

KEY

magazine



[BGAB] Alternative Breaks

PAGE 8

ATHLETE PROFILES
Q&A with Falcon
athletes | 19

JUST SAY KNOW
SSDP works to
change perception
of drugs | 16

TAKING FLIGHT
BGSU Flight Center
soars to new
heights | 4

BGSU®

Table of **CONTENTS**

4

TAKING FLIGHT
Elizabeth Gemmer



14

RIDGE PARK
Holly Shively

6

BLACK LIVES MATTER
Chelsea Schroeder



16

JUST SAY KNOW
Audrey Quinn

8

ALTERNATIVE BREAKS
Hannah Finnerty



19

ATHLETE CONNECTION
Lily Bartell

10

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT
Cherise Thomas



26

COMING TO TERMS
Sam Sharp

12

MENTORING
Elena Lancioni



Letter from **THE EDITOR**

Dear Readers,

It's winter time once again in Bowling Green, and the drop in temperature come with lots of fun things to do. Gone are the football games but here to stay is hockey! And let's not take for granted a hot cup of coffee after a long day of trekking to classes .

As we begin spring semester, it's important to keep in mind what makes BGSU and the town of Bowling Green great. I encourage you all to check off some of those items on the BG Bucket List. I know I'll be running through the fountain with friends once spring hits!

I want to thank my staff for all their hard work this semester in helping put together this great issue for you all. We had lots of fun putting it together and I hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed making it!

For those of you that are reading Key for the first time, I want to thank you for picking up this issue and encourage your feedback. Email me at ayquinn@bgsu.edu if you have any comments.

Sincerely,

Audrey Quinn
Editor-In-Chief

KEY MAGAZINE

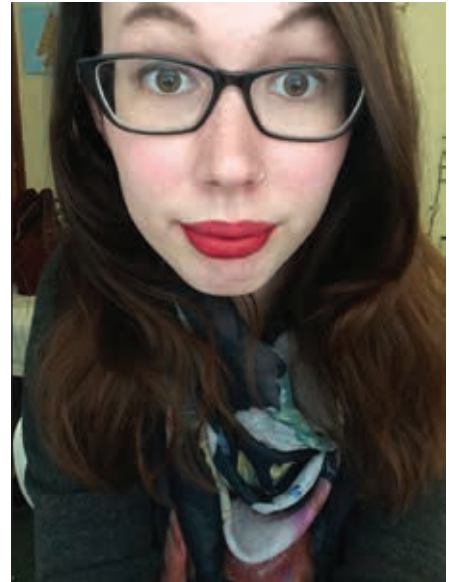
Key Magazine is published by the Office of Student Media at Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, 43403. It is distributed at locations throughout campus and at select locations in the surrounding community of Bowling Green.

Student editorial offices are located in 28 West Hall, and any questions related to content may be directed to student editor Audrey Quinn at ayquinn@bgsu.edu or by calling 330-814-4679.

Questions related to advertising in Key Magazine may be directed to Assistant Director of Student Media Tonya Whitman at twhitma@bgsu.edu or by calling 419-372-2606.

Key Magazine is published two times per academic year at Bowling Green State University, once in the fall and once in the spring.

Student Media, School of Media and Communication



EDITOR
Audrey Quinn

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Lily Bartell

WRITERS
Lily Bartell
Hannah Finnerty
Elizabeth Gemmer
Elena Lancioni
Audrey Quinn
Sam Sharp
Cherise Thomas
Holly Shively
Chelsea Schroeder

COPY EDITORS
Lily Bartell
Audrey Quinn
Chelsea Schroeder
Hannah Finnerty

PHOTOGRAPHERS
Lily Bartell
Departmental Images
Google Images

DESIGNERS
Ashley Armstrong
Alyssa Batch
Autumn Newman
Paul Obringer

Talking

BGSU's Flight Center has the University and students soaring to new heights!

.....

Students can pursue:
Flight Technologies
and Operations,
Aviation Engineering
Technology, and
Aviation Management
and Operations.

By Elizabeth Gemmer

A new building graces the campus of Bowling Green State University. It is not a new place to eat, or yet another place to gather. It is the new Flight Center. A 17,000-square foot building, it includes a hangar to park the six planes owned by the University, three classrooms named Alpha, Bravo and Charlie, a new simulator, a break room and offices for both the staff and the flight instructors.

The new Flight Center, one of only two in the nation located on a campus, opened in May of 2015, with this being the first semester that classes are being held there. The University had been administering the flight programs since 1978, and in January of 2015 North Star Aviation, a private company based in Minnesota, took over the flight program from the University. Thus the new building began to be planned and ground was broken.

The building that is now the Tech Annex housed the Flight Center from 1978 until 2014. The building was originally built in

1942 and used to train pilots to fight in World War II. After that, it was shut down for a period of time. Then in 1978 the University took it over to house their flight program. It would be convenient for both faculty members and students and they could still share runways with the Wood County Airport.

Some students say that they came to the University wanting to be part of the flight program here. Others happen to stumble on it after getting to the University.

North Star Aviation now maintains six planes at the flight center and has three specialties that students can pursue: Flight Technologies and Operations, Aviation Engineering Technology, and Aviation Management and Operations.

Flight Technologies and Operations allows students to become professional pilots after they graduate. Students will earn a Bachelor of Science in Technology as they learn how planes work and they will also be able to earn their single and multi-engine commercial pilot certificates and their instrument rating after completing ground school. Students will fly about three days per week and attend ground school the other two. Freshmen have the opportunity to be up in a plane flying their first week on campus. After they receive their certificates and ratings, students also have the opportunity to become flight instructors where they can help the students learn to fly and also get the hours that they need to advance their own careers.

Flight

.....

Most students say that the programs are difficult and require a lot of work and study time, but that it is a whole lot of fun as well, and that the end result is very rewarding and satisfying.

Aviation Engineering Technology (AET) is a rather new program. It allows students to focus more on the technological aspect of the industry. It prepares them to go into careers in aerospace, aircraft manufacturing and many others and to work with companies such as Boeing and the FAA.

It was suggested to the staff at the flight center that there was a need for students trained in this type of support field. The flight center rose to the challenge and in 2011, created the Aviation Engineering Technology specialty.

Aviation Management and Operations allows students to focus more on the business side of the industry. It prepares them for careers as airport, aviation and fixed-base operation managers.

While students in the flight center are not involved with the military during their years in college and are not obligated to join after graduation, some choose to. Students can either go into the ROTC or they can simply enlist after graduation. The flight center also welcomes non-traditional students, some even coming in from places like the military or the workforce with some flight time.

With a total of 130 students, 5 faculty, 10 flight instructors, 4 staff members and 4 flight support members, the program is big enough to be able to offer students plenty of opportunities to grow in their field.

Students also have the option to be involved in the Falcon Flight Team and Alpha Eta Rho. Falcon Flight Team is an extra curricular activity that allows students to

practice their flight skills and compete in various events, Alpha Eta Rho is a co-ed fraternity that is open to aviation majors and minors.

