

Campus Times

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5K Challenge Reveals SA Mishaps

By DAVID SCHILDKRAUT
NEWS EDITOR

Many of the finalists from this year's Students' Association (SA) 5K Challenge wish they had known they could publicize their proposals prior to the vote.

This, after the Pads and Tampons Initiative, a former SA Senate pet project, won the contest with over 60 percent of the vote, after months of free publicity from the SA Student Life Committee—when it lost the challenge last year, the committee started a pilot version of the initiative in Rush Rhees Library's all-gender bathroom during the fall semester.

The SA publicity for the initiative did not come during the voting period itself, but that doesn't mean its win didn't benefit from it or other grooming from SA, at least in the eyes of other finalists.

And outside of that question, parties agree, the competition's disorganization needs reform.

Only the Pads and Tampons Initiative advertised its proposal. Other proposers said they were unaware they could.

"I received an email saying that it was likely going to be a finalist proposal at the end of last semester," said freshman Madiva Jumabaeva, whose proposal was for UR United—a day to celebrate campus diversity with food booths featuring foods from various countries. "But I did not get any confirmation until they posted the seven finalists. Since I was not sure about it, I could not really ask people to vote for my project until after the choices were confirmed."

Other runners-up said they were not told they were finalists until SA posted the list.

"Each and every finalist had submitted a project or what they wish to be improved on UR campus," Jumabaeva said. "The whole process was not publicized enough for what they say they will do. Also, the fact that they extended the voting period and just announced the winner without the statistics shows the lack of organization by the SA."

As early as Nov. 30, posters advertising the Pads and Tampons Initiative could be seen in the tunnel system. Email evidence shows that the Pads and Tampons Initiative was not given notice of their finalist status until Dec. 12, nearly two weeks later.

One of the initiative's archi-

SEE 5K CHALLENGE PAGE 3

Ringling the Bell on Racism



YIYUN HUANG / PHOTO EDITOR

W. Kamau Bell performs his comedic skit, "The W. Kamau Bell Curve: Ending Racism in About an Hour," at the Douglass Ballroom Friday evening.

By SAM PASSANISI
SENIOR STAFF

By PHYLLIS IMADE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

W. Kamau Bell is a crowd-pleaser, first of all.

His one-man show, "The W. Kamau Bell Curve: Ending Racism in About an Hour," played to nearly nonstop laughs in the crowded Douglass Ballroom on Friday evening, part of UR's first-ever "Color Cannot Divide

Us" week.

But on the subject of racism, Bell is never just joking. Under every quip is a kernel of truth and a call to action.

Bell is a "socio-political comedian and dad" whose dabbled in many media. He's hosted CNN's ongoing "United Shades of America," as well as his own show on FX, "Totally Biased with W. Kamau Bell," and he's an accomplished stand-up comedian and podcast producer.

"The W. Kamau Bell Curve:

Ending Racism in About an Hour" plays mostly at colleges, where Bell says students are "always looking to push peoples' boundaries and expand peoples' ideas."

"Actually, these days it may take two or three hours," he joked.

Bell was outspoken about the current state of U.S. politics, calling Donald Trump's presidency "pre-apocalyptic" and saying, in a bit on the irony of U.S. Census race categories, that

he was thinking of "proposing a new census category: Orange-American."

Bell threw a photo of Trump on the screen behind him, then followed up: "Just kidding, white people, he's yours."

Throughout the evening, Bell put much of the onus for ending racism on white Americans.

"The good thing [about Trump's presidency] is we're talking about this stuff in ways we haven't before," he observed in an interview with the *Campus*

SEE KAMAU BELL PAGE 3

Stats Show URBB's Defensive Strength

*Men's Basketball's
season success is
clear in the numbers*

By TREVOR WHITESTONE
SPORTS EDITOR

Advanced statistics are easy to find for NBA players, along with the majority of Division I programs, if one knows where to look.

It's much more difficult to find them for Division III schools like UR. So we calculated them.

Note that these metrics are the least advanced that can be called advanced—more detailed statistics can be obtained when looking at play-by-play or even player tracking data. The ones we will be referring to, however, can be calculated from basic box score statistics.

On its way to a 19–1 start, UR Men's Basketball (URBB) has picked things up, playing at a pace of 70.8 possessions per 40 minutes, compared to an average of 64.7 for the 2003–15 seasons. (This is the timespan for which



TREVOR WHITESTONE / SPORTS EDITOR

Junior Sam Borst-Smith dribbles past a defender.

enough data is available, so when we refer to program history, this is what we mean.)

In other words, the team is finishing possessions in 1.7 fewer seconds on average.

This hasn't made its offense any less efficient—when adjusted slightly for strength of opponent, its ORtg (offensive rating, or points per 100 possessions) comes out to 113.7, the best mark since URBB legend John DiBartolomeo's senior

season in 2012.

