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HAVE A TIP?

Email theacorn@drew.edu and let us know!

Summit Ceremony Decisions Sparks Controversy

Sabr Keres-Siddiqui
SLA Editor

Drew University's Summit Ceremony, held this year on Monday, April 28, was heralded on the Path as a celebration to "[honor] achievement, resilience, and community." Its organizers at Drew's Department of Student Activities branded it as a "new, inclusive celebration that recognizes the incredible journeys and achievements of our students."

An email announcement of the ceremony, sent out by the Student Activities email address on Friday, March 28, highlights that "whether you are a first-generation student, part of the LGBTQ+ community, or have faced unique challenges throughout your college experience, The Summit Ceremony is an event to celebrate your accomplishments." The Path description goes further into detail about how it "merges" the traditional celebrations of Rites of Passage, First-Generation Ceremony and Lavender Ceremony (designed to honor students from underrepresented communities, first-generation students and students who identify with the LGBTQ+ community respectively) "into one powerful event that uplifts the diverse experiences of our graduates."

However, some students are unhappy with these changes, perceiving them to constitute a failure to adequately recognize the historical struggles of specific communities.



IMAGE COURTESY OF RDNE STOCK PROJECT ON PEXELS

Pride flag pins.

Upon receiving the Student Activities email, a Drew student who chose to remain anonymous raised concerns to an employee of Student Life. They wrote in a responding email that while they weren't sure of the exact reason for the merger of the ceremonies, they spoke from "personal emotion" as a member of one of the recognized communities that "[they had] been looking forward to the Lavender Ceremony throughout college as a moment to be with all of my LGBTQ+ peers in a shared space of recognition," noting its significance given the dwindling amount of spaces in which queer people in the U.S. can safely celebrate their achievements today.

"When different ceremonies used to be held...it was a mark of specific recognition and an opportunity for community for those who faced specific challenges," the student wrote, adding that "personally, I feel like having all of these differ-

ent communities who have struggled in different manners with different histories into one ceremony cheapens the impact and meaning of the ceremony." The concerned student highlighted that they "understand that the Summit Ceremony will still recognize queer students," however, it felt to them like a "missed opportunity to continue to give each of the different communities that will be involved in this new ceremony their own spotlight."

Later that same day, the student received a response from the Student Life employee asserting that the reason for the ceremony merger was in fact due to necessary steps that the University felt needed to be taken in order to allow the celebrations of identity to continue to take place. According to the employee, current political climates in higher education would have forced the University to "[remove] all identity shaped programs coming from universities" anyways,

and so Drew would be unable to hold "events that highlight separation of identities and culture." Due to this, the employee noted that Student Life "took actions to change the ceremony itself and allow students who feel like they want to be there [to attend] without highlighting identity as a whole...it was either make a new [ceremony] or lose it altogether."

These changes are being made in response to policies put into place by the Trump administration, as the Student Life employee also asserts in their email. The New York Times' Michael Bender reported on April 3 that the administration "threatened...to withhold federal funding from public schools unless state education officials verified the elimination of all programs that it said unfairly promoted diversity, equity and inclusion. While Drew remains, for the time being, a private university, it still does receive federal funding for many aspects like student aid and Pell Grants as well as a \$500,000 grant for federal COVID-19 relief. A memo sent by the Department of Education stipulated that Title I funding, or special funding for schools with "high percentages of low-income students," could be withheld "pending compliance" with the federal directive.



CONT. IN SUMMIT PG. 4

College Campuses vs. the Trump Administration

LEAD EDITORIAL

Recently, tensions between college administrations and the Trump administrations have been at an all time high. Tensions that were exacerbated when the Trump administration threatened to stop all federal grant funding to Harvard University.

Freezing these funds would take away billions of dollars from the high-ranked Ivy League college's research in disease. Other similar cuts to federal funding have been made at other high-ranked universities'

research projects primarily focusing on disease research as well. All of these actions led to Harvard suing the Trump administration due to all the cuts and defunding of research.

Drew needs to continue to be more active in opposing the Trump administration. Ever since all this discourse happened, over 300 universities have taken the step to go against any government intrusion on their universities or colleges. Drew University is one of these institutions who has had their president sign a

letter opposing any government interference. Looking at this list, you can see that Drew University's President Hilary L. Link signed her name for Drew. Link also signed a call for constructive engagement at colleges and universities around the country. All of this is a great step in the right direction to Drew staying active in opposing what the current president's administration is doing to universities and colleges.

Colleges and universities have had a long-standing history of producing groundbreaking research in sev-

eral fields, primarily in the medical and technological innovations field. Schools such as Columbia University Irving Medical Center and New York University have made headway in climate and health and using DNA as building blocks for biological functions. These research projects have helped so many people at the institution and even worldwide. Defunding research such as these would have a negative global impact in several ways.

CONT. IN LEAD ED PG. 9

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

So go for it, take advantage of every opportunity and resource around you, meet new people and try things you have always wanted to.

— Sierra Walker ('24)

SEE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE, PG 6

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theacorn@drew.edu

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INTERESTED IN JOINING?
Any Drew student is welcome to join us for meetings every Thursday at 7p.m. in our office in McLendon.

Or visit thedrewacorn.com/join to request more information.

114 McLendon Hall
36 Madison Ave.
Madison, N.J. 07940

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NEWS EDITOR:

EVA ESQUEDA

eesqueda@drew.edu

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR:

Allison Cannon

HAVE A NEWS TIP?

Email theacorn+news@drew.edu or visit thedrewacorn.com/submit-a-tip

SIE Honor Society Inducts Drew University

Benjamin Castro
Assistant Opinions Editor

In an email sent late Friday night, April 25, Drew University business students were informed that they were eligible to join Sigma Iota Epsilon, the national honorary and professional management fraternity, following the university's approval for a new chapter.

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The National Chapter Board of Sigma Iota Epsilon unanimously approved Drew as its newest member on April 18, 2024. Under the leadership of Hamed Yousefi Ph.D, assistant professor of finance, the chapter's creation marks a milestone for Drew's expanding business program and campus community.

"Establishing a chapter of Sigma Iota Epsilon at Drew University is a

significant milestone that underscores our commitment to academic excellence in business education," said Yousefi.

Sigma Iota Epsilon serves as both an honorary and professional fraternity, and is the official student organization of the Academy of Management.

SIE encourages scholastic excellence while promoting collaboration between academic learning and real-world management practice by connecting students and industry professionals.

With more than 70 chapters nationwide, the organization offers leadership development, mentoring programs, professional workshops and community engagement opportunities.

Eligible Drew students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher, have completed at least 30 credit hours at Drew, and have earned a grade of B or better in at least one business-related course, such as finance, marketing, accounting or management. Students must also show a continued commitment to the field by enrolling in at least one additional business course.

"We are delighted to be able to recognize the top students in Accounting, Business, Finance and Marketing with this honor," said Sarah Abramowitz, John H. Evans Professor of Mathematics and co-chair of the Department of Business.

Students who join will receive a certificate of honors from the national office, be listed in Drew's commencement program as Sigma Iota Epsilon graduate and have the opportunity to wear the official gold stole and cords at graduation.

Membership also provides access to scholarships, national business competitions and a professional network of high-achieving students and alumni.

"This affiliation offers our students not only national recognition but also access to valuable resources, including scholarships of up to \$1,000, leadership development programs and networking opportunities with professionals across various industries," said Yousefi.

To be recognized during the May 2025 Commencement, students must complete the national member-

ship purchase and submit Drew's internal registration form by Friday, May 2. At minimum, students must purchase the Basic Membership package to officially join, though packages including graduation regalia are also available.

The creation of the Sigma Iota Epsilon chapter at Drew reflects the Business Department's ongoing commitment to academic excellence, leadership development and preparing students for success beyond the classroom.

"We're excited to see our students engage with these opportunities, enhancing their academic journey and preparing them for successful careers in management," said Yousefi.

For questions and inquiries about Sigma Iota Epsilon or the application process, students are encouraged to contact Professor Yousefi directly.



Benjamin Castro is a senior who is double majoring in business and marketing.

Student Government Holds Senate Elections

Sabr Keres-Siddiqui
Assistant SLA Editor

This past Friday, April 25, Drew University students had the opportunity to vote for their new class senators going into the next academic year. This year's election was a diverse one, with newly elected student senators across the board.

Numerous different positions were up for grabs this cycle, including sophomore, junior, senior and international senators. Winners included Ann Marie De Jesus ('28) and Jackson Howard ('28) for sophomore senators, James Dempsey ('27) and Mari Centeno ('27) for junior senators, Vedant Maheshwari ('27) and Ashish Gupta ('28) for international senators, Sandra Faragalla ('26) and Gabe Spivak ('26)

for senior senators and Arya Patel ('27) and Thomas Jenkins ('28) for commuter senators, as well as INTO Senator Michelle Tirta ('25).

Student Government held a meeting this Wednesday, April 30, to swear in the newly elected and reelected members and discuss other relevant matters. Student Body President Zaire Wright ('27) gave an executive address congratulating all senators, as well as extending a special thanks to Elections Chair Jordyn Casanova-Ghosh ('28) and others who helped with Election Day efforts. Wright also congratulated graduating seniors Benjamin Castro and Evan Pratts (both outgoing senior senators).

During the meeting, the Senate also passed resolutions that align the bylaws and ethical standards of the

Budgets & Organizations Board with those of Student Government, as well as budgets for end-of-year events. The senators also discussed possible ramifications of new federal policies for a number of Drew programs.

Dempsey, one of the newly elected junior senators, talked about some things he'd like to improve about Drew during his time as a member of Student Government, including increasing SGA presence at campus events. "Going into this, I'm not completely sure of policies," he noted, but "speaking as a student, the idea is to go to the Student Council for things and I don't often see that actually happening."