In addition to the new facilities, the Flight Center is now home to a new simulator. The Redbird FMX full-motion simulator allows students to practice flying in certain conditions and get the feel of the plane before they take flight.

Most students say that the programs are difficult and require a lot of work and study time, but that it is a whole lot of fun as well, and that the end result is very rewarding and satisfying. The Bowling Green Flight Center is an asset to the University, it gives students the opportunity to gain valuable skills and the training they need to be successful in competitive job markets. The program also provides them with a home away from home, where fellow students and staff feel just like family. ■



Scan this QR code to see the flight center's video!



BLACK LIVES MATTER

By Chelsea Schroeder



On-Campus: Racial

“I feel like African Americans as a whole are generalized and put into this box as if we are all the same, and then looked at in a negative persona.”

— Jeremy Cook
Student

The nation is on fire as “Black Lives Matter” strikes across all areas of the country in a fierce rebellion. The movement, a stand against racist police brutality, has grown so large that it has brought change and insight from many across the globe, specifically affecting student life on the University’s campus.

Since the movement has gotten national attention among American citizens, students at the University have discussed the discrimination and inequality those of color face in their everyday lives, and openly discuss the problems that are faced by African Americans on campus.

“I feel like African Americans as a whole are generalized and put into this box as if we are all the same, and then looked at in a negative persona,” said student Jeremy Cook, who works in the Office of Multicultural Affairs. “I feel like sometimes you have to walk around with this conscious mind that you could always be a possible target.”

“Black Lives Matter” began in the summer of 2013 after African American teen Trayvon Martin was shot and killed, and continued to grow after being fueled

by many other injustice acts against people of color that followed the shooting. The movement was officially started by Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi.

It’s not just students who sometimes discriminate on campus, Cook said, but by authorities as well. “I think that being black on a predominately white institution (PWI), things can be unfair, or just life in general. I feel like I’ve gotten harassed by cops a lot, mostly the city police.”

Race is often recognized as a constant divider in society, but student Na’tia Mells sees the University as having a more diverse appeal, the problems lying in silent prejudice rather than a loud protest.

“BG as a whole has great diversity, and race is not a specific problem,” Mells said, “but the black community on college campuses are underrepresented compared to the white community. I don’t have a prejudice feeling towards white people, but I feel like theres a big block between the white and black community and they don’t really intermingle.”

Students of color put on many different rallies, marches and awareness events on campus. Kaylyn Collier is the president



Timeline of Events

- Shooting of Trayvon Martin (2012)
- Not in Our Town starts (2013)
- **FERGUSON**
Shooting of Michael Brown
- Acquittal of Darren Wilson
- **BALTIMORE**
Death of Freddie Gray

Awareness

of the Black Student Union and lives and breathes the effects of the movement everyday.

Collier strongly believes that people on campus should “indulge themselves in different cultures and ethnicities.”

“I think that people that are not of color on this campus should definitely come out to events that are not filled with rooms of people that look like them,” she said.

“Black Lives Matter” started as a movement for African Americans, but has evolved to include people from all different ethnicities and backgrounds, especially in the last year.

Christina Rodriguez, a student working in the Office of Multicultural Affairs, describes the movement from a Hispanic perspective. “We have issues similar in immigration, and it’s okay to derail attention away from us to know we are not the only ones who get scorned from our ethnicity and race.”

“I think embracing this topic would bring more awareness to just how far in the background African Americans are, and they need to be brought to light,”

she continues, “the color of your skin does not determine the person you are. It is only a color, it is a human, man-made discrimination.”

The movement continues to effect students on campus in emotional ways as they fight the battle for equality.

“‘Black Lives Matter’ is something that effects me in a very startling way, so just seeing many people in my ethnicity brutalized, is very sickening, because they don’t show the positive things that they have done to help advance colored people,” said Collier.

She believes that a conversation on “Black Lives Matter” is something that demands attention and needs to be discussed not only on campus, but nationwide.

“We have to have these conversations, and too often we don’t appreciate the black lives around until tragedy happens. I think its important for people to get out of the mindset of ‘I have to be comfortable,’ or ‘it has to be a pleasant conversation’ when they are discussing something new.” ■

“The movement continues to effect students on campus in emotional ways as they fight the battle for equality.”

— Christina Rodriguez
Student



[BGAB]

Alternative Breaks

By Hannah Finnerty

“ This program educates students on social issues such as poverty and environmental awareness by putting them out in the field. ”

Millions of Americans are blind: blind to the raging social issues that are becoming dangerously prevalent, such as sex trafficking, poverty and sexual discrimination. Many turn an eye to global warming, using the explanations of discredited skeptics to justify the steady increase in temperature. Viewers denied racial profiling after the shootings of Freddie Gray, Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown. Some passively ignore these social issues. Others are absolutely terrified of facing the truth.

One program at the University is facing those fears head on by working with students to raise awareness of social issues such as these. The BG Alternative Breaks (bGAB) program aims to give students the opportunity to not only educate themselves on an issue, but they also allow students to see the problem first hand. The students then become proactive in helping to find or work towards a solution to the issue.

This student-run program is operating through the Office of Service Learning and is lead by senior Emma Hillyer, president of bGAB. Hillyer has been an active part of the program since its foundation just three years ago. As a sophomore, Hillyer found her place in the program after going on the inaugural trip to Detroit in the fall of 2013. Since then, Hillyer served as a site leader her junior year and as president this year.

Hillyer explained that the mission of Alternative Breaks is based on three pillars of thought: education, service and reflection. This program educates students on social

issues such as poverty and environmental awareness by putting them out in the field.

“You are learning before the trip, you are learning on the trip, and learning after. And you are reflecting during the experience; how are my actions helping this community?” Hillyer said.

The University’s program heavily focuses on the reflection aspect of the Alternative Breaks three-part mantra. Unlike many service opportunities, BG Alternative Breaks encourages participants to truly understand the purpose of their community service, as well as the impact that their service is having on the community and members of the community.

“A lot of people go into volunteering to help people, which is great, but a lot of people don’t know why they are doing it or why it is important. In our program, we really emphasize why this community needs help, what is the significance of it, what is the significance of your actions,” Hillyer said.

Over fall break, 28 University students along with their site leaders traveled to Detroit and Indianapolis to help fight poverty and homelessness in these areas.

In Detroit, students worked closely with Cass Community Social Services, an agency that provides job opportunities, health care, housing and food to those in need.

Senior Alex Carroll was a site leader on the Detroit trip. She cites that Cass’ mission is unique in the fact that they provide job opportunities for the unemployable.

Cass hires the illiterate to shred confidential documents. Instead of their

“ You are learning before the trip, you are learning on the trip, and learning after. And you are reflecting during the experience; how are my actions helping this community? ”

illiteracy making them unemployable, Cass sees it as a skill, Carroll said.

Not only does Cass give opportunities to those who otherwise would be deemed unemployable, but they are also successful in incorporating a green initiative into their mission. Employees collect discarded tires and waste from demolished houses to create doormats, cup coasters, flip-flops and other items to sell.

“One of the big things that Cass is about is being green, recycling and making things

out of things that you think are unimportant now. They parallel that with their people. We assume that the homeless individuals can't do anything anymore, but (Cass) takes them and they give them purpose and bring them back to life,” Carroll said.