Overall, it's a strong figure, but not a hugely notable one relative to program history, given that the historic average is 111.8.

Where the team truly shines is on defense. Its adjusted DRtg (the defensive rating the players have allowed) is not only below 100 for the first time since 2007, but sits at 92.6, well below the program average of 100.8.

The performance of the team on both sides of the ball can be

SEE STATS PAGE 14

Dining Workers' Love for Students Unrequited

By NINA LISTRO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Editor's Note: This is part two of two articles about Dining Services workers.

For Dawn, it is important the UR Dining employees are working in a safe environment.

"This is a dangerous job," she says. "You have hot oils, you could start a fire; if you don't have the right equipment, you could injure yourself."

Keeping an eye and ear open for disagreements is also something she takes seriously. Tensions can rise, especially under the stress of dining hall rush hours. If such situations occur, proper grievance procedures must be implemented.

"Have you ever watched

SEE DINING PAGE 7

INSIDE
THIS CT

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UR DREAMERS
LEND SUPPORT
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BALDWIN'S WORDS
BEYOND GRAVE
PAGE 11 A&E

URSD CAPS OFF
SEASON
PAGE 15 SPORTS



YIYUN HUANG / PHOTO EDITOR

STUDENTS SAMPLE ITALIAN CULTURE

Students taste Italian food at the Festival of Food, Film, and Culture last Wednesday evening. The event was sponsored by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures and the Department of Religion and Classics, and included a screening of the movie “We Have A Pope.”

PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE

Fake ID Found in Hillside (1)

FEB. 4—A fake ID was found in Hillside Market.

Gale Resident's Wallet Missing (2)

FEB. 6—A Gale resident reported their backpack as missing.

Hylan Staff Harassed Over the Phone

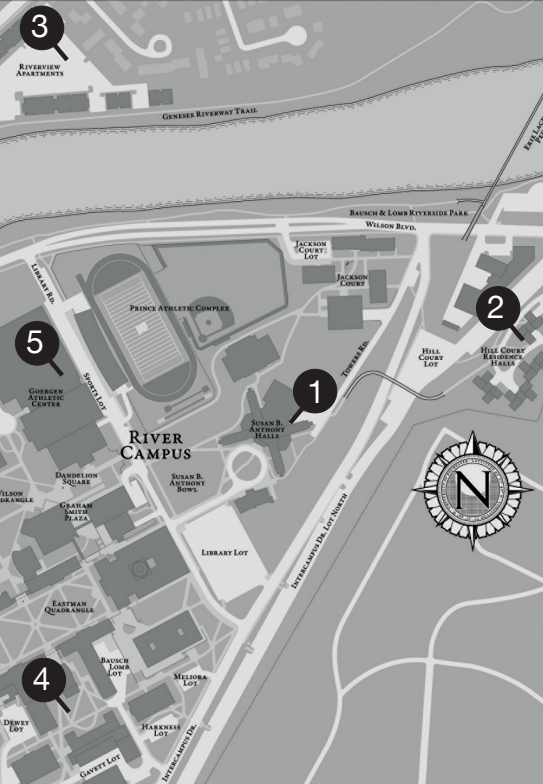
FEB. 7—Staff in Hylan reported receiving numerous annoying telephone calls.

Riverview Student's Wallet Stolen (3)

FEB. 8—A Riverview resident reported their wallet as stolen.

Cleaning Supplies Stolen from GAC (4)

FEB. 9—Cleaning supplies were reportedly taken from Goergen Athletic Center.



MAP COURTESY OF UR COMMUNICATIONS

Information provided by the Department of Public Safety.

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

TUESDAY | FEBRUARY 14

MEDIEVALISMS AFTER DARK

ROBBINS LIBRARY, 5 P.M.-7 P.M.
Dr. Thomas Hahn will give a talk on Richard Lester’s essay, “Medievalisms After Dark: Robin and Marian.”

STUDENT DEGREE RECITAL: DOUBLE BASS

HATCH RECITAL HALL, 7 P.M.-8:30 P.M.
The Eastman School of Music will showcase the musical talents of Li Xu on the double bass.

WEDNESDAY | FEBRUARY 15

SOCIAL GOOD EXPO

DOUGLASS BALLROOM, 12 P.M.-4 P.M.
The Gwen M. Greene Career and Internship Center presents the Social Expo, which will give students the opportunity to meet with employers from nonprofit organizations and social enterprises. Networking reception to follow.

AFRICA VIDEO SERIES

GOWEN ROOM, 5 P.M.-7 P.M.
Enjoy a screening of “Bayou Maharajah” presented by the Frederick Douglass Institute for African-American Studies. Pizza and drinks will be provided.

