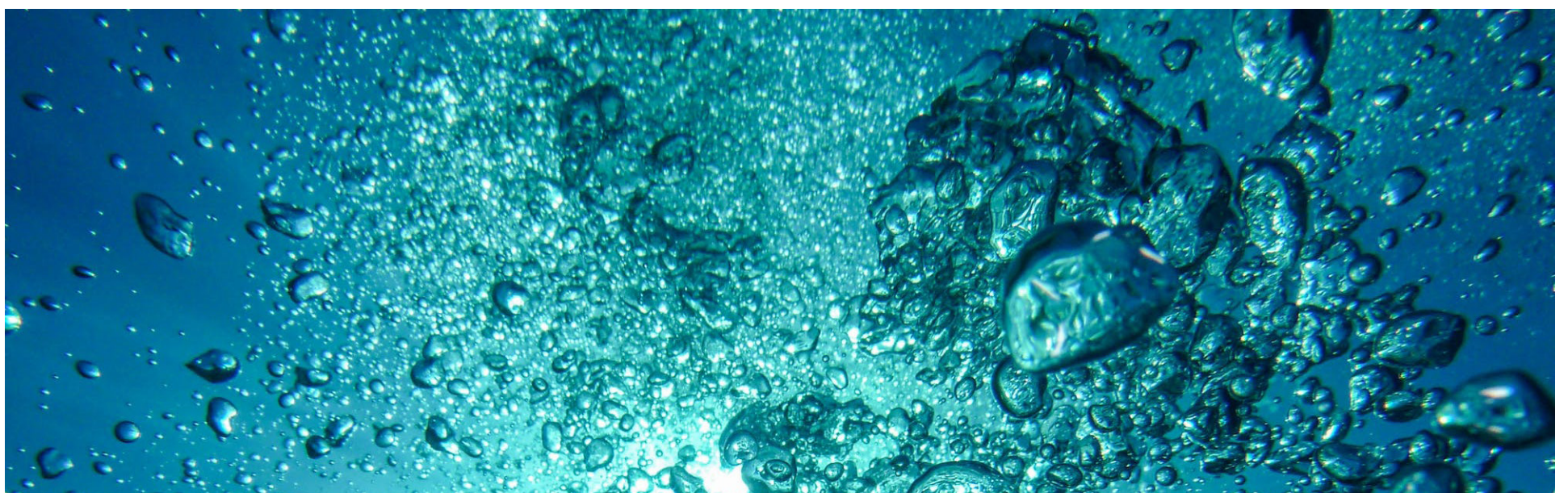
One of the biggest problems with the movie is the fact that it tries to be every-

thing, so it ends up being nothing at all.

Is it a brotherly love story? Is it one big redemption arc? Is this a “save the planet” movie? It is hard to tell.

Overall, the movie was set up for failure, but even so, it did not push through. Since most were pleased with the original Aquaman, it made watching “Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom,” that much more disappointing when it failed in making any cohesive plot or theme.