BGAB also partnered with Motor City Blight Busters during their duration in Detroit. Blight Busters is a 25-year-old organization that is focused on improving the safety and cleanliness of living conditions for citizens of Detroit. According to the Motor City Blight Busters' website, University students that participated on the Detroit bGAB trip were a part of the “120,000 volunteers, who have contributed more than 658,000 volunteer hours.”

Senior Ryann Daniels was a second-time participant on the Detroit trip. Her first trip with bGAB was in the fall of 2014. “I decided to go again to Detroit to see the progress that we had made... The first year I went (to Detroit), Blight Busters didn't have a specific office space... and they have one now.”

“Some of the buildings I had seen last year were completely done and nice looking. It was a big change,” Daniels said.

It was volunteers from programs like BG Alternative Breaks that helped bring about the change in the community. However, programs like these are not specific to the University. The Alternative Breaks program can be found on campuses throughout the United States. The University's branch is still a developing chapter, and participants are

looking forward to some of the new changes that are happening.

The program is moving towards a new model where the site leaders design the trips around a social issue that they are passionate about. From there, organizations focusing on the selected issues are located in cities across the United States. Trips are planned around those locations. This new set up is being implemented for the 2016 spring break trips.

Where these two fall trips to Detroit and Indianapolis focused on improving the decay and blight in these urban areas, the trips being planned for the spring break trip are focused in a different direction.

Two groups of students will be headed down to North Carolina to work on environmental issues such as green sustainability, energy conservation and water treatment. There will be a third trip, however the destination has yet to be determined.

Applications for spring trips are now available, and everyone is encouraged to apply. Everyone gains something valuable from participating in these trips, whether it be friendship, inspiration or post-college direction, Hillyer said.

“We have people from all different majors that come on these trips, and they find a way to connect it to their program. We've have psychology majors and criminal justice majors and physical therapy and applied health science. They always manage to find a way to benefit from the experience and to grow.” ■ KEY





Emilio

Duran

By Cherise Thomas



“ I liked doing research in biology, but teaching... was speaking to my soul. ”

— **Emilio Duran**
Associate Professor, Biology

Spain native and Bowling Green State University associate professor, Emilio Duran, discovered the place for him was not his homeland, but Northwest Ohio, where he found his niché in aiding students.

He came here in 1981 as a foreign exchange student.

“They asked me, ‘Where would you like to go?’” Duran said. “I said California and they sent me to Toledo, Ohio.”

He says his experience turned out to be a life-changing event.

Duran says it was the people here that made him want to remain here in Northwest Ohio.

While in high school, he considered the family he was staying with as his own family. “I called them Mom and Dad,” Duran said.

However, originally his first three or four months in Toledo were difficult, he was homesick and didn’t know much English.

Duran said his experience changed sometime after Christmas, where he had his first dream in English.

“Somehow from that point forward everything changed,” he said. “It just felt like home.”

“There was something about my experience, I wanted more. I came back (to Toledo) because I felt there was something lacking in my life back in Europe,” he said.

He is now a citizen of the United States and lives in Toledo with his wife and two children.

His wife, Lena Duran, associate professor in the School of Teaching and Learning at the University, was not surprised that Duran preferred living in Toledo instead of Spain.

“Emilio has embraced the American culture and appreciates it. He has made many friends in Ohio, as well as across the U.S. over the years,” she said.



“My favorite part is anything that has to do with students, whether it is the research or the service or the teaching. As long as there are students involved that is the part that makes me happiest.”

— **Emilio Duran**
Associate Professor, Biology

“Spending a year here really changed a lot of things for me,” Duran said.

Following the completion of his senior year at Ottawa Hills High School, Duran returned to Spain and started medical school.

Duran explained that medical school in Spain and Europe is a six-year program that is taken after high school.

However, he returned to Toledo after a few years and received his bachelor’s, master’s and doctorate degrees in molecular biology at the University of Toledo.

He was a faculty member at UT, but later became a faculty member at BGSU, where he has been working for eight years.

“I was at a point that, I felt I had to change (from) doing research in biology. A lot of professors in sciences, they became professors because they want to do research and that’s the same for me,” Duran said.

In his research work he discovered his desire to teach.

“I liked doing research in biology, but teaching... was speaking to my soul,” Duran said. “I felt it was a very important thing for me to do.”

He began collaborating with faculty at BGSU, within a program called COSMOS, now known as NWO COSMOS, a program that included faculty from different colleges working together in STEM education and grant projects.

“I think that is what attracted me to come to BGSU because I didn’t have that at UT,” Duran said.

He said it was a big change for him because he had to switch from the College of Arts and Sciences to the College of Education.

“I changed from doing research with parasitic worms to now doing research with science teachers,” Duran said. “That was a big big change... a scary change.”

But he said his new job at BGSU lets him do both and he is able to combine his love for teaching, research and service.

“I think there is something very passionate about helping people and I can see my impact more directly now than I did when I was a biologist,” Duran said.

He is now associate professor in the School of Teaching and Learning and a joined appointment in biological sciences. He is also faculty associate director of the Northwest Center of Excellence in STEM Education, the director of The Ohio Junior Sciences and Humanities Symposium and faculty co-director of “STEM in the Park.”

“When you’ve been in academia for as long as I have, you accumulate a lot of titles.” Duran said.

According to the BGSU “STEM in the Park” page, STEM in the Park is a program that offers a hands-on experience and has interactive displays and activities created by universities, community partners and local businesses.

“It’s just a free community event. We bring about 4,000 people from this area and we engage families and their children in hands-on experiences,” Duran said.

Third-year student, Journalism Public Relations major and Communication minor, Hannah Tempel experienced STEM in the Park, and described it as something she sees her children going to in the years to come.

“It was a cool type of place to be. It’s kind of nice that BG puts on something like that and also provides a learning environment for young children,” she said.

“STEM in the Park is a very special event,” Duran said. “It’s a validation of why I got into education in the first place.”

Duran says his favorite part of his job is working with students.

“My favorite part is anything that has to do with students, whether it is the research or the service or the teaching. As long as there are students involved that is the part that makes me happiest,” he said.

“I don’t know how many people love their jobs... I love my job, I really do.”

Duran said. “I am blessed in a way that I am being paid to do things that I love to do.” ■ KEY

MENTORING



Opportunities Await

By Elena Lancioni

“The quicker you find that bond with SMART... the more connected you are, the more likely you are to stay and graduate.”

— **Ana Brown**
Office of Residence Life

When a student comes to college the student is told to take advantage of all of the opportunities that the campus has to offer. There are a plethora of opportunities to seize in college and being involved in a mentor program is one of the many activities. Being a part of a mentor program allows a student to find a home and adjust to college more easily.

One of the mentor programs at BGSU is the SMART program. SMART is offered to first year students, typically of color, but open to all students living in the residence halls on campus. Many students who are first generation are encouraged to join the program as well. It is a branch of the Office of Residence Life directed by Ana Brown, who has been overseeing the program for six years.