Dempsey also emphasized that "the fact that [Drew] is a small campus means that everyone is a lot more connected," and that as part of increasing that presence he would like to communicate more with the community as a whole. He suggested the possibility of weekly or biweekly newsletters with information on "what we got done...[and how we're addressing] constituent suggestions."

Dempsey also highlighted some of his concerns

about organization and logistics at Drew, especially noting that locations for the English department are still uncertain pending the sale of Sitterly House as part of Drew's deal with the Borough of Madison. He noted that "drivers should not be sitting at the closed Glenwild gate for hours looking for help," calling for better signage and more accessibility to make campus more easily navigable. He added that he appreciates the updates to the Commons and other areas, and would like to see similar updates and refurbishments made to other aging facilities around campus, such as some dorms.

Overall, this year's election signaled a significant shift in student opinions and sentiments, with new representatives being elected across the board. Students are eagerly anticipating the new changes that their newly elected senators will bring, and it remains to be seen what policies they may implement.



Sabr Keres-Siddiqui is a sophomore majoring in political science and minoring in sociology and journalism.



Newly inducted senators pose for a group photo. ment.

IMAGE COURTESY OF STUDENT GOVERNMENT.

Fall Course Considerations in the Department of Business

Benjamin Castro
Assistant Opinions Editor

As the spring semester comes to a close, students are encouraged to explore the diverse and expanding Fall 2025 course offerings from the Department of Business.

The department continues to offer courses across four majors, focusing on preparing students for today's rapidly changing professional landscape. Recent faculty promotions and new course additions reflect the department's growth and commitment to innovative education.

"We are delighted to expand our offerings and to bring back courses that were popular last year," said Sarah Abramowitz, John H. Evans Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science and co-chair of the Department of Business.

Two familiar faculty members will join the department in full-time positions this fall. Maggie Wells, known to many students from the Principles of Marketing, and Rob Roche, who teaches courses in sports management, law and marketing, will both transition to full-time roles beginning in the fall semester.

Wells will teach Marketing Analytics, a new course examining the expanding role of data in modern marketing strategies. Students will learn about two key types of marketing data and how to use them to improve campaign results, demonstrate return on investment and enhance organizational decision-making.

The course features practical exercises and re-



Business Department Students receiving recognition at the College of Liberal Arts Awards.

IMAGE COURTESY OF BENJAMIN CASTRO

al-world applications to help students build marketable skills.

"The US Department of Labor estimates that there were 1.1 million job openings in business analytics in 2023 with 40% of those in marketing and creative fields," said Wells. "That number is projected to grow by 11% over the next ten years which is much faster than average. Having some knowledge of how to use data is now a prerequisite for many marketing jobs."

Roche will be offering Business Contract Law for the first time this fall. The course will examine contract law in both everyday and business contexts, providing students with a practical understanding of enforceable agreements, lia-

bility, third-party rights, the Uniform Commercial Code and remedies for breach of contract.

"Contracts are one of the most essential parts of business. Students will have an advantage in the workforce by having an understanding of the elements required for enforceable contracts and their remedies when an agreement is breached," said Roche. "I am looking forward to bringing practical examples from the world of business and have students analyze them from a contractual perspective."

Returning this fall is Cryptocurrency Investing, a graduate-level course available to undergrads with instructor permission. Co-taught by Drew alumni Bob Carella (C'07) and

Adam Meshell (C'08), the course introduces students to the world of digital assets commonly referred to as "crypto" and explores their potential role in investment portfolios.

Designed to be accessible to students with even a basic understanding of finance, the course makes room for interactive discussions, case studies and real-world applications.

Carella is the CEO and founder of BobFi Enterprises and co-founder of LedgerAI Quantum Corporation. He previously served as global head of equity at Binance.US and brings nearly two decades of experience in financial services. Meshell is a partner at Ernst & Young and serves as the head of KYC Financial Technologies.

Throughout the semester, students will examine the ethical, environmental and regulatory considerations surrounding crypto, as well as the potential benefits and risks associated with digital asset allocation. The class is designed to be both rigorous and fun, offering students an introduction to one of the most talked-about sectors in finance.

Another returning offering will be Brand Strategy and Consumer Experience taught by Ann Mills. The course explores the foundational elements of brand strategy and challenges students to build their own brand using behavioral insights and creative tools.

"This course is a nice contrast to some of the other marketing classes because students are challenged to think long-term about a brand's overarching identity," said Mills. "Throughout the semester, students will learn how to strategical-

ly represent and position a brand across all visual assets, platforms and channels."

Mills will also teach the returning Digital Marketing and AI Marketing courses, the latter returning after a successful debut this past spring semester.

Other returning highlights include Entrepreneurship I with professor and Drew alumna Lyndsee Manna (C'07), and Student Managed Investment Fund I with Professor Hamed Yousefi.

As the department continues to evolve, students are encouraged to speak with their advisors and review course descriptions when considering their fall schedules. For more information on Fall 2025 offerings, contact Business Department Chair Steve Firestone.



Assistant Professor of Practice Sean Mooney representing the Department of Business at an Open House.

IMAGE COURTESY OF BENJAMIN CASTRO



Benjamin Castro is a senior who is double majoring in business and marketing.

Recap: College of Liberal Arts Award Ceremony at Drew

Benjamin Castro
Assistant Opinions Editor

Nearly 80 students were honored for their leadership, scholarship and service at the annual College of Liberal Arts Awards Ceremony, held Thursday, April 24, in the Concert Hall at the Dorothy Young Center for the Arts.

Hosted by Dean Ryan Hinrichs, the ceremony recognized students across a wide range of academic disciplines, from studio art and business to neuroscience and political science.

Students were nominated by Drew faculty and staff who have supported them throughout their academic journeys.

Although President Hilary Link was scheduled to attend the ceremony, she was unable to be present due to a last-minute family emergency. Provost Jessica Lakin addressed the crowd in her place, congratulating students on their accomplishments and encouraging them to continue making an impact beyond Drew.

Associate Deans Jinee Lokaneeta and Jill Cermele were also present at the ceremony, supporting Hinrichs and the faculty members who presented awards to students.

Awards were presented across departments including the arts, sciences, humanities, social sciences and business. Family members



IMAGE COURTESY OF SUNITA BHARGAVA (C'11, G'14)

(Left to right) Dean Ryan Henrichs, Benjamin Castro, Elizabeth Caccavo, and Katie Murray.

were invited to attend the event to celebrate alongside students.

Among the honorees were several students who were recognized with multiple awards for their outstanding contributions across academic and leadership categories.

Brendan Mullany ('25) received both the Winifred Baldwin Award and the Novartis Award in Computer Science.

Jared Simonetti ('25) was recognized with the Novartis Award in Computer Science and the Jane Brown and Albert Norton Wettstein Award.

Jen Arias ('25) received the Winifred Baldwin Award and the James A. McClintock Award for Excellence

in Psychology – Science of Psychology.

Cameryn Brown ('25) earned both the Ewing Distinguished Political Science Major Award and the Hardin Award.

Grace Ballard ('25) received the President's Award in Theatre Arts and the Chauncey Lester and Elsie Stewart Benedict Memorial Award.

Sudenaz Yilmaz ('25) was honored with both the Stanley Prescott Hooper Memorial Award in Art History and the Jane Brown and Albert Norton Wettstein Award.

Alexa Kerr ('25) and Seth Okumura ('25) each received the Albert Norton Wettstein Award and the Robert Fisher Oxnam

Ensemble Studio Theatre Award in Playwriting.

Several members of The Drew Acorn's editorial team were also among this year's award recipients.

Current editor-in-chief Sierra Walker ('25) received the Winifred Baldwin Award, while former editor-in-chief Nicole Sydor (C'24, G'26) earned both the Slipper-McClintock Award and the John G. Berg Jr. Memorial Award.

"It was truly a privilege to be recognized for my past achievements and the promise my future holds," said Walker. "It was even more special that I also got to watch my friends and other members of the Acorn win other awards for all their hard work."

Current assistant opinions editor Benjamin Castro ('25) received the Transfer Student Senior Impact Award.

Jocelyn Freeman ('25) and Dominique Cobb ('25), current writers for The Acorn, were recognized with the Leavell-Oberg Award in History and the Marketing Award, respectively.

"It was an honor to receive such an award because I didn't start out as a Drew student," said Cobb. "It's really nice to be recognized for the time and effort that I've put in, especially within my field of study."

Dean Hinrichs concluded the ceremony by thanking Lokaneeta, Cermele, Katey DePinto of Launch, the Concert Hall staff and the Dean's Office staff—Michele Comandini, Anne Callaghan and Katie Murray—for their behind-the-scenes efforts in coordinating the event.

Additionally, Hinrichs invited students, families, faculty and staff to the reception which followed in the rotunda.

The ceremony served as a reminder that success is not just about academics, but also about leadership, perseverance and impact within the community. Congratulations to all the honorees!



Benjamin Castro is a senior who is double majoring in business and marketing.

Summit Ceremony Influenced by Trump Administration

CONT. FROM SUMMIT ON PG. 1

Many school officials are worried due to the administration's apparent "[struggle] to define which programs would violate its interpretation of civil rights laws." Education Secretary Linda McMahon said she was "not quite certain" whether classes focused on African-American history would fall under noncompliance with the DOE's rules, Bender reports. The department's rules are incredibly vague, stipulating only that "schools must consider whether any school programming discourages members of all races from attending, either by excluding or discouraging students of a particular race or races, or by creating hostile environments based on race for students who do participate"—leaving many schools confused over what could constitute a violation of the federal guidelines.