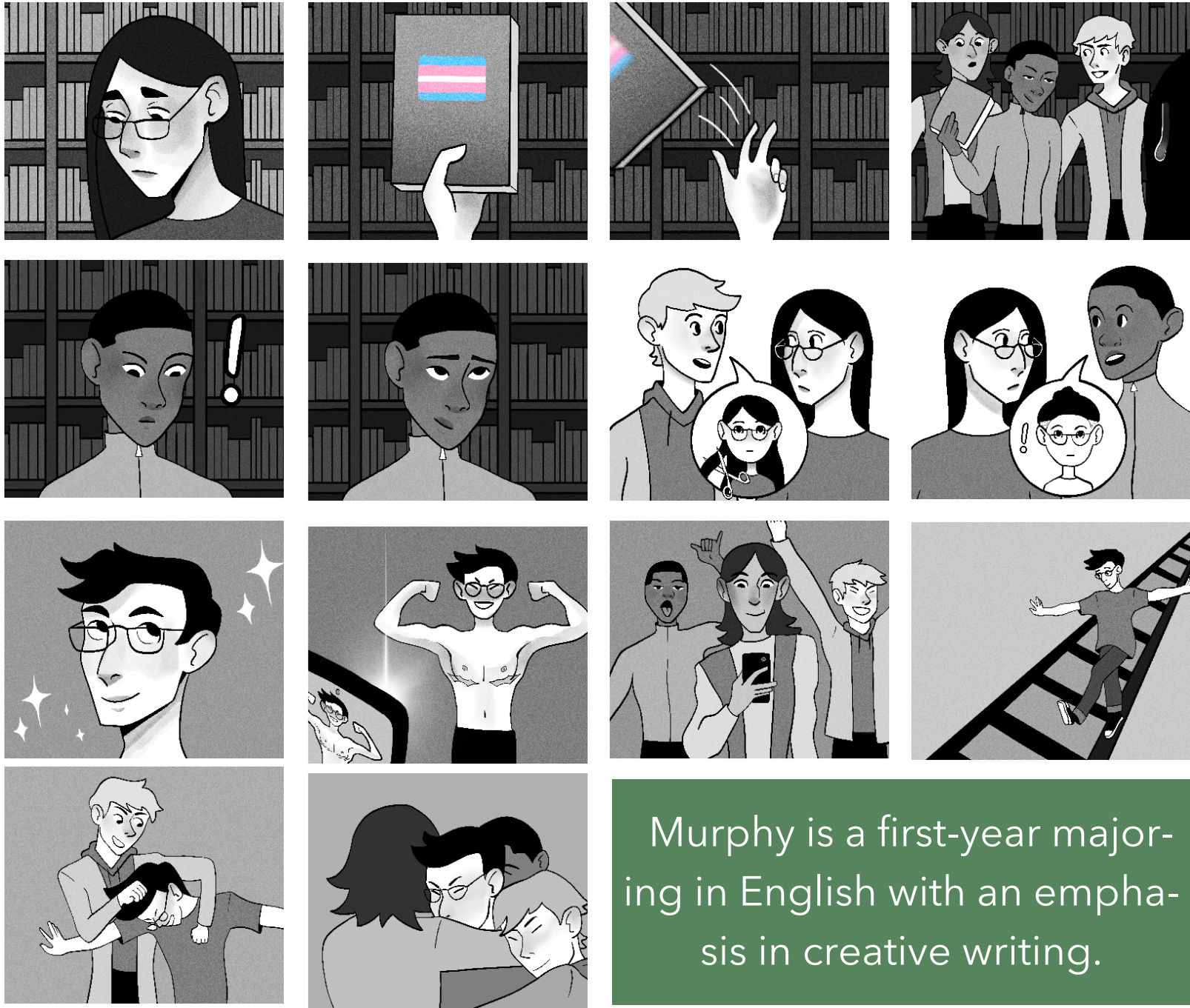
Samantha De Falco is a junior majoring in English and minoring in Italian.



Air bubbles in water.