A student involved in SMART is paired with an upperclassman mentor, who also lives on campus. The mentee builds a relationship with the mentor through weekly contact and meetings on a monthly basis. The bonds created between the mentees and mentors are long lasting and can transform into lifelong relationships.

The SMART program has been a part of the BGSU campus since 1999 when James Jackson founded the program with the desire to give students a home. The multicultural students were a significant minority on campus at the time and Jackson wanted to

bring the students together to share in a common bond and be engaged on campus. The goals of this program are safety and security, diversity and inclusion, academic success, engagement and personal growth.

Not only are there mentors, but also there are team leaders who help to guide the mentors. The mentors and team leaders on the staff reflect a wide diversity of students. Jessica Walls is a senior team leader who has grown up through the SMART program. She stumbled across the program when she was researching BGSU. She has since developed as an individual through the help and guidance of SMART.

“It is imperative to have mentor/mentee interaction,” Walls said. She encourages students to take the initiative because there is someone out there who is willing to help you.

The mentor and mentee attend various events throughout the school year. One of the big events hosted by the SMART program is the “Taste of February,” which is open to the campus and community. This event has become a kickoff to black history month and showcases an aspect of African history.

A mentor program is beneficial in many ways to students because not only does it provide a long lasting bond, but it also helps keep students involved on campus. Brown shared that there are 10 percent higher retention rates for students who live in residence halls.



The 2015 SMART staff

“The quicker you find that bond with SMART... the more connected you are, the more likely you are to stay and graduate,” Brown said.

At the end of each school year, there is a recognition ceremony and a book scholarship is given to a mentee who was the most engaged throughout the year. It is called the “Gift of a Lifetime.” This gift helps students to continue with their education and it recognizes the effort that they made to stay involved on campus.

The SMART program has been a home to many students and Brown has seen the program grow over the years and the impact it has had on past students. Some students have become roommates and built relationships.

“Many are out in the real world and to see the growth and development is indescribable,” said Brown. “It lets me know we are doing something right.”

The SMART program has served as a model for many of the mentor programs on campus and it hopes to continue to serve the needs of future students. One who is interested in joining SMART can become involved anytime throughout the school year.

“Do not be afraid to ask for help...it is a strength because you know your limitations,” Brown said.

Another mentor program that is currently in its second year on campus is the Honors Mentor Program. This mentor program is open to students who are involved in the Honors College on campus. The spearhead behind this program is senior, Allie Hohlbein.

The goals of this mentor program are to build a community within the Honors College, serve as a place for upperclassmen to be involved on campus, relieve anxieties of the honors project and teach students the skill of having a mentor-type relationship.



Knot icebreaker exercise during a SMART staff meeting

Photos provided by SMART staff

One of the students involved in the program who is both a mentor and a mentee is sophomore Josie Mansperger.

She said, “My mentor explained the process of the honors project that helped me better understand the project and the goals. I look to her for a lot of advice since she is the president of the Student Nutrition Association, which is a club I am involved in. I have formed a lasting relationship with her.”

The mentors in this program are honors students who became mentors on a voluntary basis. Mentors and mentees are paired together based off of similar majors. Hohlbein added that the relationships that one develops through meetings are a necessary skill to have for professional relationships.

The mentors and mentees can meet as often as they would like, but are encouraged to meet three to four times each semester to cover various topics. There are modules that help to serve as a catalyst for conversation that cover topics such as the honors project and the importance of seeking relationships with faculty.

This program helps to benefit students by serving as a space to share what the upperclassmen have learned over the years.

“Upperclassmen are given the chance to pay it forward.”

— **Josie Mansperger**
Mentor and Mentee

Hohlbein shared that the perspectives that underclassmen students get from upperclassmen is very valuable.

“I think for someone being mentored it gives you the chance to learn from someone,” Hohlbein said. “Upperclassmen students are given the chance to pay it forward.”

Students who are interested in joining the Honors Mentor Program can join at the beginning of the spring semester and applications will be available through Canvas and the Honors office.

“Be proactive about finding a good mentor who is really going to invest in you,” Hohlbein said.

The mentor opportunities on campus are here to help you. The transformation to being a first year student is not easy and these programs recognize that. The mentors can provide valuable information and knowledge about college. Do not be afraid to seek help and join a program that interests you. ■ **KEY**

SMART Contact:
Ana Brown acbrown@bgsu.edu
SMART@bgsu.edu
Twitter: @SMART_BGSU

Ridge Park

BG's First Public Park for Ward One in 175 Years

By Holly Shively

After two years of planning, Bowling Green's First Ward residents gained the first public park in 175 years of Ward One history after its official ribbon cutting on October 19.

“This is a wonderful day for the new Ridge Park neighborhood, and I might say the city of Bowling Green as well,” Mayor Richard Edwards said.



Ridge Park displays a plaque commemorating the school, reading, "Dedicated to all who taught and learned here."

Edwards, Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Earlene Kilpatrick, Parks and Recreation staff, park board and city council members invited children to come forward and help hold the ribbon that Mayor Edwards cut to officially open the park.

After the ribbon cutting, children flooded the playground to play on the new equipment for the first time. Over 180 attendants also had the opportunity to purchase t-shirts with the saying "Parks Make Life Better" and enjoy donuts and cider at the biggest ribbon cutting ceremony in Bowling Green's history.

"You can't put a dollar tag on that," Edwards said about the children's smiles at the city council meeting later that night. Located in the First Ward at the corner of Ridge Street and North Summit Street, the site of the new 3.5 acre Ridge Park previously housed Ridge Elementary School, which closed in May of 2013. When the school closed, the site was planned for auction, but residents worried that the area would become more apartment buildings or a parking lot. They looked to First Ward council member Daniel Gordon for help.

"We didn't know who was going to be the highest bidder, and so we didn't know what use there would be for it," Gordon, said. Though there were many options for the lot, including a charter school, senior center and office space, citizens were concerned with the loss of the only public play space for children in the First Ward. With this in mind, Gordon presented Ordinance 8277 to purchase the site and build Ridge Park. City council appropriated the funds to purchase the site and demolish the school building in a unanimous vote to approve Ordinance 8277. Ridge Park displays a plaque commemorating the school, reading, "Dedicated to all who taught and learned here."

While Bowling Green has several parks, Parks and Recreation Director Kristin Otley said that before Ridge Park, there were only two other parks in the city labeled as neighborhood parks, also known as pocket parks. These two parks include Dellard Park and Raney Park, which Otley said are both significantly smaller than Ridge Park. These pocket parks are specifically meant to meet the needs of the surrounding neighborhood.

"The difference is that neighborhood parks are designed to be a part of the neighborhood and improve the quality of life

there. These larger parks certainly help those neighborhoods, but they're not designed to support and uplift the neighborhood," Gordon said.

Without already existing funds, Parks and Recreation along with city council set to fundraising. "A park doesn't just happen without money," Otley said.