THURSDAY | FEBRUARY 16

PAX KAFFRARIA AT ROCO

MEMORIAL ART GALLERY, ALL DAY
See the Memorial Art Gallery’s collection of Meleko Mokgosi’s Pax Kaffraria collection, which is based on the history of a fantasy nation.

STUDENT DEGREE RECITAL

HATCH RECITAL HALL, 7 P.M.-8:30 P.M.
The Eastman School of Music will showcase the musical talents of Carley Campbell, who will be singing.

FRIDAY | FEBRUARY 17

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

STRONG AUDITORIUM, 7 P.M.-9 P.M.
College Feminists presents its annual production of “The Vagina Monologues,” as part of the International V-Day movement. Tickets are on sale at the Common Market.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

PALESTRA, 8 P.M.-10 P.M.
Come watch the ‘Jackets take on the Carnegie Mellon University Tartans in basketball.

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YIYUN HUANG / PHOTO EDITOR

BOB MARLEY EVENT UNITES STUDENTS

Seniors Susan Ojukwu (left) and Joy Nicholas (right) craft at the annual Bob Marley Expo held in Hirst Lounge last Saturday.

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SOCA’s Bob Marley Expo Fosters Unity Through Music

By DAVID SCHILDKRAUT
NEWS EDITOR

Students and community members enjoyed free food and crafted to the beat of Bob Marley’s island jams last Saturday afternoon at the annual Bob Marley Expo hosted by the Student Organization for Caribbean Awareness (SOCA).

This year’s theme of “One Love” was inspired by the country’s current socio-political climate and meant to honor the life of Bob Marley as an artist and an activist, said senior and SOCA President Elizana Joseph.

Attendees partook in activities such as coloring, beading, and face painting. Freshman Vincent Escovedo, who had a lightning bolt painted on his face, praised

the unifying nature of the event.

“Events like this show that however the outside world is, it doesn’t faze this community,” said Escovedo.

Adding to the harmony of the event were performances by the YellowJackets, PASApella, and freshman Miles Perry from “No Disclaimers,” a spoken word committee.

Perry recited a poem he wrote, comparing humanity’s treatment of black women to its treatment



Freshman Jasmin Edjang (right) paints a community member’s

YIYUN HUANG/ PHOTO EDITOR

of Earth. He explained that his poem was written to raise awareness and spread unity on campus. “We tend to talk more about

political things,” Perry said. “We want to try and remedy them to try and make a more unified campus.” PASApella, an a cappella group under the leadership of the Black Students’ Union, closed the Expo with a performance of two traditional African songs, one of which was mashed-up with Bob Marley’s “One Love.”

“You don’t have to understand different languages,” junior and PASApella member Ntemena Kapula said about the song choice. “You can connect people through the tone of a song. An open space like this allows people to fuel our happy vibe and set aside their worries for a little bit.”

During the event, attendees had the opportunity to sign a pledge on what the song’s creed meant to them. Senior Edwin Aguila, who came to the expo to emphasize the need for peaceful unity, felt his pledge carried a powerful message.

“I put ‘one love means unity,’” Aguila said. “I feel like it is a term everyone can use to say ‘I love you.’ One love.”

Schildkraut is a member of the Class of 2020.

W. Kamau Bell Talks Race, Trump, and Civic Roles

KAMAU BELL FROM PAGE 1

Times before his talk. “White people who wouldn’t have considered themselves to be right-wing or Republican or racist in any way now suddenly realize if their voices aren’t heard more clearly, and if they aren’t taking more responsibility for the white people who are like that, then we’re doomed.”

“If there’s anything to prove that inaction leads to evil, it’s Donald Trump,” he added.

He also said that racism has become more open and acceptable since Trump’s November election. He pointed out the rise in public consciousness of American neo-Nazi Richard Spencer, tracing a connection from Spencer, through the right-wing Breitbart News, to Trump aide Stephen Bannon and

the White House.

Bell’s barbs weren’t limited to politics, though.

He discussed Colin Kaepernick’s kneeling during the national anthem, and pointed out the hypocrisy of separating sports from political and racial issues.

“I can prove racism in two words: Cleveland. Indians,” he said.

He had another bit on the two things “to never, ever ask a black person about their hair.” (Number one, “Can I touch it?” and number two, “How do you wash it?”) And he expanded on why it’s not alright to ask those questions, as well.

“Ending racism is not about satiating your curiosity,” Bell told the audience, to applause and murmurs of affirmation, “it’s about

respecting people’s boundaries and letting them live their lives.”

Issues of everyday inequality and racism were also on Bell’s agenda for the evening.

He lampooned a Spanish-language Republican party website, whose picture of “Hispanic children” turned out to be a stock photo of Asian kids, and the casting of white actors in Hollywood films such as “The Last Samurai” or “The Great Wall.”