The administration's moves have drawn sharp criticism from educators around the country. Skye Perryman, a chief executive at civil rights law group Democracy Forward, told Bender that "threatening teachers and sowing chaos in schools throughout America is part of Trump's war on education." Over \$373 million in educational grants have been cancelled by Trump

and Musk, and the administration has initiated "civil rights investigations" over issues as small as a single all-gender restroom in one Denver high school—in actions eerily similar to those laid out in the plans for Project 2025, Bender warns.

These sudden restrictions, unclear bans and vague threats are throwing educators across America, and now especially the

Drew community, into chaos and uncertainty. Students and administrators alike are unsure where to turn, lest they suddenly lose all funding from the longstanding government programs that previously used to guarantee them the very freedoms which they now risk being pulled out from under them for celebrating their identity and their community. It remains to be seen

what long-term effects these changes might have, but the apparently visceral impacts it has already had on things like the Summit Ceremony makes it clear that education in America is incredibly deep into uncharted territory.

Sabr Keres-Siddiqui is a sophomore who is majoring in political science and minoring in sociology and journalism



Invitation to the Ceremony.

IMAGE COURTESY OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES ON THE PATH



Goodbye to four legendary seniors!!!

Graduating members of the Editorial Board share some parting wisdom.

WMNJ: From '90s Alternative Roots to Digital Revival

Abby Michal

Contributing Writer

There was a time when WMNJ Radio broadcast live from a corner of the Tolley Hall basement—a small, makeshift studio where students played records, shared stories and made their voices heard across campus. For more than 30 years, WMNJ has been integral to campus life at Drew, but no era captured its spirit quite like the 1990s. As alternative rock dominated the charts and reshaped youth culture across the nation, WMNJ filled the airwaves with generation-defining sounds, introducing new bands and creating a space for students to discover new music. Since then, much has changed: 88.9 FM has given way to digital broadcasting, the Walkmans and cassette tapes to iPhones, AirPods and MP3s and a shoebox basement station to a glass-walled studio in the heart of the Ehinger Center. Yet one thing remains constant: WMNJ continues to be a special place for all who have been part of its story. To trace the station's evolution, we spoke with alumni who witnessed these shifts firsthand, reflecting on the music, the mayhem and the memories that defined WMNJ's heyday.

Radios were the life-line for college students before the 2000s. Former WMNJ DJ Susann Rutledge (C'95) recalls, "You heard everyone's music in the hall, like you knew what your friends were interested in." This was when Nirvana and Pearl Jam dominated the Top 40 charts, and Drew students tuned into 88.9 "The Forest" during Friday night hangouts or quick study sessions. However, college radio wasn't just background noise; WMNJ was a cultural hub. David Briggs (C'94) explained, "College stations were at the forefront of musical taste." Mainstream radio offered limited variety with playlists that leaned toward commercial hits, so students relied on campus stations to discover new artists not yet discovered by the masses. Mike Richichi (C'91) adds that college radio was central to the alternative music scene, bridging the gap between mainstream and underground. "There was a genre called college alterna-



IMAGE COURTESY OF ABBY MICHAL

An REM record in the WMNJ studio.

tive," he explained. "Bands like Icehouse, Peter Murphy, Bauhaus, The Church and REM were huge on college radio." Richichi also recalls performances by acts like They Might Be Giants and Tiny Lights, highlighting the station's close ties to live music. He adds, "Alternative got really popular in the '90s, but it became popular partly because college kids were listening to it in the late '80s and early '90s."

Working at WMNJ during its FM days in Tolley was a unique experience. DJs broadcast live, with no pre-recorded segments. If you didn't have your albums, you didn't have a show. Kippy Rudy (C'90) recalls, "This was long before digital music, and it was actually the beginning of CDs. People would come down with their milk crates full of albums. That was just part of the normal routine—carrying your crates down and picking your albums in advance." As WMNJ transitioned to digital broadcasting, many of those records were lost, eventually sold off as part of station fundraising efforts. Around 2011, WMNJ made the pivotal shift to full digital broadcasting, marking a major turning point in its history. While transitioning from FM to digital was exciting, it also signaled the end of an era, which, for many WMNJ members, was bittersweet. Amy Wheeler (C'94) remembers thinking, "If we let go of it, we wouldn't be able to get it back." The change ended a time when live, student-driven broadcasts connected directly with the campus.

Past DJ and Music Director, Edgar Gonzalez (C'12), recalls, "I was part of the effort to transition from radio to online only. We moved everything from Tolley's basement to the EC,

which at the time we called the UC." The main challenge, he adds, was affordability. "That was not easy, to put it lightly. We needed new equipment, and we also had to move everything to the new space." Over time, WMNJ went from live broadcasting, where DJs played content in real-time, to a semi-automatic automation system that allowed music to play 24/7 without anyone in the studio. Despite these changes, alternative music remained a defining feature of the station. John Dabrowski (C'12) recalls, "There was a lot of rising indie alternative music...It was the time of bands like Vampire Weekend, MGMT, The Postal Service, Belle and Sebastian and Death Cab for Cutie." So while going digital didn't change the station's music interests, it did alter the way students tuned in.

Opinions on the shift from FM to digital broadcasting varied among alumni. Nick Klein (C'13), a station engineer at WMNJ, recalls the difficult decision to sell the FM license: "We were going back and forth about it for a while, but it ultimately came down to a couple of points. The FM license was a prestigious thing—we could say we're 88.9 FM, The Forest—but our FM transmitter barely reached the edge of campus. By the time I started my radio show, anyone listening was doing so online." For Wheeler, the change was bittersweet: "I do wish we could have stayed on FM forever," she said, noting how FM radio is what had brought WMNJ members together.

For students who never knew WMNJ before it went digital, like Kristen Oakley (C'21), the shift felt more like an opportunity. "I think digital is definitely

the way to go," she said, emphasizing its ability to reach a larger audience. Unlike earlier alumni, Oakley's time at WMNJ came after alternative music had faded from the mainstream, replaced by the rise of pop and rap, which shaped her perspective on the station's role in the campus music scene. Despite the nearly decade-long gap between her and the others, technology and affordability remained ongoing challenges. Oakley recalls, "I was in that transition period where we still had old equipment, but we needed new equipment."

It is clear that WMNJ in the '90s was a far cry from its state in more recent times. Jeremy Blatter, faculty advisor to WMNJ, recalls the station's condition in 2019: "I didn't realize the extent to which the station had dwindled to virtually no one. When I was first approached by a student about reviving it, there were maybe three active students left, and the pandemic brought digital broadcasting to a halt for more than two years." In 2022, Blatter officially took on the role of faculty advisor, dedicating the summer to updating the station's license agreements and installing new equipment. By late 2022, WMNJ was back on the digital airwaves, and the station began recording podcasts for broadcast and distribution on Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

For many alumni, discovering WMNJ was a pivotal moment in their college careers, one that shaped the

trajectory of their personal and professional lives. Wheeler recalls, "It's definitely one of my favorite memories at Drew—the radio station, the friends I made and the skills I developed." Dabrowski echoes a similar sentiment, describing joining WMNJ as a "happy accident" that led to a fulfilling career in the entertainment industry. Briggs reflects on the strong sense of camaraderie among those who worked at WMNJ, calling it a place where bonds were formed. For Oakley, WMNJ is more than just a station; "It's a part of me."

The impact of WMNJ on these alumni's lives remains undeniable. The beauty of WMNJ is that it brings together people from all backgrounds. These alumni have gone on to successful careers in publishing, law, public relations and television production, including work as a digital producer for the Sherri Shepherd talk show. While these Drew alums have ventured down different paths, WMNJ remains the thread that unites them. Whether through the '90s alternative days or its digital revival, WMNJ lives on as a voice for the Drew community, sustained by the efforts of faculty and dedicated students.

Interviews conducted by John Lewis, with additional research and assistance by Zoey Shimp.

Abby Michal is a junior majoring in English and Media & Communications and minoring in Anthropology.

DREW UNIVERSITY CONCERT COMMITTEE
PRESENTS

THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS

with
TINY LIGHTS

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IMAGE COURTESY OF ABBY MICHAL

A They Might Be Giants poster.

Outdoor Club Gets Adventurous on Its First Camping Trip

Madison Miller
Contributing Writer

Over Easter weekend, the Outdoor Club put on its first camping trip at Jenny Jump State Park, and it was a huge success. It had an amazing turnout of 26 people.

The group left Drew around 11 a.m. on Saturday and embarked on an hour-long drive to the camping site. Leading up to our arrival, the group was buzzing with anticipation and was excited for the adventure ahead.

After arriving and setting up the tents, the group went on a short, casual hike, which was an amazing way to get to know the area and enjoy the perfect warm, sunny weather. During the



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE DREW OUTDOORS CLUB

The Outdoor Club members pose for a group picture.

hike, we went to multiple overlooks to take in the magnificent views of nature.

In the evening, everyone had fun roasting their own hot dogs (and veggie dogs) and goofing around while sitting around the

fire. For dessert, there were s'mores, obviously, because no camping trip would be complete without s'mores.

Later that night, the group drove to the United Astronomy Club of New Jersey's Observatory at Jenny

Jump, which turned out to be the highlight of the trip. At the observatory, people had the chance to look through telescopes and see multiple planets like Mars and Jupiter. It was a tranquil, almost therapeutic experience to be able to sit under the night sky and gaze up at the stars in awe.

On Easter morning, the group kicked off our day with an Easter egg hunt. This brought some lighthearted fun to the final day of camping.

Before heading back to campus, the group stopped by the nearby Ghost Lake to lie out under the sun and soak up the last bit of nature before returning back to their busy college lives.