Ridge Park was one of 30 projects chosen to be featured on fundyourpark.org, a nationwide crowdfunding website. On the website, private citizens could donate money to fund the park. Most private donations ranged from \$5-\$500. Otley shared that the Wood County Park District, the Bowling Green Community Foundation and the playground equipment supplier were some of the many grants given to fund the park. Grants ranged between \$2,500 and \$20,000. Gordon said that through grants and private donations over \$70,000 has been raised towards the \$85,000 goal.

Otley and other members of Park and Recreation did more than just fundraise. "A lot of work goes into making a brand new park that you wouldn't necessarily think of," Otley said. The team excavated, placed rocks, and laid mulch around the park area to make it as nice as possible for the surrounding neighborhood.

The city plans to complete Ridge Park in two phases. Development of the southern half, facing Ridge Street, was just phase one and included the playground equipment, bike racks, benches, trees and plaques commemorating the school and thanking donors. Phase one was completed and opened at the ribbon cutting ceremony.

"The city is kind of taking the wait and see approach," Gordon said about phase two. He anticipates development will come for the open space, but they will wait until the city sees what citizens want. Preserving a play space for local families is not the only benefit of the newly opened Ridge Park.

"One thing that I like is that council and the city, everyone's on the same page," Gordon said about members of city council. "It's a matter of good public policy to create parks... These are real tools to revitalize neighborhoods."

Gordon said that the City Improvement Plan showed that the east side of the city has been neglected over the past several decades. "When housing conditions deteriorate, when property values decline—

when people don't feel as safe or proud of their neighborhoods—that affects the entire city," Gordon said. "It's now actually conventional wisdom that we need to do more for our east side neighborhoods... and Ridge is definitely part of that."

Tom Rodgers, a University student who ran against Gordon for election to city council in the First Ward said, "The park obviously is going to increase the home value in that area, and I think the next step for increasing the value of that area is to fix up the houses... and when we do that we're making the whole community better and making it more attractive for more young couples to move in."

Gordon shared that one of the best moments was seeing parents and kids tossing around footballs and couples having picnics before amenities were even placed, showing him that there really was a strong need for the space in the neighborhood.

"Other city officials have described Ridge Park as my baby, and that makes me one proud parent," Gordon said.

Gordon hopes to see more pocket parks for neighborhoods in Ward One in the near future. ■ KEY

“The difference is that neighborhood parks are designed to be a part of the neighborhood and improve the quality of life.”

— Dan Gordon
First Ward Council Member



JUST SAY KNOW

Student organization SSDP looks to change the perception of drugs

By Audrey Quinn

“Educating people on responsible drug use is a major component of harm reduction.”

— Luke Zona
President, SSDP

Students at Bowling Green State University are working towards creating lasting change in the public perception of drugs.

Students for Sensible Drug Policy, a new organization on campus, is working with their national branch and local government to turn the outlook of drugs from “Just Say No” to Just Say Know”— that is, to educate people on both the harms and benefits of certain drugs, as well as how to be a responsible consumer of drugs.

Senior Luke Zona is the current president of SSDP has spent years researching the benefits of certain drugs.

“I wanted to be a psychiatrist since my junior year of high school,” said Zona.

In an effort to do research on the type of drugs commonly prescribed to patients by psychiatrists, Zona found research that suggested psychedelic drugs can relieve anxiety, depression and PTSD symptoms.

“Through education we can change the perspective of these drugs,” said Zona.

A main component of SSDP’s presence on campus is tabling to educate University students on harm reduction— trying to minimize the negatives of drug use based on accepting the fact that people will use drugs regardless of their danger.

Educating people on responsible drug use is a major component of harm reduction, said Zona.

In addition to this, SSDP is working to ensure that a law that protects students in the event that they call the police to report an overdose are not prosecuted is passed in the State Senate. BGSU’s SSDP chapter is working with chapters at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio University, Kent State University and The Ohio State University, to lobby for the passing of this bill in the spring.

“The bill has been written, it just needs to be passed,” said Zona.

Another part of their organization is petitioning for the passing of certain bills.

“That’s very characteristic of a political group,” said Zona.

For those looking to get involved in the discussion on drug policies SSDP is bringing up, SSDP Public Relations chair Erika Heck recommends starting on the organization’s Facebook page.

“The articles are a way for our page to stay active when we’re not doing things,” said Heck. “I would love for us to interact with us on social media. I’m on there a lot, answering questions and talking about the articles.”



Some of the main topics the articles focus on are the recent heroin epidemic, education on harm reduction, analysis on certain drug laws nationally and overseas medical research on psychedelic drugs.

“It’s exciting to know that I am helping people in that way. Drug reform will be something I focus on my whole life.”

— **Luke Zona**
President, SSDP

Heck posts news articles to the organization’s page every other day. Some of the main topics the articles focus on are about the recent heroin epidemic, education on harm reduction, analysis on certain drug laws nationally and overseas medical research on psychedelic drugs.

Those looking for more information can reach out to members of SSDP. “A lot of us in SSDP have (information) or know how to get it to you,” said Heck.

Heck is particularly interested in the social aspect of drugs. “I think the social aspect as well as the medical aspect is lost on people,” said Heck. Heck said that drugs are used at venues such as concerts as a way to bring people together.

“The drugs that we were raised to think are bad can be okay when used in a certain way,” said Heck.

Zona spearheaded the campaign to bring a chapter of SSDP to the University’s campus.

“BGSU does a really good job of helping people start an organization,” said Zona. He received help from the national branch of the organization and was able to create the organization within four months.

During the four months, he had monthly phone calls with the national branch that outlined the steps he needed to take in order to create the organization.

Zona said the hardest part of creating an organization on campus is finding a faculty advisor, which had already been taken care of by an outgoing student at the University who wanted to start a chapter of SSDP but was graduating.

From there, Zona found like-minded people through his friends to join the organization, which currently has

12 active members.

The organization meets once a month and holds frequent tabling to sign petitions and educate students on harm reduction.

“We keep doing more and more each semester as we learn how to interact with people here,” said Zona.

In addition to the interests of SSDP, both Zona and Heck are pursuing individual topics of interest in the field of drug research.

Zona is working with campus policymakers to get police officers to carry Naloxone, a prescription drug that reverses an opiate overdose. He has meetings set up with policy makers to speak to them about the benefits of Naloxone.

Zona spoke with other chapters of SSDP who have successfully passed similar laws to get his information to pass on to policy leaders at BGSU. “It was about knowing the right people through networking to get the information I needed to make it pass,” said Zona. “The information is what really empowered me to do it.”

Knowing that he is creating a policy that can have a lasting effect on people is rewarding to Zona. “It’s exciting to know that I am helping people in that way,” said Zona.

continued on page 18

continued from page 17

“Drug reform will be something I focus on my whole life.”

Heck is currently reading up on Legalize Ohio 2016, an issue created when Issues 2 and 3 failed to pass in Ohio in the recent election. Heck said that it is an amendment to that will create a free market instead of a monopoly, and has many of the aspects of marijuana legalization that she wants.

Senior Emily Soster is in support of creating laws that change drug policies.