He noted, too, that activism has the power to change this—he attributed the diversity of the current slate of Academy Award nominees to the “#OscarsSoWhite” movement on Twitter.

“If we can’t talk about this racism,” Bell said of this type of casual discrimination, “that’s why we

can’t talk about the bigger racism, where life and death is involved.”

From the beginning of the evening, Bell joked that “when I criticize white people, I don’t mean the people here. You’re some of the good ones, you’re not like the rest,” adding in jest, “You speak so well.”

But he pulled no punches when discussing those who respond to the “#BlackLivesMatter” movement with declarations that “All Lives Matter.”

“We can’t say ‘All Lives Matter’ until we get black lives to matter,” he declared, to applause from the room.

Toward the end of his talk, Bell urged the black members of the audience to take pride in the accomplishments and history of

African-Americans.

“You know how much of American popular music black people invented? All of it” Bell laughed.

He also had a message for white audience members.

“You need to be fired up,” he said, urging them to take back “white pride” from the likes of neo-Nazis and the alt-right, the white supremacist strain of nationalism that became a topic of conversation in the 2016 campaign.

And to everyone fighting against racism and discrimination, Bell urged: “Make sure that in between fights, you’re also nourishing your soul.”

Passanisi is a member of the class of 2017.

Imade is a member of the class of 2017.

SA Faces Bigger Challenges than 5K

5K CHALLENGE FROM PAGE 1

tects, Tristan Ford, a senior, said the posters were created independently of SA and hung up because he and the other planners assumed they would be finalists. SA also denied having a role in the posters.

SA adviser and Associate Dean of Students Anne-Marie Algier, who is also the Campus Times’ adviser, explained that since no one had ever advertised their idea for the 5K Challenge before, there were no rules pertaining to it.

“We didn’t have a good process,” Algier said. “It wasn’t some standardized script that we have in place from this program. Every year it grows a little bit, we get a little better at running it. I think it is worthy of a conversation to look at: should we have a scripted thing of what we should send to each of the finalists? Should we have the ability to campaign or not? We probably need to put some rules around it, like we do for elections. I think it’s worth a conversation.”

The Pads and Tampons Initiative was proposed by senior Tristan Ford and juniors Rebecca Block and Zaira Lujan.

The three of them, as well as

Executive Director of Student Life and senior Nicholas Contento and Student Life Committee Legislative Chair and sophomore Criswell Lavery, worked together during fall semester to advance the Pads and Tampons Initiative in a way that some finalists viewed as unfair.

“Of course hearing this news is disappointing,” freshman Sofia Azmal, who proposed that a slide be added to the Susan B. Anthony Residence Halls swing set, said. “I didn’t think that the competition was biased by any means, but apparently it was. I thought that the Tampons and Pads initiative was really good.”

Azmal added: “There were other ways that the committee could’ve gone through to enact this initiative, but I guess committees have to do what they have to do to get funding.”

Jumabaeva agreed.

“Regarding their earlier campaign on the initiative, I do find it unfair because every project should get equal treatment whether they have won previously or new for the semester,” she said.

Comments from Contento in an interview revealed that his committee worked on the initiative

with the 5K Challenge in mind.

“They were going to submit this anyway,” Contento said of the initiative during a recent interview. “We were also trying to see if we could get enough funding during the semester before the 5K Challenge to see if we could get this going. Our committee always had the 5K Challenge in its mind. We just wanted to support them. Most of our meetings were about, ‘How can we go out to help them? What can we do to support SHAC?’ It was all to help SHAC, basically.”

The Pads and Tampons Initiative was initially proposed as part of last year’s 5K Challenge. After a loss to both hot water coolers and a swing set, an SA Impact Petition garnered over 270 signatures, meaning that SA was obligated to take the proposal up. The proposal landed in the Student Life Committee, where it was taken up as an initiative, which was reported on by the Campus Times last October.

During fall semester, the Student Life Committee created two surveys—one online and one paper—to gauge student interest in the Pads and Tampons Initiative. According to Lavery and Ford,

these surveys indicated a high degree of support amongst the student body for free pads and tampons, and both men and women responded to the survey.

An initial pilot program was initiated in Rush Rhees Library’s all-gender restroom during fall semester; Ford noted the launch date as Dec. 1. The pilot program utilized pads and tampons obtained from the University Health Service (UHS) and was done at no cost to both the students and UR.

This pilot program in December seems to contradict the logic of the selection of the Pads and Tampons Initiative as a 5K Challenge finalist.

“The 5K Challenge is for new ideas and for students to bring these new ideas to campus,” Flo to said in an interview. “I still consider that [the Pads and Tampons Initiative] new because it hasn’t been implemented before.”

The runners-up were divided on their view of the results.

Senior Elizabeth Akauola, who proposed on behalf of Grassroots additional water refill stations, was critical but took a milder tone towards the results.