The camping trip was well-organized and inclusive. People generously lent

out extra gear, like sleeping bags or tents, to people who did not have them to ensure that lack of resources was not a barrier to attending the trip.

Overall, the camping trip was relaxing and rejuvenating. It gave people a chance to be able to reconnect with nature and decompress before the stress of finals by leaving behind our computers and being able to live in the moment.

The first outdoor club camping trip was a success, and we hope to see it become an annual tradition here at Drew.

Madison Miller is a first-year student who is exploring their major and serves as the historian for the Outdoor Club.

Celebrating Students & Staff at the Community Leader Awards

Allison Cannon
Assistant News Editor

People ranging from students and staff to parents and grandparents gathered in the Dorothy Young Center for the Arts concert hall last Tuesday to recognize members of the Drew community for their work in civic and student engagement.

Students, faculty and staff were nominated by members of the community to receive awards based on the outstanding work they have done to foster connection, inspire change and build bridges between campus and the wider world.

The ceremony started at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22, and it honored class leaders, Gold D recipients, student community leaders involved in the Center for Civic Engagement and graduating seniors involved in club life.

The students receiving the awards have been upstanding leaders not only in their academic life but outside of class as well.

Students were recognized for their hard work on different projects like starting clubs that uplift others, creating communities and outstanding work within the workforce.

Katie Germinder ('27) was recognized for their work with student engagement. They received the Sophomore Recognition Award for student engagement as a Sophomore in The Acorn and the Drew Environmental Action League, or DEAL.

Faculty members were also recognized for their work at Drew. Professors and staff alike received awards throughout the night in recognition of their hard work within the classroom

and beyond. The coordinator of the event, Terrance Somesla-McCornell, also received an award for his dedicated work in the Student Engagement Department. Later that night, he was back on stage to hand out more awards.

This event is part of a series of awards and ceremonies that are being held. Specialized honors thesis defenses are taking place from April 18 through May 8, the College of Liberal Arts Awards was held on April 24 and the Day of Scholars Poster Session and Action Scholars Town Hall were held on May 25.

Congratulations to all of the award winners, and thank you for your leadership, your outstanding dedication to Drew and your contributions to our community throughout this past year.



Allison Cannon is a first-year student who is exploring their major, but is minoring in Spanish and Law, Justice and Society.



Award recipients pose for a group photo.

IMAGE COURTESY OF OMAR AHMED ('26).



Award recipients pose for a group photo.

IMAGE COURTESY OF OMAR AHMED ('26).

En Garde!: Swords, Magic and Excitement Galore at MedFest

Katie Germinder
Opinions Editor

Every spring semester, That Medieval Thing puts on a renaissance-faire type event known as Medfest. This year, the event was held on Saturday, April 26, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the lawn by the Ehinger Center, as well as inside and outside S.W. Bowne Hall.

The plot of the main show they put on varies from year to year, and this year it was based on the BBC's Merlin. Many of the characters in the show are ones that already exist and that many people know and love. The head board members and cast worked hard every day since the semester started, with planning even hap-



IMAGE COURTESY OF KATIE GERMINDER

Event participants stage a mock duel at MedFest.

pening in the fall semester. They all worked together to make the script, written by Samantha DeFalco ('25), come to life.

During the event, there were performances from the

cast, outside combat and musical performers, raffles for things like wands and swords, medieval-themed food, and student and local vendors selling a variety of goods. Each act of the main

performance was split up into different time slots, allowing the audience to have time to shop and eat during breaks.

There was a high amount of attendance from Drew University students, staff, alumni and even some prospective and admitted students who came from the Open House hosted by the Admissions department. The high attendance rate was due in part to the fact that That Medieval Thing has a very strong connection with their alumni who come back year after year to reconnect with friends and board members.

The script was also very accurate to the Arthurian myths and kept the audience constantly engaged. This was all thanks to the script writer Samantha DeFalco

('25) and historian Kevin Feinstein ('28), who worked together to craft an amazing script.

Overall, this year's Medfest was another great event in the books for That Medieval Thing, which continues to provide attendees with a magical and mystical escape from reality.



Katie Germinder is a sophomore majoring in Environmental Studies and Sustainability.

Academia in Action: Day of Scholars Defines the Power of Knowledge

Jodi Velez
Staff Writer

On April 25, dozens of teams from the Drew University Action Scholars program presented their year-long presentations, from environmental justice and first-generation college experiences to mental health awareness.

The Ehinger Center was transformed from every cor-

ner in The Space, Crawford Hall and the 1867 Lounge. Although known as the Town Hall by the Center of Civic Engagement, these first-year students merged with the Day of Scholars as they displayed their passion for spreading awareness to the community and campus.

Baldwin Honors and Specialized Honors upperclassmen shared their research from their fields

of study. Some presentations shown included topics from juror emotions on sentencing decisions to the scientific realm by studying the genetic mutations of Bacillus subtilis. Projects also addressed public health research, the troubled teen industry and social justice in the chemistry curriculum. This event was structured as an open house, with team posters, data visualizations

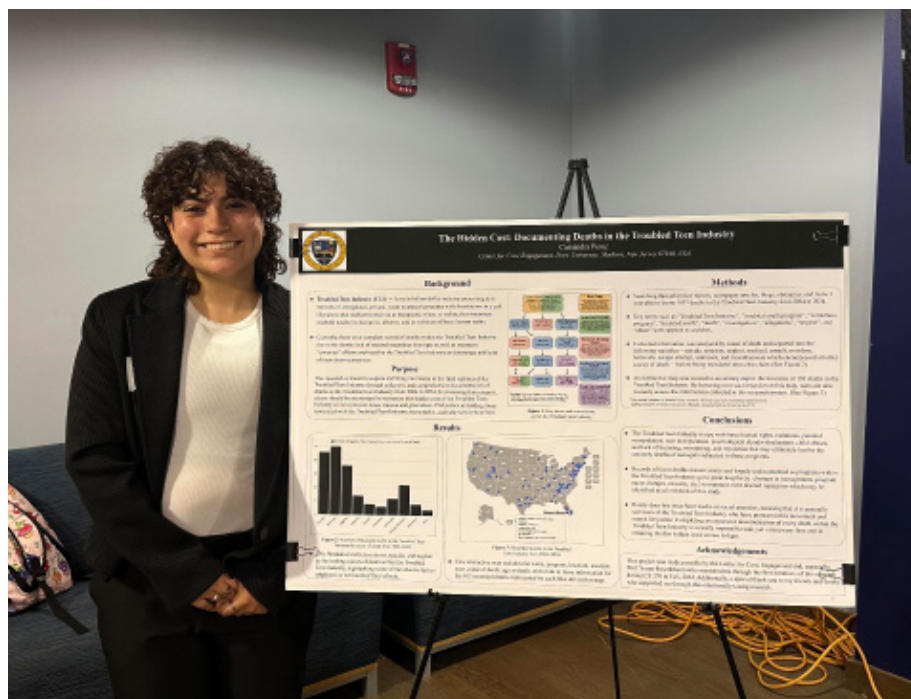
and mini-presentations.

For visitors, it was a chance to learn about the hard work and dedication their peers crafted. It inspires students preparing to complete a thesis or project to view how they could form their research. Whether addressing on-campus environmental concerns to federal government-based ones, the projects on display demonstrated how academic

work can serve as a resource for current and future students.



Jodi Velez is a sophomore majoring in Media & Communications and minoring in Marketing.



Clockwise from top left: Sierra Walker ('25), community members at the event, Cass Perez ('27) presenting, Center for Civic Engagement director Sean Hewitt welcomes.

IMAGES COURTESY OF JODI VELEZ

Acorn Senior Spotlights!: Sierra Walker, Robin Gindhart, Benjamin Castro and Ollie Arnold

Sabr Keres-Siddiqui
Assistant SLA Editor

Each year, The Acorn traditionally shines a spotlight on the graduating senior members of the editorial board. This year, our newspaper must unfortunately say farewell to four fabulous editors, and we invited them to share some of their experiences, thoughts and insights as they move forward from their time at Drew.

Sierra Walker

Sierra Walker ('25) is the editor-in-chief of the Acorn and is graduating with a double major in media & communications and marketing and a minor in Spanish. Walker plans to attend graduate school at Middle Tennessee State University in the fall as part of its Industrial-Organizational Psychology Master's Program.

What made you want to join the Acorn?

"I originally wanted to go into print journalism and news writing so the Acorn seemed like a natural step. Then, when I was thinking of joining at the beginning of my sophomore year, the previous news section editor, Lauren Reduzzi, asked if I wanted to be her assistant editor, so I jumped straight into the deep end and never looked back."

What's one of your favorite Acorn memories?

"My favorite Acorn memories were all of the late nights I would spend with other editors on publishing nights. After we would finish our InDesign and turned the PDF into the printer, we could take a breath and joke around."

Do you have a favorite editor?

"I could never answer a question like that—I love you all."

What are some of your plans for the future after grad school?

"After grad school, I hope to enter a career as a consultant IO psychologist, either as part of a IO psychology consulting firm or a more general consulting firm. Really, I just want to use the skills I learn to improve companies that need help."

Is there any advice you'd like to give to current Acorn members and future students?

"Focus on the good times, lean into the chaos and study AP style. Even when things are stressful, the Acorn is an amazing organization full of so many incredible people, so make sure you do not lose sight of that. On that note, a little bit of silliness is always fun, so lean into things even if you



The graduating seniors pose for a group photo.

IMAGE COURTESY OF SABR KERES-SIDDIQUI ('27)

are supposed to be working. Finally, remember all the AP style rules, your copy editors will thank you and myself and past editors will find you and hold you accountable if you slip up."