“I think there’s nothing wrong with the use of some drugs and alcohol,” said Soster. Soster thinks there needs to be support for people who are addicted to harder drugs, something SSDP hopes for create in their policies. ■ KEY

“ I think there’s nothing wrong with the use of some drugs and alcohol, but there also needs to be more support for people who are addicted to harder drugs. ”

— Emily Soster
Senior



bgssdp Students for
Sensible
Drug Policy

Front, left to right: Nate Zona, Jackie Corfman, Kelsey Jones, Erika Heck, Andrew Thompson, Rachel Squire. Back row: Luke Zona, Ivan Bumpus



ATHLETE CONNECTION

O

ften college athletes, including BGSU athletes, seem like allusive figures who are inaccessible and are always running around in Nike gear covered in orange, brown and more logos than one might deem necessary. I sat down with seven student-athletes, to take a peek into why they play their sport, the positives, the negatives and what their lives are like day-to-day.

By LILY BARTELL | Assistant Editor



JAMES KNAPKE

“I’d love to get into high school coaching and give back to the guys that have helped me along the way.”

Sport: Football (QB)

Year: R.S. Junior

Major: Communication

Hometown: Fort Wayne, Indiana

Q: How long have you played football?

A: My mom got me started in sixth grade.

Q: Why do you love football?

A: When I was younger I liked it because I got to meet a lot of new people. Now, I like how it is such a team sport. I like the discipline behind it and how everyone has to work together in order to accomplish all the goals that we set at the beginning of the year.

Q: What does a normal in-season day look like for you?

A: I have class all morning and then I’ll get ready for practice. We will have meetings and then we are on the field practicing for about two hours. Some days we have a lift. We lift Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays and then after that some guys have class. I’ll get something to eat, do homework and go to bed.

Q: What does a normal off-season day look like for you?

A: We usually have lifts and meetings. During Spring Ball, we will have a similar schedule like in-season. In the summer we lift, condition and play some 7-on-7 about two days a week. Before and after Spring Ball are the easiest times for us, but it’s all fun.

Q: What do you like to do in your little free time?

A: Well, I live with three offensive linemen so we eat a lot of food. We are always finding the deals around town at the different restaurants. We have a ping-pong table in our garage. There have been some heated battles in there with teammates. On campus, I’m not involved as much as I’d like to be because of our schedule.

Q: What are your plans after you graduate?

A: I’ll graduate in Spring 2016. I haven’t decided what I’m doing for my fifth year yet if I want to do grad school or maybe pick up another minor. In the future I’d love to get into business and eventually own my own companies. I’d love to get into high school coaching and give back to the guys that have helped me along the way.

Q: How do you balance school, practice, traveling, missing classes, etc.?

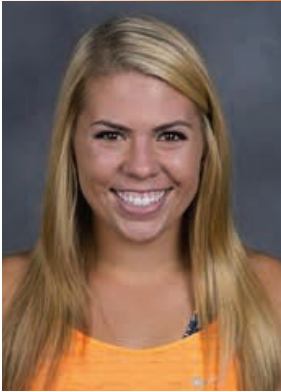
A: We miss most Friday classes when we are in season. For the most part teachers are really understanding about missing classes. We don’t always get to go home for holidays, it depends on when games are and what bowl game we may get into. The way we look at it is that we get to do this for four or five years and a lot of people don’t get that opportunity. As much as its hard not being home, it’s worth it and the team becomes your family. ■ KEY





ATHLETE CONNECTION

DREW FILLIS



“Being an athlete here has given me many opportunities and connections that I hope to keep for a while in life.”

Sport: Tennis
Year: Senior
Major: Athletic Training
Hometown: Toledo, Ohio

Q: How long have you played tennis?

A: I've been playing tennis since I was six and started playing tournaments when I was eight.

Q: Why do you love tennis?

A: I just really enjoy the overall game of tennis. I like that it is a fast-paced sport and I just find it interesting because you don't have many sports that are individual but also can be a team sport.

Q: What does a normal in-season day look like for you?

A: A normal in-season day for me would be having practice in the morning, followed by lifting, and then going to class in the afternoon. With my major, athletic training, I would also have up to 20 hours a week of clinical hours.

Q: What does a normal off-season day look like for you?

A: Out of season is much more laid back, we only have 2 hours a week of practice and then lifting/conditioning 3 times a week so there is much more time to get school work done or catch up on Netflix.

Q: Why do you enjoy being on a team?

A: Being on a team here was probably the best thing I could have ever done. Coming in as a freshman, I already had a group of friends who showed me the ropes and were always there for me, as I needed. Being a senior now, that's kind of my job to help the younger girls out. It is great to be on a team too because you're around a group of girls who share my love for tennis and we work hard because we want to do well. We are each other's support system and we're always there for each other with anything.



Q: What do you like to do in your free time?

A: I'm in a few organizations. I am the SAAC president, I'm the Omicron Delta Kappa (honors society) treasurer, and the Athletic Training Student Organization Secretary so even without practice or classes I keep myself busy. If I don't have meetings, classes, practice, or clinical hours I love to nap or just relax at home.

Q: What are your plans after you graduate?

A: I'm not entirely sure what I want to do after I graduate but I think I would do a year long internship in athletic training, and then hopefully grad school, and then go from there!

Q: How do you balance school, practice, traveling, missing classes, etc.?

A: It is a lot of time management and staying on top of my school work because I am a student first and I have to make sure that I have everything done before I travel or work around my practice. I chose to play tennis because it was always a goal of mine to play D1 college tennis and I knew that was something that I wanted to do my whole life. I grew up loving sports and I think that being an athlete here is a pretty cool thing. Athletes have to put in a lot more time in practices and games that take away from some social life, but I'm playing a sport that I've worked so hard to be here. Matches are the fun part of tennis, working hard in practice during the week to get to compete and put the skills to the test. Being an athlete here has given me many opportunities and connections that I hope to keep for a while in life. ■ KEY



ATHLETE CONNECTION

KARI ROSS



“ I enjoy being on a team because I like to work hard. I also like the routine and structure it brings to my life. ”

Sport: Soccer (Midfielder)

Year: Sophomore

Major: Exercise Science

Hometown: St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada

Q: How long have you played soccer?

A: I have been playing my sport since I was four, so 16 years. I have been playing competitively since I was eight, so 12 years.

Q: Why do you love soccer?

A: I love that I play a team sport. I like working with others and building relationships and friendships with teammates and coaches.

Q: What does a normal in-season day look like for you?

A: A normal in-season day looks like me waking up at 7 a.m. and heading to practice for either 8 a.m. or 9 a.m. After practice, I rush home quickly to shower and grab a snack or protein shake before heading off to class. I typically have classes until about 4:30. After classes I normal go home and make dinner. Occasionally we will have meetings or events to go to at nighttime, but not all the time.

Q: What does a normal off-season day look like for you?

A: On a normal off-season day I will wake up and go to practice in the morning. On some days in the off-season we will lift after practices or do yoga. After practice I normally have classes so I go home, shower and grab a snack before class. Same as in season, we occasionally have events or meetings to go to in the evening.

Q: Why do you enjoy being on a team?

A: I enjoy being on a team because I like to work hard. I also like the routine and structure it brings to my life. Most importantly I have built so many great relationships with people through sports and being on teams.