“Personally, I don’t think the

Tampons/Pads Initiative benefits the entire university, and not all girls use tampons,” Akauola said. “Not to mention, not all girls use the all-gender bathrooms, where these items will be placed. On another note, I feel that free tampons and pads should have been implemented a long time ago and should not have relied on the 5K Challenge.”

A few of the runners-up were fully supportive of the results, including freshman Julian Maceren, who proposed an inflatable ball pit to be set up during finals week.

“Although I would have loved to have ball pits during finals,” Maceren said, “I think the Pads and Tampons Initiative does well in voicing women’s struggles. Just as people don’t need to bring their own toilet paper to public restrooms, women shouldn’t have to supply their own tampons/pads for a bodily function they did not choose to have.”

Regardless of opinion on the situation, most of the runners-up felt that SA needed to be far more organized in its implementation of the 5K Challenge.

Schildkraut is a member of the class of 2020.

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OPINIONS

EDITORIAL OBSERVER

Lots for All



By SCOTT DANIELS
FEATURES EDITOR

At the University, resident students are allowed to keep cars on campus.

Freshmen, however, are not. This is a known fact and accepted reality for first-year students. But why is it that freshmen are ineligible to purchase parking permits?

Finding the answer to a seemingly simple question proved difficult. After a fruitless exchange with the Parking and Transportation Office, I was told such a decision was made by the administration.

Reaching out to the administration led to a long chain of transfers and promises of call backs.

The most reasonable explanation I have heard is that first-year students are encouraged to become acclimated to their new school and classmates. That explanation seems suspicious to me. It seems more likely that the administration is aware of the scarce parking available and figured it could get away with limiting the amount of students able to take up parking spots with this excuse.

And they have. After looking into the rules and regulations of student parking, I have concluded that there is no legitimate reason that freshmen should not be allowed to apply for parking permits if there were more parking spaces available.

The current parking system is extremely limiting as it is. It costs \$250 per semester for a student to purchase a parking permit. There are only four lots dedicated solely to residential students. To actually receive a permit, students are entered into a lottery because there are so few spots available to students. The lottery favors students that apply earlier, and students closer to graduation.

With such a system in place, many sophomores are left without personal transportation, even though they are eligible to apply for permits. The small amount of parking areas dedicated to students leaves much to be desired. Students have been expressing their grief over parking for years, and the University has done little to fix the issue.

It could be, and often is, argued that the University provides plenty of alternative modes of transportation to students without cars. This is true. Students are able to make

use of the provided shuttles, the city RTS buses, or Zipcar services. The shuttles that the school provides are useful and convenient.

But they only go to the bare minimum of where students may want to go, like student living areas, College Town, UR properties, and various shopping centers. If a student wanted to go to an area in the city that our shuttles do not reach, they have to use the RTS bus system. It is a city bus system, so it is accompanied

It seems more likely that the administration is aware of the scarce parking available, and figured they could get away with limiting the amount of students able to take up parking spots with this excuse.

by all the wonders that come with public transportation.

At the end of the day though, it does get you from point A to point B. That is, for a fee. One-dollar bus fare is not unreasonable by any measure, but the fact that other colleges in the Rochester area give their students free passes for RTS buses makes it unreasonable that students at arguably the best school in the area do not have access to such a luxury.

Zipcar is a useful resource for quick trips to the store and the like, but if you plan on staying anywhere for a day-trip, hourly costs quickly pile up. Allowing more students to keep personal transportation would be less costly, less time consuming, and would give UR students a greater sense of freedom and independence.

I understand that city campuses are limited for space, and that parking spaces are not a priority. I could easily fall back on the classic student exclamation of, “We pay \$65-grand a year and the school can’t afford to (insert desired amenity here)?”

There have been many ideas thrown around, and even articles in the Campus Times, about possibly increasing parking and building new lots. This is a serious issue to be considered. The University could take comprehensive steps to increase space for student parking.

If these issues were resolved, it would only be fair to allow freshman the same chance to enter the lottery as sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

Daniels is a member of the Class of 2020.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Cheers and Jeers

Cheers to Facilities for their speed in clearing the walkways during and after snowstorms;

Jeers to Grab and Go having confusing and limited hours.

Cheers to our superhuman Starbucks staff;

Jeers to Starbucks seat-stealers.

Cheers to the Community Kitchens in Douglass finally opening for students so they can start to learn how to feed themselves after they leave the University;

Jeers to having to wait for a half and hour outside on the Wilson Quad to get a scarf at Winterfest.

Cheers to Class of 2021 interacting on their Facebook page as we all watch;

Jeers to Gleason rearranging the table configuration to make it seem as if things have changed for the second semester but not actually adding any new tables.

Cheers to the weather gods for making this winter more bearable;

Jeers to having to avoid construction all over campus.