Robin Gindhart

Robin Gindhart ('25) is the Student Life & Arts editor at the Acorn, and is graduating with a major in English writing & communications and a minor in psychology. She joined the Acorn as a staff writer before becoming the Student Life & Arts editor.

What made you want to join the Acorn?

"I've always admired journalists and the consequential work that they do—partially thanks to Rory from "Gilmore Girls"—so I wanted to join the Acorn to begin to be a part of that. This began during my time at Sussex County Community College, where I earned my associate's degree and where I was part of The College Hill Newspaper, but it wasn't student-run like the Acorn and only included myself and one other student. This brought on a desire for a more immersive newspaper experience in order to discover whether I could really see myself as a journalist or not, so once I heard about the Acorn, joining was the obvious choice for me."

What's one of your favorite Acorn memories?

"I think one of my favourite memories from the Acorn was when Teddy, the previous SLA section editor, and I would come up with random and absurd titles just for the fun of it. Of course we couldn't publish articles like that, but man it would've been funny if we had. Honestly anything random Teddy did—which was very often—would just make me laugh, so shout out to him."

What's one of the things you've enjoyed most about editing for the SLA section at the Acorn?

"There's a lot to enjoy about being a section editor, although it's often tedious work, but one of the things I enjoyed the most was the chance to work with others in a more interactive and personal way. It was also always so satisfying to see the pages completed at the end of the night and it's rewarding to see how much better I've gotten with InDesign over time."

Is there any advice you'd like to give to current Acorn members and future students?

"Only do something if you truly want to. The great thing about college is that you get to call almost all of the shots, which can be a blessing and a curse, especially if you're as indecisive as I am. You should keep trying something out when it's new and you're still unsure, but if you keep feeling like you want to pull away or are struggling to enjoy it more often than not, then it's probably not meant for you."

Ben Castro

Ben Castro ('25) is the Assistant Opinions editor at the Acorn, and is graduating with a double major in marketing and business. He joined the Acorn as a contributing writer in 2023 before becoming a staff writer, LinkedIn and Path manager and then the Assistant Opinions editor. He is also involved in numerous clubs on campus, as well as Student Government and Admissions.

What made you want to join the Acorn?

"I originally joined The Acorn because I wanted to express my creativity and further expand my writing skills. It was a no-brainer as a student majoring in marketing, as it allowed me

to work with like-minded people and develop my skills in content creation and audience engagement."

What's one of your favorite Acorn memories?

"The night I became Assistant Opinions Editor. I have a lot of respect for our current editorial board, and I stepped up to the position so no one else had to stress out."

You're well-known at Drew for being involved in many different extracurriculars, and you can be seen almost everywhere on campus. How do you keep up with that many activities, and how do you dispel rumors that you have an army of clones?

"I stick to a set schedule that keeps me on track but still gives me room to jump into different activities when I can. I love to be involved, and I do wish I had an army of clones so I could be doing even more on campus."

Is there any advice you'd like to give to current Acorn members and future students?

"Have fun with your college experience. Get involved on campus, volunteer around the community, and be more outgoing with your fellow students. It makes you feel better and makes your entire college experience better."

Ollie Arnold

Ollie Arnold ('25) is the Copy Desk Chief at the Acorn, and is graduating with a major in mathematics and a minor in computer science. He joined the Acorn in Fall 2021, and is well-known for their frequent contributions to the Opinions section known as "Ollie's Opinions."

What made you want to join The Acorn?

"Near the beginning of my freshman year I got dragged to the club fair. The Acorn had a pretty notice-

able table, and among other positions, they were looking for copy editors. I thought it sounded like a good chance to be a grammar snob, so I went to the open house later that week."

What's one of your favorite Acorn memories?

"It's hard to narrow down my favorite memory, since I have so many of them. I think I'd have to say seeing my name on an in-print paper for the first time, because it felt like I was a part of something."

What do you enjoy the most about writing Ollie's Opinions?

"It may sound egotistical, but I really love hearing from people about how much they like the articles. The writing process is also really fun for me—I'm able to get pretty comedic with it, which is my favorite way to write."

Is there any advice you'd like to give to current and future Acorn members?

"My best advice is to try new things as much as possible. Even if it doesn't work out or you don't like it, you still tried something, and that's worth a lot."

The Acorn would like to thank all of its graduating members for their amazing work and incredible determination over the years. Without their unending dedication, our organization would not be what it is today, and we are extremely grateful to them for making the Acorn office a friendlier and more inclusive community than ever! We are incredibly proud of all that they've accomplished so far, and can't wait to see the new heights they reach in the future.

Sabr Keres-Siddiqui is a sophomore majoring in Political Science and minoring in Sociology and Journalism.

OPINIONS

SPEAK UP!

OPINIONS EDITOR: Katie Germinder | kgerminder@drew.edu

Submit a letter to the editor or contribute an opinion piece (500 WORDS APPROX). Email theacorn+opinions@drew.edu

9

Lead Ed: College Campuses vs. the Trump Administration

LEAD EDITORIAL

CONT FROM DREW'S PG 1

Many students are personally outraged by the interference as well. “Brazen slashes to vital programs like these do not just impact academia. These cuts are stopping cancer research in its tracks, undoing years and years of progress (both social and scientific) and most telling of all: crippling American education. I am relieved to see Drew and our community standing up so strongly for its freedoms, as it is undeniably clear that the current administration’s reckless actions are deliberately designed to poison the wells of our schools with dangerously authoritarian



President Donald Trump waving. tactics,” said Sabr Keres-Sidiqui (’27).

It is clear that Drew University is not letting the Trump Administration

halt any research that is being done at their institution no matter what it is. This is especially reassuring to hear since the Drew

Summer Science Institute will be starting up soon on June 2. Drew Summer Science Institute allows Drew students to work with fac-

ulty mentors on a research project full-time over the summer term. The projects these students work on are groundbreaking and inspire other students to take part in the program. If other programs such as these get defunded, it would be a huge blow to student morale and to the college and university research community as a whole. Drew must remain active against the Trump administration so that programs such as DSSI and other research projects can continue to thrive.



The Lead Editorial is the collective opinion of the editorial board.

A Letter from Ben: Thank You Drew University

 Benjamin Castro
 Assistan Opinion Editor

Two years ago, I made the decision to transfer to Drew University after completing two years at Union County College.

When I first began the transfer process in spring 2023, I didn’t expect to be involved at my next school. I assumed my time at Drew would mirror my community college experience: classes, work and little more.

I thought I would commute, attend class and leave. Quiet. Straightforward.

But that mindset shifted quickly after arriving at Drew.

After my tour with Emmily Bacca (C’24) and the incredible support I received from my admissions counselor, Sunita Bhargava (C’11, G’14), I fell in love with the campus environment. For the first time, I saw a community where I felt I could truly belong.

The only other school I seriously considered was Kean University, located back in my hometown. Looking back now, I have no doubt that Drew was the right choice.

I arrived at Drew with a mix of excitement and uncertainty, unsure of what my place would be in this new chapter. What I found was a university that welcomed me with open arms, and a version of myself I didn’t yet know existed.

Determined to make this experience different, I spent the summer before my first semester browsing Drew’s student engagement website, The Path, and sign-

ing up for every club that caught my interest. I promised myself I would commit to something more this time.

I hit the ground running that fall semester—first joining the Gaming Club, then getting involved with the Commuters Association. Before I knew it, I was staying on campus late almost every day, surrounded by fellow students, events and opportunities that made Drew feel like a second home.

Club life became a cornerstone of my experience and success here. From reviving the Anime Club to founding the Transfer Student Organization, I found joy in building spaces that brought people together.

Being involved wasn’t just about filling my schedule. It was about creating a campus culture where students like me felt seen, supported and celebrated.

Alongside my club work, I embraced on-campus employment opportunities. Whether giving tours to prospective students, welcoming admitted students at orientation or mentoring first-years in DREW 110, I found a deep sense of purpose in helping others find their place at Drew.

My internships with Gourmet Dining, Rainbow Secure and A Work of Heart Productions allowed me to apply classroom knowledge to real-world projects, especially in marketing—a field I’ve grown deeply passionate about.

Through civic engagement programs like Changemakers, I learned

how powerful service work can be. I completed volunteer hours with community partners, participated in reflection-based workshops and challenged myself to think bigger about my impact on others and the world around me.

At Drew, I learned how to lead—but more importantly, how to listen. I learned to advocate for first-generation students, commuters and transfers—communities whose stories are often left untold.

The more involved I became, the more I realized I wasn’t alone. There were others with similar journeys, and together, we built communities rooted in shared experiences and mutual support.

Building a network here never felt like networking. It felt like a connection—like reaching out and finding people who wanted to grow alongside you.

Faculty and staff saw more in me than I saw in myself. Their encouragement and mentorship helped me develop my voice, my vision and my confidence.

Classmates became colleagues. Colleagues became close friends. And every project, every meeting and every late-night editing session added to a chapter I’ll always carry with me.

This campus gave me more than just an education. It gave me a home I never expected to find, and a version of myself I didn’t know I was capable of becoming.

To every person who opened a door, offered support or believed in me—thank you. Your kindness

shaped my journey more than you know.