Q: What do you like to do in your free time?

A: In my free time I like to hangout with my teammates. I also like to do art projects like painting and drawing. Some times when I know I am going to have free time on the weekends my parents will come down and I will spend time with them.

Q: What are your plans after you graduate?

A: Right now, after I graduate from BGSU, I have plans to go back home and finish my art degree that I started at Brock University. As far as a career that I would like to have, I am not too sure yet.

Q: How do you balance school, practice, traveling, missing classes, etc.?

A: I balance these things by trying my best to be proactive and get a head start on things. Teachers that I have had here have been really accommodating and understanding of my traveling schedule, so that helps a lot. I didn't feel like I was finished competing at a high level of soccer yet and college soccer was the next step for me. I wanted to have a team and group of people in college to surround myself with. ■ KEY





ATHLETE CONNECTION VICTORIA HEATH



“ I like the feeling of knowing somebody has my back as much as I have theirs. ”

Sport: Gymnastics

Year: Junior

Major: Dietetics

Hometown: York, Pennsylvania

Q: How long have you done gymnastics?

A: This will be my sixteenth year.

Q: Why do you love gymnastics?

A: I love accomplishing a big practice schedule or assignment at practice. When you accomplish something that big it's like you just feel good about hitting and accomplishing something and saying "you did it."

Q: What does a normal in-season day look like for you?

A: Lifting is a little bit lighter to avoid injuries and cardio is at the rec. At practice it is usually just routine, routine, routine. We will do partner stuff where you and your partner have to hit a certain amount of routines or a back-to-back routine and it's just usually working on your routine.

Q: What does a normal off-season day look like for you?

A: Lifting gets harder with more weight. We practice all the time though and we work on new skills. It's more "fun" in the off-season, but with harder conditioning and lifts. We also do more team activities.

Q: Why do you enjoy being on a team?

A: I like the feeling of knowing somebody has my back as much as I have theirs. Being one of the leaders, it's been better because I feel like I've always had a leadership role from when I was in club until now, I just naturally feel like people look up to me and I like having people depend on me. It makes me know that I have to do my job so that everyone can do their jobs and it keeps all of us accountable.

Q: What do you like to do in your free time?

A: I like to cook. My roommates and I love to cook and eat. Or, we like to eat so we cook. If it's nice outside I like being outside doing anything. I'm also a part of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, H2O Church, and the Well, which is affiliated with H2O.

Q: What are your plans after you graduate?

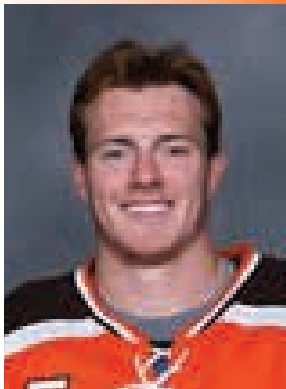
A: I'm going to graduate in Spring 2017 and then after I graduate I will do a summer internship. I'll then have to pass the state exam to be registered dietician. Once I get that I could work as a dietician in a place like a nursing home or a hospital. I haven't decided yet if I want to go and get my masters degree in neo-natal dietetics because I would want to do more specifically that. ■ KEY





ATHLETE CONNECTION

BEN MURPHY



“Having a close-knit group of people that have the same goals and ambitions, same outlook, same drive as I do, it’s easy to have friends.”

Sport: Hockey (Forward)

Year: Senior

Major: Individualized Studies

Hometown: Duxbury, Massachusetts

Q: How long have you played hockey?

A: Since about four years old. Haven’t taken my skates off since.

Q: Why do you love hockey?

A: I love the opportunity to get better which feeds off of the competitive environment.

Q: What does a normal in-season day look like for you?

A: I will usually wake up, eat breakfast, I’ll read, I’ll go to the rink, stretch and get on the ice to warm up. We will have a team meeting and then have practice for about an hour. I usually have classes in the afternoon and then will work on homework, hang out with my fiancé or with the guys at my house. Then, wake up and do it all over again.

Q: Why do you enjoy being on a team?

A: I like making friends and being social. I love being around people and I embrace it. Having a close-knit group of people that have the same goals and ambitions, same outlook, same drive as I do, it’s easy to have friends.

Q: What do you like to do in your little free time?

A: I help out with FCA and FCA hockey in the summer. It’s tough being at school and I help and contribute as best I can.

Q: What are your plans after you graduate?

A: I want to continue to play and pursue a career in hockey as long as I can. Outside of that, I’m undecided. I don’t know if it wasn’t hockey, it would probably be around coaching, mentoring or counseling.

Q: How do you balance school, practice, traveling, missing classes, etc. and why did you choose to play your sport versus being a regular student? What are the trade-offs, benefits, etc.?

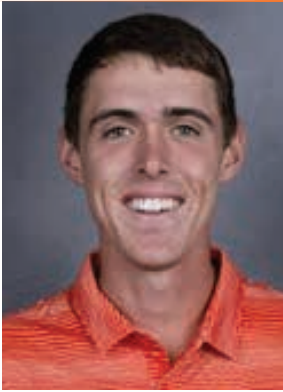
A: I try to get my work done before I travel and if I have to study or read I bring it with

me on the road. I don’t like having a bunch of schoolwork on my mind. We don’t get to go home very much. We get about a week at Christmas, but with our season being about six straight months, going home doesn’t happen. ■ KEY





ATHLETE CONNECTION BRETT RINKER



“It’s great having friends that are also your teammates.”

Sport: Golf

Year: Junior

Major: Sports Management

Hometown: Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania

Q: How long have you played golf?

A: I’ve been playing since I was two. I was eight when I started playing tournaments.

Q: Why do you love golf?

A: I love the challenge of never knowing what to expect each time you play a round of golf. I love traveling to our Hawaii tournament.

Q: What does a normal in-season day look like for you?

A: We will work out from 7-8 a.m., get some breakfast, go to class, get some work done after class, go to practice from 3 p.m. to whenever depending on the day, get some dinner, do more homework and go to sleep.

Q: What does a normal off-season day look like for you?

A: We still have practice, just not as often. We have workouts Monday, Wednesday and Friday and we push more weight at lifting.

Q: Why do you enjoy being on a team?

A: I love the camaraderie and my teammates. It’s great having friends that are also your teammates. My teammates make it very competitive and it influences my golf game positively.

Q: What do you like to do in your little free time?

A: I try to relax and hang out with friends for the most part. We don’t have too much free time so I just try and get some rest.

Q: What are your plans after you graduate?

A: I’m going to give professional golf a shot. I want to go to the Southwest region of the United States to try and play. If that doesn’t work out, I’d still like to be in the golf business and hopefully open up a business in the field.

Q: How do you balance school, practice, traveling, missing classes, etc. and why did you choose to play your sport versus being a regular student? What are the trade-offs, benefits, etc.?

A: It’s hard to catch up on classes when we miss so much. I try to stay a week ahead in my classes and make sure my professors know I’m missing class. Professors are usually really helpful, but it can be very difficult. It helps a lot to make friends in classes so you can get notes and catch up. ■ KEY

“I love the challenge of never knowing what to expect each time you play a round of golf.”