IMAGE COURTESY OF PIXABY ON PEXELS

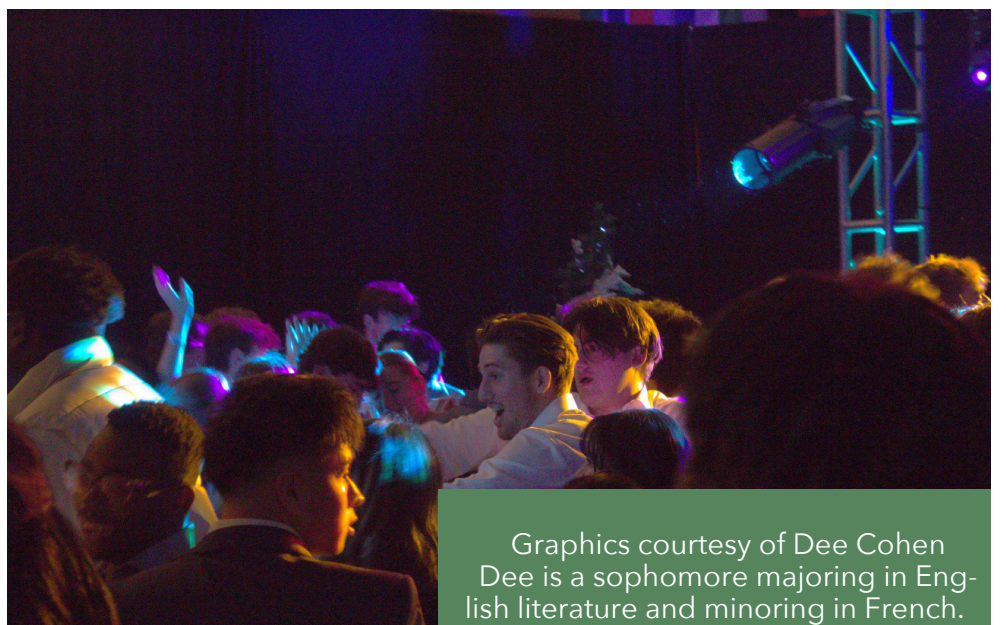
Boyish by Murphy Fonseca



Winter Ball 2023

GET FEATURED:

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Graphics courtesy of Dee Cohen
Dee is a sophomore majoring in English literature and minoring in French.

Inconsistent Performance by MVB in Back-to-Back Matches

CHARLOTTE WELLS
SPORTS CO-EDITOR

Drew's men's volleyball team saw mixed results in a home tri-match on Saturday. The Rangers toppled Cairn University 3-0 in the first game of the day, only to suffer the same loss to St. John Fisher University that afternoon.

The morning game against Cairn opened with a long rally before Drew scored the first point, setting the tone for the rest of the match. The Rangers gained an early lead, but the Highlanders stayed within a few points for much of the first set.

There were a number of long points and impressive saves and kills from both sides, keeping the spectators entertained even as Drew pulled further away, winning the first set 25-16.

Drew carried this momentum into the second set, at one point going on an

8-point run to assert a significant advantage over the Highlanders.

The game paused midway through the second set as one of Drew's top hitters of the match, Andrew DuHaime ('26), suffered a minor injury that took him out of commission for the remainder of the set.

The Rangers did not let the setback shake their confidence; the team came back onto the court re-energized as play resumed and posted a 4-point winning streak, bringing the score to 22-13 and effectively blocking out the Highlanders for the set. Drew closed out the second set with a score of 25-16 once again.

Cairn did their best to rally in the third set of the game, playing with renewed energy to battle the Rangers nearly point for point. While their reinvigorated performance brought them closer to the Rangers in the last stretch, Drew was not

to be outdone and rounded out the set 25-21 to secure a definitive match victory over Cairn.

Despite their prowess on the court in the first match, the Rangers proved unable to deliver the same performance against St. John Fisher, who came into the match-up ranked No. 7 in Division III. This marked Drew's third game against a nationally-ranked opponent this season.

The Rangers fought hard to stay in the running with the Cardinals, trailing just two points at the start of the first set and opening the second with a tied score. St. John Fisher soon overcame Drew's efforts, winning the first set 25-18 and the second set 25-19.

Drew fell off early in the third set, as the Cardinals gained an early lead of 8-1. The set ended 25-13 in St. John Fisher's favor.

Top performers of the day included Destan Llolla



Destan Llolla ('26) spiking ball. IMAGE COURTESY OF CHRIS PEDOTA FROM DREWRANGERS.COM

('26) and Ephraim Smith ('25); Llolla posted eight kills against Cairn and six against St. John Fisher, while Smith turned in seven kills against Cairn and eight against St. John.