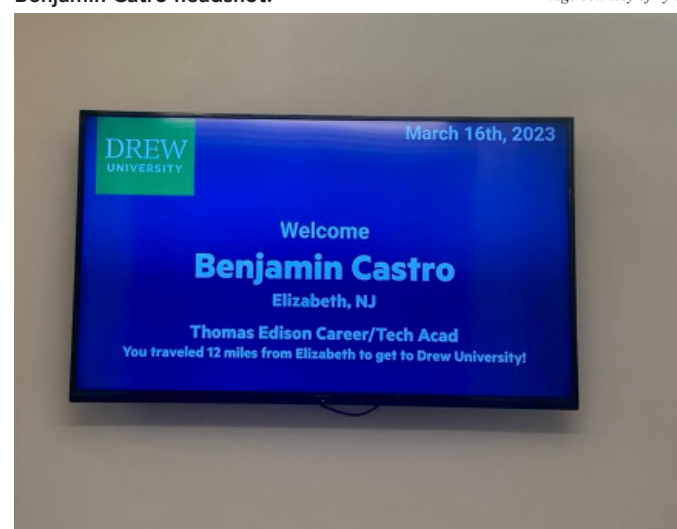
Thank you, Drew University, for showing me what’s possible when you say yes to growth. Thank you for the friendships, the challenges, the memories and the Forest I now proudly call home.

Benjamin Castro is a senior double majoring in marketing and business.



Benjamin Castro headshot.

Image courtesy of Lynne DeLade



TV display before first tour of Drew.

Image courtesy of Benjamin Castro

A Letter from Sierra: Parting Words from the Editor-in-Chief

Sierra Walker
Editor in Chief

As my time as an undergraduate student is coming to a close, I am naturally thinking back on everything I have done and my ears are ringing from all the questions about my experiences in college. I wish I had some incredibly unique and helpful advice I could offer everyone else entering or continuing their undergraduate education, but I can only say this: take advantage of your time in college and of everything it has to offer.

Anyone who knows me would tell you that I am constantly busy—perhaps more busy than I should be—but looking back on my time at Drew, I can say that it has helped me professionally. But, even more importantly, I can not think of a single thing I wanted to do in college that I did not do.

While I was involved in clubs and activities in high school, I wanted to push myself further in college—and I am so thankful that I did. As of writing this, I am exiting my position as editor-in-chief of the Acorn and have already left behind my position as News Section Editor and as Vice President of the Bookworms, Drew's book club. These positions connected me to Drew's community and forced me out of my comfort zone in so many ways.

I can confidently say that by getting engaged in different aspects of on-campus student life, I grew as a leader, communicator and person in ways I did not



Sierra Walker headshot

Image courtesy of Lynne DeLade

think possible. By taking this time to jump into new things and being willing to fail before I succeeded, I became the best version of myself.

These experiences led me to gaining so much practical knowledge and experience and also making amazing friendships and connections along the way. Through what now seem like butterfly effects—saying yes to something small like lunch after class and so many things snowballing until I found myself in absurd scenarios—I have made incredible friendships with people that I would have never met without what now feels like a little bit of divine intervention.

At the same time I was trying new things outside of school, I pushed myself as far as I could academically. I chose to double major in marketing and media and communications and picked up a minor in Spanish along the way. Even though this meant that during most semesters I had to take five classes, I'm so happy I chose this path.

While I took classes that covered a broad spectrum of topics and spanned across many departments,

I feel as though I took advantage of perhaps the only time I will have unfettered access to so many knowledgeable professors.

Even more so, I let those professors guide me throughout my time here. Using my time in college as a time to explore fields and classes, I learned what I liked and what I definitely did not, so I could graduate with a set career plan—even though it was completely different than what I thought it would be.

In maybe the craziest example of taking advantage of the resources available to me in college, I switched my career path in my last months of junior year. While that part is not all that crazy, since college is the time to test the waters and people change career paths all the time, I took it a step further. I decided to switch career paths over the course of eight hours.

Looking back, this was a decision I had made little by little over the course of years, but in the moment, it felt sudden and scary, and I have never been so happy that I spent all of college preparing for scary moments, so I could make the right decision that day.

A little context for the people who do not know me: ever since middle school I knew I wanted to write for print news. I looked at colleges with great communications programs, took every journalism course at Drew and by my junior year, I was working for local newspapers and training for my current role at the Acorn.

Then I took a class in organizational ethics, and piece by piece my career path, which already felt so set in stone, started fracturing as I found another passion within a niche field of psychology. So by the time Professor Alexander de Voogt offhand asked which graduate schools I was planning to apply to, my decision was already made, even though I did not know it yet. Over the next eight hours—and many calls with my father, who has changed careers and industries at least five times that I know of—I decided to change what I wanted to do with my life.

Now, a year later, I am so happy with the decision I made. I am attending the top graduate school for industrial-organizational psychology, my honors thesis in the field was just passed without revisions and I've been recognized through so many awards here at Drew. Despite changing everything, I am in an amazing place right now. Even if I did not change anything, I would have been in a comparable position in another career, as I already turned down a full-time job in news writing.

But none of this would have been possible if I had not expanded my horizons

and took advantage of the opportunities around me. Without taking classes in other departments, I would have never found the field I am now entering and, without taking advantage of so many opportunities in and out of the classroom, I never would have gotten experience in both psychology and journalism.

So, learn from me, and use this time to try the things you have always wanted to do. Go to that club meeting or take a class in an unrelated subject or even just try a chocolate milkshake instead of vanilla—just do it all while you can, before things get too serious and professional.

This is not to say you should say yes to everything and do more than you can handle, but I think you should push yourself out of your comfort zone. This is your time to try new things, to exit the nest and dare to fly, because right now is one of the last times in life that someone will be down below to catch you if you fall.

So go for it, take advantage of every opportunity and resource around you, meet new people and try things you have always wanted to. Use this time to learn to fly, so that when graduation comes you can soar to new heights.



Sierra Walker is a senior double majoring in marketing and media and communications, minoring in Spanish.

Hello! It's a Play About Two White Dudes in Africa

Allison Cannon
Assistant News Editor

Written by the creators of the television series *South Park*, "The Book of Mormon" is a musical satire in which two Mormon missionaries are sent to Uganda, Africa, to take on the most challenging location in Mormon history.

If the dangerous animals don't kill you then the AIDS, or crazy war generals, will.

This musical has a classic hero's journey story arc.

The main characters, Elder Price and Elder Cunningham, are brought to a world seemingly different from their own; a faithless village that even has their own word to curse God whenever anything remotely bad happens.

When faced with a difficult challenge, as one does



Image of the Book of Mormon stage when in Uganda, Elder Price does what any great prophet hero does, and runs away.

This musical is hilarious and is a great introduction to Broadway musicals. As a newbie to the musical theater scene I was intimidated by the premise, but the small Eugene O'Neill Theatre was inviting and a great home for "The Book of Mormon."

The sets were well made for a small theater, while still having on-stage props the theater also had

large frames around the stage. The frames were interchangeable and were a great use of their small space.

I quite enjoyed the exaggerated set of Uganda. The set consisted of the small village that the missionaries resided in, which included small huts made of mud and various animal bones and bamboo stairs.

This set is so clearly juxtaposed with the rest of the play. The majority of the play takes place in the Uganda set, however as the

play goes on you get used to the background and it starts to melt away. When the scene is changed it is either to a lighter and cleaner looking scene, which portrays the main character's journey into a different world.

I think this production was done exceptionally well. The details that you don't notice at first seem to pop up every time the scene changes and gives the viewer a new experience.

If you don't like well placed gay jokes, then "The Book of Mormon" probably isn't for you.

The characters were fun and I quite enjoyed Elder McKinley, played by PJ Adzima, who was the leader of the Mormon missionaries in Uganda. Elder McKinley is a closeted gay man who makes sly references throughout the whole play about being gay but

then contradicts himself in the song "Turn it Off" where he sings about crushing the box of gay thoughts in his mind.

Many of the side characters only had a few minutes of talking time while on stage, but it was never boring.

All of the characters were well developed and were full of personality and it added to the viewing experience.

There is never a dull moment during this show.



Allison Cannon is a first year student who is exploring their major, but is minoring in Spanish and law, justice and society.

Ollie's Opinions: Everything is Still Awful, But I'm Glad We're All Here

Ollie Arnold
Copy Desk Chief

My Thursday nights are about to become a lot more boring. I have been a member of The Acorn since my very first semester of college in 2021. This makes me the longest-running staff member we currently have. I am the only one left from the days when our office was in the back of the Ehinger Center, when we had almost no one on the editorial board and even fewer writers. Writers barely ever entered the office—they were recruited by section editors over email. My job as copyeditor was simple—go in, copyedit every article (the copyediting team consisted of the copy desk chief and me) and leave.

That period of The Acorn was a lot less community-focused, but I had never felt more welcomed despite this. That group was my first club at Drew, and most importantly, they were the people who fostered this column. In February 2022, I was asked to write a quick opinion piece to pad the opinions section, and when it went over well, I continued it as a regular feature. (While this level of production has become impossible as an upperclassman, I used to churn out an article every single week.) Nicole Sydor (C'24, G'26), our opinions editor at the time, was the one who suggested I do a regular column and named it Ollie's Opinions. It is in large part due to her



Image courtesy of SabrKeres-Siddiqu

Ollie Arnold lounging in the Acorn office

that this has been a part of my life for more than three years, and for that I can never thank her enough.

I thought that since this is my final opinions article, it should encompass everything I have ever had strong feelings about—and what better way to do that than to review everything I've ever had an opinion about in this column? So today I present you with Ollie's Opinions: Everything.

My very first article, published Feb. 22, 2022, was about the candy Circus Peanuts. That opinion was completely correct—as I said, “They look like toes.” Other food opinions that I have had include American cheese (still disturbing), cottage cheese (still looks like “some sort of wound secretion”), seltzer (still infuriating), soup (still too surprising) and trail mix (still “M&Ms with obstacles”). I'm beginning to suspect I just don't like food.

One of my most covered subjects is Drew Uni-

versity itself. The Commons has the dubious honor of starring in three articles. The first, written in March 2022, was inspired by the Commons starting to play music. They have not taken my advice to put the music in the trash, and for that I will never forgive them. Another issue that came up was students leaving dirty dishes and trash at tables, a problem that I have thankfully seen much less of recently. I've also had a much easier time finding spoons, so either they listened to me and bought more or people stopped eating them.