ATHLETE CONNECTION NICOLE HRANCHOOK



“ I love that the effort you put in you get out. If you work really hard, you’ll see the benefits. ”

Sport: Swimming (Breaststroke/IM)
Year: Senior
Major: Pre-physical Therapy
Hometown: Harrison Township, Michigan

Q: How long have you done swimming?

A: I started competitive swimming when I was seven, so 15 years.

Q: Why do you love swimming?

A: I love that the effort you put in you get out. If you work really hard, you’ll see the benefits.

Q: What does a normal in-season day look like for you?

A: Our practices start at 6 a.m. so we have to be on-deck at 5:45 a.m. to get the pool set up. We typically swim for two hours. After that, breakfast and classes and then we come back to the pool in the afternoon for our second swim, which is about two hours. On Tuesdays and Thursdays we lift weights and do dry land workouts and spinning. Saturdays we also do two hours of swimming and an hour of weights.

Q: What does a normal off-season day look like for you?

A: We maintain the same practice schedule for the most part. Friday afternoons are devoted to team activities.

Q: Why do you enjoy being on a team?

A: They are your second family away from home. They are your support system not just with your athletics, but everything in general.

Q: What do you like to do in your little free time?

A: I’m the vice president for SAAC and the MAC SAAC representative. I’m also president of Medlife which I started with a group of people last fall at BG. I’m vice president of the pre-physical therapy club.

Q: What are your plans after you graduate?

A: I’m planning on attending grad school for physical therapy. Then, I want to practice either pediatrics or sports physical therapy. I’m looking at Grand Valley, but I also like Pittsburgh. I’ve applied to seven schools so now it’s a waiting game.

Q: How do you balance school, practice, traveling, missing classes, etc. and why did you choose to play your sport versus being a regular student? What are the trade-offs, benefits, etc.?

A: I feel like a lot of people don’t understand the time commitment. We put in everything that we get out of being an athlete. We work hard to get good grades and have to work with professors to keep up in class. ■ KEY



COMING TO TERMS

DEFINING ONE'S SEXUAL ORIENTATION



By Sam Sharp

“The fight for gender equality and understanding is a long and difficult war, but this generation has the means to win it.”

— **Brit Embry**
Vice President, Vision

Personal identity in the age of social media can be a difficult thing to understand. Especially since transgender individuals and gay political issues have been all over the news recently. With the recent media fixation of transgender issues, new identity terms have surfaced that have changed the general public's perception of gender. These terms may be unfamiliar to the average person uneducated on LGBTQIA+, but they will soon be widely accepted as more media coverage is shifted on human acceptance.

This past summer the United States Supreme Court made history by determining that same-sex marriage is a constitutional right. The landmark *Obergefell v. Hodges* case paved the way for same-sex marriages all across the United States. Now more than ever, people are feeling comfortable accepting and embracing their sexuality in public. This case caused a massive wave of support from equal rights activists as well as discontent from individuals who practice a religion that does not believe in same-sex pairings. There are still miles to go in the gay rights movement, but for now it's legally accepted and welcomed by the United State's government.

Now that same-sex marriage has been passed, one of the leading human rights topics at the moment is transgender acceptance and awareness. Caitlyn Jenner has quickly become the media's magnet

for all news regarding transgender topics. Formerly known as the qualified male athlete who took home a gold medal in the decathlon, Caitlyn accepted the female she felt she should have been all along. Despite her questionable celebrity status, Jenner has shifted the media focus from her family to her personal journey as an innovative trans woman. Jenner may not be the perfect candidate for a trans role model, but she has certainly helped bring attention to the movement.

Media outlets are now beginning to use proper language to identify individuals who have changed their gender or those who do not associate themselves as a gender. These classifications may seem excessive, but it's important that society begins to understand social attitudes outside of heteronormativity. Social attitudes are constantly shifting as new identities are emerging.

Preferred pronouns are beginning to pop up on social media bios as well as formal introductions. It's easy to mess pronouns up when you do not know the person, so proper etiquette would be to ask whoever you are speaking to which pronouns they prefer if they do not offer any upon introduction. The common pronouns are he/him, she/her, or they/them.

I recently spoke with second year sociology major and Vice President of Vision, Brit Embry. She described the queer umbrella organization as education and

The only ones holding back total acceptance of the human race at any form are those who limit themselves to a world filled with the idea of socially-constructed gender identities and values.



Laverne Cox, transgender



Caitlyn Jenner, transgender

“there’s also a social aspect, but it’s an organization for anyone who identifies under the LGBTQ spectrum or as an ally. (They can) come and talk about issues affecting our community or talk about intersectionality and how queerness is experienced in different ways by different people from different backgrounds. It’s just a way for us to come together and talk and figure out issues that are affecting us.”

Vision is considered an “umbrella” organization because it offers assistance to smaller organizations on campus that involve human issues like the smaller organization HUE (honoring, urging, and empowering people of color), and also FORCE (female organization raising consciousness and empowerment).

It’s not clear how long the concept of Vision has been around, according to Embry a secret organization used to hold identity safe meetings around campus similar to Vision. However, Vision meetings are no longer a secret happening, because they have weekly meetings every Tuesday in Hanna Hall.

Vision creates a safe environment for those who may not be out to their families and friends. Embry said that they create a safe haven and environment for students by saying that they adhere to a general group policy.

“What’s learned here leaves here, what’s said here stays here,” Embry explained that

the policy helps people feel comfortable enough to share their experiences with members of the organization.

The fight for gender equality and understanding is a long and difficult war, but this generation has the means to win it. Previous sentiments of hate towards the non-heteronormal have become few and far between.

The only ones holding back total acceptance of the human race at any form are those who limit themselves to a world filled with the idea of socially-constructed gender identities and values. ■ KEY

“What’s learned here leaves here, what’s said here stays here.”

— Brit Embry
Vice President, Vision

Facebook now offers a custom gender option that now allows anyone to type any gender identity into a text box under the “more info” tab.

Some common and lesser-known terms are:

LGBTQTTIAA+: This combination of letters that represents several identities present in the queer community, which are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and Ally

Pansexual: a person feels romantic, sexual, physical, and spiritual attraction for all gender identities

Cisgender: an individual whose gender identity, expression, and biological sex all align (for example woman, feminine, and female)

Androgyny: also known as “intersex,” an expression that includes feminine and masculine characteristics

Heteronormativity: the outdated belief that people only fall into male or female roles and that they may only be attracted to each other

Ally: a straight person who accepts and shows support for people in the queer community

Gender Fluid: not conforming to any particular gender, fluctuating gender options

FTM/MTF: a person who has gone through medical operations to change their biological sex from Female to Male or Male to Female

Questioning: the experimentation of sexual orientation through investigation of influences surrounding oneself

Third Gender: a person who does not fully identify with traditional male or female genders

Intersectionality: concept in which oppressive institutions are interconnected

Certain words may now be considered inappropriate. If a word seems like it could be offensive towards someone, the best policy is to ask what he or she prefers to identify him or herself as.