Cheers to the new food items at the Pit like the pepperoni rolls and the mashed potatoes;

Jeers to the mystery crunch rolls with molten

centers.

Cheers to W. Kamau Bell for ending racism;

Jeers to Ed Hajim’s monument to narcissism outside of Goergen—kind of weird that he has one while he’s still alive.

Cheers to construction contractors for actually sticking to their schedules pretty well;

Jeers to courses that make you scan written homework and submit it on Blackboard.

Cheers to PAWS providing adorable dogs every month to relieve student stress;
Jeers to everything that causes that aforementioned stress.

Cheers to the workers at Blimpie’s for feeding hordes of hungry students near the dark hours of midnight;

Jeers to the freshman class for never knowing what Old Douglass looked like.

Cheers to the sanitation workers who try to keep our restrooms from becoming toxic waste dumps;

Jeers to the drunk students who work to make that so.

Cheers to Rush Rhees Library for its year-round magnificence;

Jeers to Rush Rhees Library for being only thing ever on UR’s Instagram

Cheers to everyone who joined the Campus Times staff this year;

Jeers to every person who left the Campus Time staff this year.

Cheers to the Common Market for providing relatively affordable snacks that satisfy most cravings;

Jeers to the Christmas tree pretzels not being sold anymore.

Cheers to the MAG for having interesting and free exhibits for students;

Jeers to the inadequate transportation for students to get to those exhibits or really anywhere else in Rochester.

Cheers to Douglass Dining Hall for improving wait times for food at stations and adding labels to all its food stations;

Jeers to the ratio of bad soups to good soups at Douglass.

Cheers to the jolly man who works at the Kosher Station;

Jeers to the salt and puddles all over campus that ruin perfectly good shoes.

Cheers to Late Night Douglass for offering delicious, sobering food;

Jeers to the alarm that is constantly going off by the entrance to Wilson Commons.

The above editorials are published with the consent of a majority of the editorial board: Justin Trombly (Editor-in-Chief), Jesse Bernstein (Managing Editor), Vennela Pandaraboyina (Opinions Editor), Angela Lai (Publisher), and Ben Schmitz (A&E Editor). The Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board make themselves available to the UR community’s ideas and concerns. Email editor@campustimes.org.

Campus Times

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Mind the Science Gap

By JOSE PEREZ

American academics are concerned about the scientific literacy of the public. A 2015 study from the Pew Research Center and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) shows significant gaps in opinion between the general public and the scientific community in key scientific issues such as climate change, energy, food safety, and biological evolution.

Neil deGrasse Tyson, director of the Hayden Planetarium and renowned scientific communicator, summarized these concerns at a recent talk in Guilford College, North Carolina: “Americans overall are bad at science. Scared of math. Poor at physics and engineering. Resistant to evolution. This science illiteracy is a threat to the nation. The consequence of that is that you breed a generation of people who do not know what science is nor how and why it works. You have mortgaged the future financial security of your nation. Innovations in science and technology are the [basis] of tomorrow’s economy.”

Many scientists consider this scientific illiteracy rampant in the new Trump administration, and thus fear that the scientific community will lose its seat in shaping public policy, specifically on issues related to climate change and energy. Some are even considering marching on Washington D.C. on Earth Day to remind the new government about the importance of science-based policy, an unusual move from a group that has normally tried to shy away from manifesting political opinions.

Most of the scientific community has long considered this “science gap” to be a deficit of scientific knowledge and thinking—if only people were informed enough to know and understand the science behind these issues, they would agree with the

experts. Thus, an improvement in STEM education in grades K-12, as well as increased efforts in scientific communication and outreach to present these findings to the public, should be key in bridging the gap.

But several research studies over the past decade suggest that the causes of the science gap are more complex.

Let’s first go back to the Pew study: despite the gaps in opinion between the public and scientists, a significant majority of the public holds a favorable view of the scientific enterprise, with 70 percent of adults agreeing that government investments in science and technology pay off in the long run, and 80 percent of adults agreeing that science has made life easier for most people. Furthermore, a separate Pew study conducted in 2016 also

‘Americans overall are bad at science. Scared of math. Poor at physics and engineering. Resistant to evolution. This science illiteracy is a threat to the nation [...] You have mortgaged the future financial security of your nation.’

showed that scientists are still one of the most trusted professionals in America, only behind the military.

If the public still holds science and scientists in such high regard, why do so many oppose the scientific consensus on specific issues?

A 2012 study led by Yale Law School psychologist Dan Kahan tried to give us some insight in the case of climate change. Kahan’s team tested two different hypotheses that explained public apathy over climate change: the first one attributes such opinions to a

deficit of scientific information and understanding, the second to opposing sets of cultural values. The researchers surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,500 U.S. adults to test the predictions made by both hypotheses, and found that the results agreed more strongly with second explanation, opposing cultural values.