Also notable, Jacob Sledz ('25) posted eight kills against the Highlanders and five against the Cardinals

with one ace in each game as well. DuHaime turned in seven kills against Cairn before sustaining an injury midway through.

The Rangers take on Rutgers-Newark for their next game on Feb. 23.

Charlotte Wells is a senior majoring in English and French and minoring in humanities.

Senior Day Closes Out Dual-Meet Swim Schedule

BRANDON DENNIS
SPORTS CO-EDITOR

The stands were overflowing at the F.M. Kirby Pool as Drew's swim and dive team honored 13 seniors for their tenure before they competed against the University of Scranton in their final career dual meet this past Saturday.

Each athlete was called forward and presented with a printed photo from the season, a gift bag and flowers as recognition for their commitment to the team.

"It was honestly very surreal," Charlotte Wells ('24) said. "I was definitely a little sad and excited about the whole meet and being a senior... being on the other side of it after all these years really hit me and I almost cried."

The men's swimming and diving team honored Finn Armitt ('24), Jonathan Benowitz ('24), Hayden Koh ('24), Marco Niro ('24), Luke Stevens ('24) and CJ Talerico ('24).

The women's swimming and diving team honored Emma Boggs ('24), Zoey Geoca ('24), Amira Hadri ('24), Maddie Kessel ('24), Tori Newton ('24), Megan Slater ('24) and Wells.

The men's team defeated the Royals 171.5-128.5, resulting in their first undefeated dual-meet season in program history.

Following an early lead, the men's team dominated the meet, taking first place in 11 of 16 events. Despite the clear lead, a number of close races kept athletes and spectators alike on their toes as energy remained high throughout the meet.

Turning in an impressive showing for his final dual-meet, Koh contributed three individual victories for the Rangers in addition to being a part of the winning 200-medley relay. Nicolas Heinio-Widell ('27) also contributed four victories for the team, leading a 1-2-3 sweep in the 100-freestyle where he was followed by

Brendan Burkett ('26) and Stevens.

On the women's side, Drew was edged out at the very end for a close loss of 156-143.

The women's team maintained a lead until the 13th event when Scranton eclipsed Drew, but the teams remained neck and neck in points until the final event when the Royals took first place in the 200-freestyle relay, solidifying their victory over the Rangers.

Despite the narrow loss, several athletes threw down tremendous showings in the pool to close out their dual-meet season in style, with captains Hadri and Sam Trodick ('25) taking first place in all four of their events. Trodick's performance earned her the Landmark Conference Athlete of the Week honor, while Hadri was named Ranger of the Week for her victories in the pool.

Drew's swimming and diving teams will compete next at the Landmark Con-



Charlotte Wells ('24). IMAGE COURTESY OF CHRIS PEDOTA FROM DREWRANGERS.COM

ference Championships beginning Feb. 15 at Loyola University in Baltimore, Md.

With the championship just ahead, Wells outlined her perspective going into the final meet of her swimming career: "I'll hopefully end on a high note at conference, but I also want to focus

on having fun with the team and not stressing too much since it's almost over."

Brandon Dennis is a senior majoring in English with a concentration in creative writing.



Swim team senior pose for picture. IMAGE COURTESY OF CHRIS PEDOTA FROM DREWRANGERS.COM



Swim team seniors pose for picture. IMAGE COURTESY OF CHRIS PEDOTA FROM DREWRANGERS.COM

COMING UP
 Get live stats @GoDrewRangers

Saturday Feb. 17- SWIM
 Landmark Conference
 Championship Day 3
 Baltimore, MD

Saturday Feb. 17 - MLAX
 vs Albright College @
 Drew, Madison, NJ 1pm

Saturday Feb. 24 - MTEN
 vs Ranger Invitational @
 Madison, NJ 10am

Saturday Feb. 24 - TF
 Landmark Conference
 Championship Indoor
 Selinsgrove, PA 11am

SPORTS

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CO-EDITOR: CHARLOTTE WELLS CWELLS@DREW.EDU
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In the Mind of the Injured Athlete

DEVAN SATURIA
 ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

BRANDON DENNIS
 SPORTS CO-EDITOR

From the core of the team to a spectator on the sidelines, athletes struggle through massive transitions when injury strikes. Despite the loss of a key player, the team is forced to continue on, leaving the injured athlete behind, often with compromised mental health.