Another subject on campus I still feel strongly about is smoking. While smoking may seem like a personal decision, doing it in shared areas makes a choice for anyone else who spends time there. While this may make me “not cool,” I just don't think it's fair to give me lung cancer against my will. Other harmful activities on campus include, as the weather

gets warmer, the onslaught of speeding cyclists. Drew is still a “lawless wasteland” when it comes to any bike regulations, so I warn you all to be on the lookout. And while chalkboards may not seem harmful, my ears beg to differ. The main reason I'm excited about graduation is that I will finally escape the “terrible shrieking sounds” and “giant dust smears on my pants.”

One of my most recent articles, while it is not Drew-focused, does reference a problem found all over campus. The ability to pee whenever I want is one that may never be solved, especially under a presidential administration whose main goal is for me to disappear entirely. (Don't worry, I'm not a criminal, just trans. Although those are sort of becoming synonymous.)

My other articles are largely unrelated to each other. By far my most popular article covers my hatred of horses. This article spread as far as a marine biology student in Australia, who emailed me about how much she and her friends enjoyed it. I guess horses can't be all bad if they can transcend the boundaries of continents. I have covered one other animal—the humble anteater. After learning about these noble creatures, I have come to realize that we have more in common than I thought, and I am proud to call anteaters my friends. Actually, while some may object to this categorization, I'll also put babies in the animals

category. As I said in the past, “babies cause global warming,” and I will not be argued with on that point.

This is getting very long, so here's a fast overview of my remaining articles: chartreuse is still the color of the devil. Monopoly is still “about as thrilling as watching a TV that isn't on.” The English language is still a necessary evil with too many vowels. Airplanes are still sinister and evil creatures. Turtlenecks are still “strangulation death traps.” Clutch handbags are still super dumb. The beach is still hell on Earth. Massachusetts is still the best state of all time and I will never admit otherwise. And bassoons, while still looking very silly, are something I've honestly come to appreciate.

My opinion on The Drew Acorn has, of course, not changed. This is a place that I am proud to have spent my entire college experience. While everyone I mentioned in the original article has graduated, the sentiment remains the same. As I said at the end of the article, “We're inevitable.” The Acorn will be around forever, whether or not it actually exists, because I will always be carrying it around in my brain. To my fellow staff—you'll do great. Just keep on doing what you're doing and we'll stay a success. And I can condone that kind of behavior.

Ollie Arnold is a senior majoring in mathematics and double minoring in computer science.

Gun Laws and Regulations in the US Need to Change

Katie Germinder
Opinion Section Editor

On April 17, 2025, a tragedy struck the Florida State University campus, one that unfortunately is not a new occurrence in the United States. Since 1999, there have been over 420 school shootings in the United States and a great sum of those shootings happened during the 2021-22 school year. All of this violence and death needs to come to an end immediately. I refuse to be afraid of getting an education. The government needs to make gun laws stricter.

I am incredibly upset that I am growing up in a generation where teenagers and young adults fear being shot to death while trying to get an education. I have been in several lockdowns in the past few years and have genuinely thought, “This is it. This is real and I am going to die.” I cannot

stand that fear and general anxiety anymore and no one should have to experience that.

Gun laws need to be a lot stricter than they currently are. No one should be allowed to purchase any semi automatic weapons, since they will only be used to hurt someone and even kill them. In a majority of the school shootings that have occurred since 1999, the shooter(s) have used an automatic rifle to attack the schools. No military grade weapon such as this should be owned by a normal person. There should also be laws that require people to get a thorough background and mental health check before purchasing a gun. If a person has a known history of online threats or violent behavior, they should not ever be allowed to own a gun.

I do realize that some of the shooters have also obtained guns that are owned by other people living in

their household. If someone owns a handgun for self defense or a hunting rifle, it should be locked away somewhere where only the owner knows where it is and how to access it. I am frankly troubled that someone would own a gun if they also knew that someone else they lived with was not exactly the most stable.

Overall, I am sick and tired of being scared. I am tired of politicians prioritizing guns over kids, educators and school staff members. We should not be afraid to learn and work.



Katie Germinder is a sophomore majoring in environmental science and sustainability.



Image of a standard classroom.

IMAGE COURTESY OF PEXELS.COM

12 DIVERSIONS

HAVE IDEAS?

Submit your art, photography and more by emailing theacorn@drew.edu or visit join the Acorn by visiting thedrewacorn.com/join

Try This Fun End of Semester Word Search: Caps Off to You!

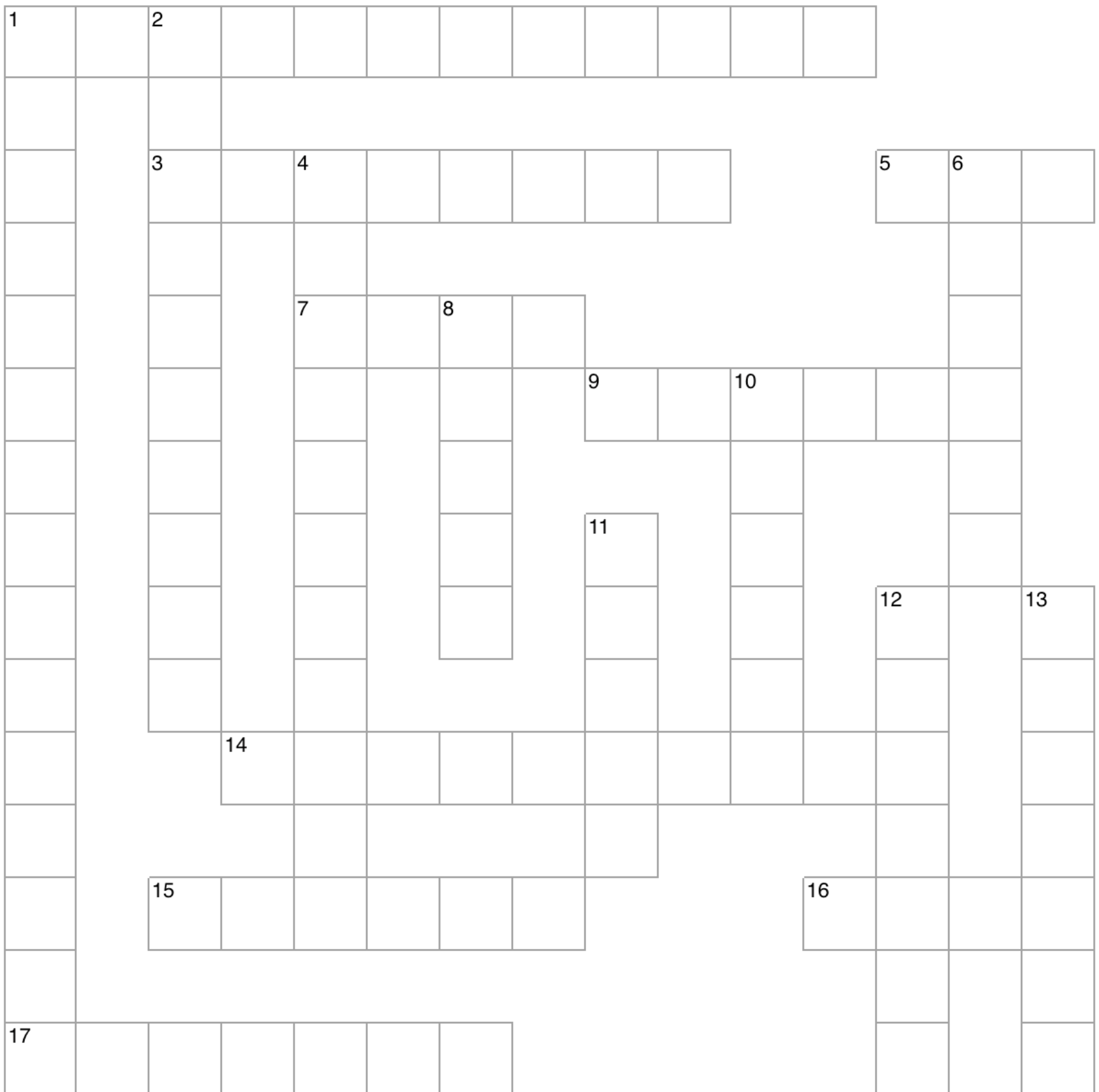
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 FUTURE

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 GRADUATE
 HONORS
 KNOWLEDGE
 LEARNING
 PROFESSOR
 SPEECH
 STUDENT
 SUCCESS
 TASSEL
 UNIVERSITY



Try This Commencement Crossword: Congrats Seniors!



ACROSS

- 1 Graduation ceremony
- 3 Mentors who guide students to graduation
- 5 Headwear traditionally worn at graduation
- 7 Positive outlook for the graduate's future
- 9 What graduates gain through education
- 14 Potential role for graduates in the future
- 15 What graduates look forward to
- 16 Ceremonial robe worn by graduates
- 17 Goal for graduates in their future endeavors

DOWN

- 1 Words of praise for the graduate
- 2 Drive to achieve goals after graduation
- 4 Graduation represents a significant one
- 6 Graduates of a school or college
- 8 Feeling experienced by family at graduation
- 10 Address given by a graduate or guest
- 11 Emotional reaction at graduation
- 12 Official document received at graduation
- 13 Companions who share the graduation experience

Want to Play Online?



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Drew Acorn

All the cool kids are
doing it*

*By "doing it" we mean practicing journalistic integrity
while wearing some sweet merch

Getting to Know Our Rangers On and Off the Field: Men's Tennis' Devan Sutaria

Gillian Sampson

Assistant Sports Section Editor

As the semester winds down, it's the perfect time to shine a spotlight on one of The Acorn's own: Devan Sutaria ('26).