These results should be a call to action for those of us who engage in scientific communication and outreach. We have to go beyond explaining scientific information in a clear and concise fashion; we also have to do it in a way that the audience doesn’t perceive that information to be contrary to their cultural values.

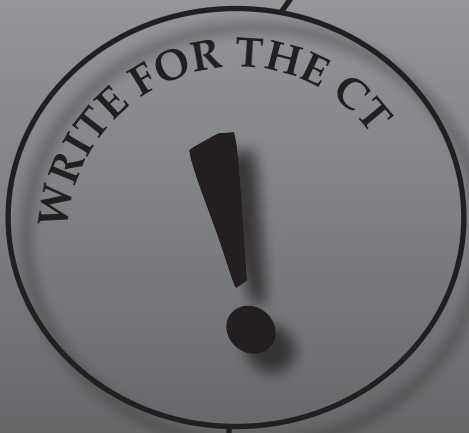
We need more communicators from diverse cultural backgrounds, who can relate to specific audiences more closely and thus be perceived as credible.

Following this line of thought, I urge UR students to participate more actively in science outreach and communication, and help us bridge that science gap.

There are several opportunities on and off campus to do science outreach. The UR chapters of professional associations (e.g. OSA, SPIE, APS, ACS, APA, IEEE) often organize outreach initiatives in local schools and other community centers, and the national-level leadership of these associations arranges yearly visits to Congress to advocate for increased science funding and science-based policy. The Rochester Museum and Science Center (RMSC) is continuously in need of volunteers who can help with their current exhibits, or even help create new ones.

And of course, the (very young) student group that I lead, Students for Science Advocacy, will try to do its part promoting science policy and advocacy by hosting relevant speakers and meeting to discuss current science policy issues.

Jose Perez is pursuing a master’s degree in optic.



OPINIONS@CAMPUSTIMES.ORG

UR OPINION

BY VENNELA PANDARABOYINA & YIYUN HUANG
OPINIONS EDITOR & PHOTO EDITOR

“WHAT WOULD YOU DO ON YOUR DREAM DATE?”



SAM KERBER, '20

“Bungee jumping with Leif K. Johansen.”



ZOUHAIR ALMIDANI, '19

“Anything with my girlfriend is enough.”



JACK SMITH, '19

“Get drunk on Scotch.”



SOPHIA STONE, '18

“A day at the beach.”



MOLLY GOLDSTEIN, '17

“I would go on a hot air balloon ride.”



PAYTON NUGENT, '20

“Going mini-golfing, getting ice cream, and then walking on the beach.”

FEATURES

Dining Hall Employees Experience Varied Treatment From Students

DINING FROM PAGE 1

‘Chopped’?” she asks. “Well, it gets like that back here sometimes.”

Leslie chimes in, “Yep, this is where all the drama happens.”

Other than working the register, cashiers are often required to help set up the stations before doors open.

This can be an frenzied task, especially in Douglass, where many of the stations are dedicated to certain diets. If an item that could contaminate the allergen-free station is accidentally brought there, for example, everything must be thrown out and the equipment properly sterilized.

With limited time before students start flooding in, this can be a major setback.

Tension and drama aside, they are still a family. Leslie and Shamika have become particularly close over the years.

“Miss Leslie is my mother away from home,” Shamika says.

In a separate interview, without knowing she had been called her mother, Leslie describes Shamika as her baby.

I mention to her what Shamika said.

“Really?” Leslie smiles coyly. “Me and that girl are just so intertwined.”

The student body makes up the largest portion of this extended family: nearly three and a half thousand pampered children whose nourishment is taken care of by Dining Services.

All three cashiers are not convinced that students recognize how much Dining Services and its employees do for them. Dawn blames this on a lingering teenage arrogance that some students have yet to grow out of.

Dawn and Shamika might let some of that overt egotism slide, but Leslie is not afraid to serve up a side of sass when necessary.

For example, the new doors put in during the renovation are designed to lock in place if pushed open all the way, something most students fail to recognize as they file in and out. The open doors create a perfect wind tunnel that blasts Leslie with frigid air.

At first, she recognized that the students were oblivious to what was happening and would either politely ask them to “please close the door” or get up herself to shut it. But after days of repeatedly asking students to be mindful of the door and taking hundreds of unnecessary steps to close it, Leslie began to get irritated.

Each time she feels the slightest breath of cold air

seep through her sweatshirt, Leslie stiffens.

“Hey! Close the door!” she yells. Her voice booms through the dining hall, but the wind keeps it from reaching the students who are already walking away. Leslie doesn’t give up.

“Close the door! Close the door!”

Dawn casually points out the obvious: “I don’t think they can hear you.”