Now-captain of the women's field hockey team Hana Johnston ('24) tore her ACL during her junior year at Drew.

"When I got injured and discovered that I would need to have surgery, I felt like the rug was pulled from under my feet," Johnston said.

Attention to mental well-being becomes neglected as physical recovery takes priority for the injured athlete.

"It was honestly one of the lowest points in my life to have field hockey ripped out from my life in an instant," Johnston said.

An athlete's life is dictated by set routines and scheduled practices, but these take a backseat once the harsh realities of a long-term injury set in.

Dreams of outstanding performances in upcoming games are replaced by uncer-



Injured athlete removed on stretcher after injury.

IMAGE COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

tainties and lingering questions in the athlete's mind about whether or not their performance will rebound to their pre-injury level.

"I had to really dig deep and realize that my strength came from within myself, not just from being in the weight room," Johnston said.

Although an athlete will usually see an outpouring of support in the days following their injury, the season does not end. The injured athlete's contributions to the team's success are replaced by teammates as they pursue championship goals.

As a spectator on the sidelines, the feeling of let-

ting down teammates and supporters is accompanied by an internal regret that the injury was a direct result of the athlete's own actions.

Whether it be not taking the necessary preventative measures or simply putting themselves in an inopportune situation on the field during the time of the injury, athletes often feel self-guilt that the injury was their own doing.

"I definitely felt guilt," baseball team captain Billy Coleman ('24) said. "I would come to practice and everyone would be working hard out there, and I'd be on the side in shorts."

Overcoming the alienation from crutches, casts or braces that divide an athlete from teammates and rejoin them once more requires exceptional motivation.

With an arduous recovery before injured athletes, doubts and uncertainty eat away at the excitement of potential return dates.

"There were so many days post-op in rehab where I was in terrible pain, but I had to push through and think of the days ahead," Johnston said.

A hope to return to the sport of their passions can drive the athlete through their recovery process.

"Having field hockey ripped from my life in an instant and without a choice made me really realize that I was not ready to retire," Johnston said. "Making this comeback has pushed me to really cherish the now."

Devan Sutaria is a sophomore majoring in biochemistry and minoring in business.

Brandon Dennis is a senior majoring in English with a concentration in creative writing.



Highlight Reel (Feb. 2 - Feb. 15) Landmark Conference Awards

MBB Athlete of the Week (Feb. 12): Pat Higgins ('25)
 Field Athlete of the Week (Feb. 5): Melina Christodoulou ('24)

Rangers of the Week

(Jan. 29 - Feb. 4) Emily Camlet ('26) WT&F
 Andrew Duhaime ('26) MVB (Feb. 5 - Feb. 11):
 Bella Hatzoglu ('26) WFENC
 David Musial ('26) MBB

Team Performance Highlights

WFENC: Hatzoglu earns 100th career victory at FDU Invitational
 MBB: Rangers secure first win over a nationally ranked opponent with 96-81 victory over Catholic
 MBB: Rangers break program record for 3-pointers scored in a season, reaching 278 total 3-pointers during game against Wilkes
 WBB: Head Coach John Olenowski reaches 100 wins at Drew with victory over Wilkes
 WSWIM: Rangers earn CSCAA Scholar All-America distinction for 28th straight semester
 MSWIM: Rangers earn CSCAA Scholar All-America distinction for 15th straight semester
 MT&F: Rangers post four runner-up showings at East Stroudsburg University DeSchraver Invitational