Sutaria embodies what it means to be a student-athlete with his dedication, drive and perseverance. Whether on the tennis court, in The Acorn office or through his involvement in campus organizations, he demonstrates a commitment to excellence that inspires those around him.

As the current Sports section editor for The Acorn, Sutaria has played an instrumental role in expanding coverage of Drew Athletics. His passion for athletics is displayed through his dedication to making athletics accessible to all members of the Drew community.

Sutaria's own athletic journey at Drew is a story of resilience and adaptability. Originally a pitcher for the baseball team, he faced a major setback when an elbow injury caused him to have to reconsider his athletic future.

Refusing to let adversity define him, Sutaria pivoted with determination.

Men's and Women's Tennis Senior Days

Casey Bush

Contributing Writer

The Drew University men's tennis team held its Senior Day on April 18, where they faced The College of New Jersey. This event was the team's last regular-season home match, which resulted in a final score of 7-0 for TCNJ.

Despite the loss, the team celebrated their three seniors, Josh Kline ('25), Sergey Kravenchko ('25) and Owen Reynolds ('25) with a ceremony before the match. The seniors gave it their all at this match, and they still have a few chances to cap off their careers in the upcoming matches.

The team continued their match with Susquehanna University on April 25, resulting in a 4-3 win thanks to Kline clinching the match at 5th singles. Kline was awarded Landmark Conference Player of the Week for his timely victory. The team advanced to the first round of the Landmark Conference Championships, which took place on April 29, resulting in a dominating sweep of the Juniata Eagles.

No matter the outcome of the Senior Day match, the Rangers had an overall successful season with a positive record of 11-8, and still have a chance to etch their names into Drew



IMAGE COURTESY OF BASIM HORSHAW ('25)

Sutaria ('26) poses for baseball team's media day.

After spending a summer playing tennis recreationally, he sharpened his skills and earned a spot on Drew's men's tennis roster.

This transition not only illustrates his athletic versatility but also his unwavering commitment to staying active within the Drew sports community. When asked about his most memorable moments as a Ranger, he discussed being part of the historic baseball team that broke Drew's existing win streak record and this year's tennis team that successfully made the playoffs.

Beyond athletics, Sutaria's list of accomplishments is extensive as a Baldwin Honors Scholar, pursuing a degree in biochemistry and molecular biology with a minor in business.

Notably, his academic journey has been shaped by standout courses like Biochemistry and Cell and Molecular Biology—classes he credits for sparking his passion for science and confirming his commitment to a future career in medicine.

His professional development speaks volumes as

well: Sutaria has worked as a medical scribe at a local hospital, participated twice in Drew's Summer Science Institute and completed the Overlook Summer Internship Program, where he shadowed a different physician specialty every day for a month, all while being an athlete and maintaining Dean's list.

Moreover, his leadership extends globally. Sutaria holds a leadership role in Drew's chapter of the Global Medical Brigades, with whom he has successfully organized two medical trips to Panama, raising over \$50,000 and delivering care to more than 200 patients. He plans to return in the next month. The leadership skills he has gained from athletics, the passion for the sciences and his kind personality converge to make these trips successful and impactful in the Drew community.

When reflecting on the most valuable lessons learned from being a student-athlete, Sutaria highlights more than just time management. Sutaria said, "I think the greatest value of being a student-athlete is learning how to balance two sectors of my life that I am extremely passionate about, and channel that

passion into the right place at the right time. Learning that mindset through sports and education helped me grow in each." This skill has fueled his successes not only on campus but also in research, service and leadership.

Through it all, Sutaria's gratitude for the Drew community shines through. "I am so thankful for the community at Drew that is always working to support and uplift those around them," he shared.

His drive to succeed in all facets of his Drew experience makes Sutaria a true example of what it means to be a Ranger. Through hard work, resilience and an unwavering commitment to excellence, Devan Sutaria stands as a leader, role model and a shining example of the very best Drew University has to offer.



Gillian Sampson is a graduate student in the Masters of Education program.

HIGHLIGHT REEL

APRIL 19 TO MAY 2

LANDMARK CONFERENCE AWARDS

Men's Tennis Athlete of the Week • April 29 • MTEN • Josh Kline ('25)
Landmark Conference Offensive Athlete of the Week • MLAX • Jake Rainero ('27)

Landmark Conference Men's Golf Athlete of the Week • MGOLF • Elliot Parker ('26)

ATHLETE MILESTONES

MLAX • Tommy Larmore 100 Career Points

SOFT • Olivia Magliacano 100 Career Hits

RECORD ALERTS

WTF • Landmark Conference Outdoor Record • Emily Camlet ('26)
WTF • Landmark Outdoor Record Long Jump • Sage Hendershot ('26)

Have an athlete you want to highlight? Submit their name, class year and accomplishment by emailing sports.theacorn@drew.edu or visiting thedrewacorn.com/submit-a-tip

Casey Bush is a freshman exploring potential majors.

COMING UP

Get live stats @GoDrewRangers on X

SATURDAY, MAY 3
MTEN vs GOUCHER
South Williamsport, PA
10:30 AM

SATURDAY MAY 3
WTF LANDMARK CONF
Championships
Selinsgrove, PA
11:00 a.m

SUNDAY, MAY 4
BB vs CATHOLIC
Madison, NJ
10:30 AM

SPORTS

SPORTS EDITOR: DEVAN SUTARIA | dsutaria@drew.edu
ASSISTANT SECTION EDITOR: GILLIAN SAMPSON | gsampson@drew.

INSIDE:

Student-Athlete Spotlight: The Acorn's Own Devan Sutaria

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Getting to Know Our Rangers On and Off the Field: Women's Fencer Eva Esqueda

Benjamin Castro

Assistant Opinions Section Editor

As the academic year winds down, we're wrapping up one of the final installments of our Ranger Spotlight series.

It's only fitting that we close out the year by highlighting one of The Acorn's own: Eva Esqueda ('26), a standout student-athlete whose impact on campus spans from the fencing strip to the newsroom.

Drew's student-athletes are known for their ability to balance competition, academics and leadership; few exemplify that better than Esqueda, an extraordinary and dedicated member of the fencing team and one of The Acorn's rising editors.

Currently serving as the managing editor and news editor, Esqueda is set to become the Acorn's next editor-in-chief beginning next semester. With a sharp mind for news writing and an equally sharp sabre, she brings passion and poise to every role she steps into.

A media and communications major with minors in French, film and American studies, Esqueda's campus involvement is as impressive as her fencing record.

She currently serves as a community advisor for Baldwin Hall, a second-year Action Scholar, a Baldwin Honors student and a creative voice on Drew's WMNJ The Forest radio station through podcasts such as "Playlist of Our Lives" and "The Threevengers." She previously served as the social media manager for L'Association Francophone, the French Club.

Her fencing journey has shaped much of her college experience. Esqueda began fencing foil in seventh grade, but during high school she pivoted to varsity golf after taking a break from fencing due to the pandemic. Once at Drew, she was determined to return to the sport—this time as a sabre.

"I love sabre and the squad that I'm on. Although I'm not that experienced of a fencer and have only been doing sabre for two years, I have qualified for Regionals twice!" said Esqueda.



IMAGE COURTESY OF ELYSA JORDAN ('25)

Eva Esqueda ('26) setting up for a bout with help from Logan Kleva ('26).

She is set to serve as a team captain on the fencing team next year, a reflection of her commitment and leadership.

One of her favorite memories as a Ranger came this January, when the fencing team traveled to Greece.

"I not only got to try so many good foods and explore plenty of historical and cultural sites, but I was also able to form closer bonds with my teammates," said Esqueda. "Plus, we got to meet and fence with some locals! It was definitely a one-of-a-kind experience."

Her academic and professional milestones are equally noteworthy. The summer before her New York Semester on Media and Communications, Esqueda interned with Warner Bros. Animation, where she worked in creative affairs reviewing scripts, pitching stories and sitting in on production meetings.

"I loved going into such a bustling city that's the hub for so many industries and having the opportunity to speak to professionals who work in the fields I hope to go into," said Esqueda.

Esqueda will return to Warner Bros. this summer to intern with the DC Comics Animation and Audio team.

Among her many courses at Drew, one that stood out was History of Rock and Roll with Professor Carter.

"Carter's teaching style is phenomenal, and he really knows how to make the already exciting subject material even more enjoyable. I loved getting to listen to some of my favorite songs and discover in what context they were produced," said Esqueda.

She credits her student-athlete experience with helping her grow in unexpected ways.

"I think being a student-athlete has helped me gain the obvious skills: time management, confidence, leadership capabilities. But as someone who is extremely introverted, I'm really happy that I've been able to find a team of people who also double as my friends," said Esqueda. "It's nice to know that we all support each other and can look out for one another."

With plans to write an honors thesis next year and graduate a year ahead of schedule in spring 2026, Esqueda continues to lead by example—whether she's editing headlines, studying scripts or preparing for her next bout.

As she steps into her role as both a captain on the fencing team and editor-in-chief, there's no doubt she will continue to leave a lasting legacy on Drew's campus.

If you would like to nominate another student-athlete to be featured in next semester's issues, please send their name to theacorn+sports@drew.edu.



Benjamin Castro is a senior double majoring in marketing and business.

Thank you for reading and recycling The Drew Acorn

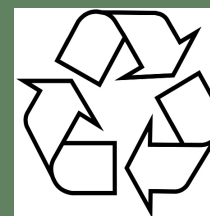


IMAGE COURTESY OF ANDREW ZLOTNICK

Eva Esqueda ('26) poses for media day photo.