Leslie mumbles something under her breath about how they really need to fix the damn things, and grudgingly gets up to close it.

On the rare occasion that students do hear Leslie, they freeze before slowly turning around to confront the intimidating voice. She gives them a wide-eyed stare that says, Well, pay more attention next time. They close the door, white-knuckled and whispering short apologies without making eye contact.

While swiping into the dining hall, student engagement with employees rarely graduates from the ritualistic “hello, how are you?”

There are some exceptions, however.

Watching Leslie, Dawn, and Shamika work, it’s easy

There’s a spectrum of student-employee relationships: on the “exemplary” side are the Kobers, but there are a handful that could be classified as ‘unsatisfactory.’

to tell who has made an effort to get to know them.

“Oh hey, Daniel.” Dawn squeals as one such student walks in. “Where’s your instrument?”

She glares at him, jokingly. “You better be practicing.”

Daniel chuckles.

“Don’t worry, Dawn. I’ve been practicing lots.”

“Glad to hear it,” she says with a wide smile. “Enjoy your lunch now, dear.”

Out of the three, Dawn seems to know the most students. This might have to do with her level of experience—or maybe it’s because she’s mentioned on the University’s list of “101 Things to do Before You Graduate,” handed out to freshman at the start of the year.

The task “Make friends with Dawn, the world’s nicest Dining Services worker” can be found about halfway down.

Leslie, on the other hand, has formed an incredibly strong relationship with juniors Nicolette and Julianna Kober. The twin sisters met Leslie their freshman year,



YIYUN HUANG / PHOTO EDITOR

Dining Services worker Jayquan Coley serves a student at the Kosher Comfort sandwich station in Douglass Dining Hall.

when they frequented the dining hall after soccer practice.

“It was usually early in the morning,” Julianna says, “and Leslie was always just so energetic.”

The three would spend time catching up and eventually Leslie began to refer to the girls excitedly as her “babies” when they walked in.

Over the years, the relationship has grown, and Leslie has become “a loving mother away from home” for the Kobers. Whenever they have a stressful day, Leslie is there, willing to talk things through and offer up advice.

“Sometimes I’ll come in during a transition period, when the hall is closed, and just sit and chat with her,” says Julianna.

“I think it gives our parents peace of mind, knowing that we have an amazing support system at school,” says Nicolette.

Their mom is even friends with Leslie on Facebook.

“I don’t even have these

Dawn, Leslie, and Shamika would love to see all students treat them with kindness and consideration.

kinds of relationships with my professors,” Nicolette says.

The twins have actually established close relationships with a handful of the service employees on campus. Especially Julianna, who works at Connections.

Last year, Julianna remembers when her sister took a last minute trip to Peru with some friends.

“I was so nervous,” she recalls. “I was at work and Miss

Karen [her supervisor] noticed something was wrong. I told her how worried I was for my sister and she said, ‘Come with me, we’ll go pray.’ We went to the bathroom and prayed for probably 20 minutes or so. I really value Miss Karen’s spirituality. I’m not even a religious person, but it just made me feel so much better.”

“Maybe that’s what kept the bulls from attacking me,” says Nicolette.

There’s a spectrum of student-employee relationships: on the “exemplary” side are the Kobers, but there are a handful that could be classified as “unsatisfactory.”

In fact, some students have acted downright insulting—slamming ID cards on the table, wrapping their hands with their sleeves when receiving it back, and being vocally abusive when something doesn’t go their way.

One time Shamika had to tell a student about the rules regarding “clamshells,” the green plastic to-go containers students can purchase from Dining Services for \$5.

“There’s a lot of misinformation that circulates about how the clamshells can be used,” she says. “I don’t think the management explains the program well enough to students.”

The containers are intended for students who might not have time to sit down at the dining hall and eat their meal. Instead, they can fill a Clamshell and bring it with them to class or the library.

Many students, though, believe they can sit down to eat a meal and fill up a Clamshell for later.

That is not the case.

“In that situation you would have to pay for the equivalent of two meals,” explains

Shamika, “otherwise we as a department would lose money.”

The student ended up paying for both meals, but not without a feisty confrontation.

When Shamika tried to hand his change (about \$12) back, he looked her in the eyes and said, angrily, “No, you keep it. You need it more than I do,” and stormed out of the hall.

Hearing stories like this one infuriates the Kobers.

“They are people too,” says Julianna. “They deserve to be respected. I mean, how would you even get into the dining hall if people like Miss Leslie, Shamika, or Dawn weren’t there?”

Dawn, Leslie, and Shamika would love to see all students treat them with kindness and consideration.

“We provide them with delicious meals that take into consideration their diets and allergies,” says Dawn, something she believes warrants some form of acknowledgment.

Nicolette says it could something be as simple as making eye contact.

“I think you make such a personal connection just by doing that.”

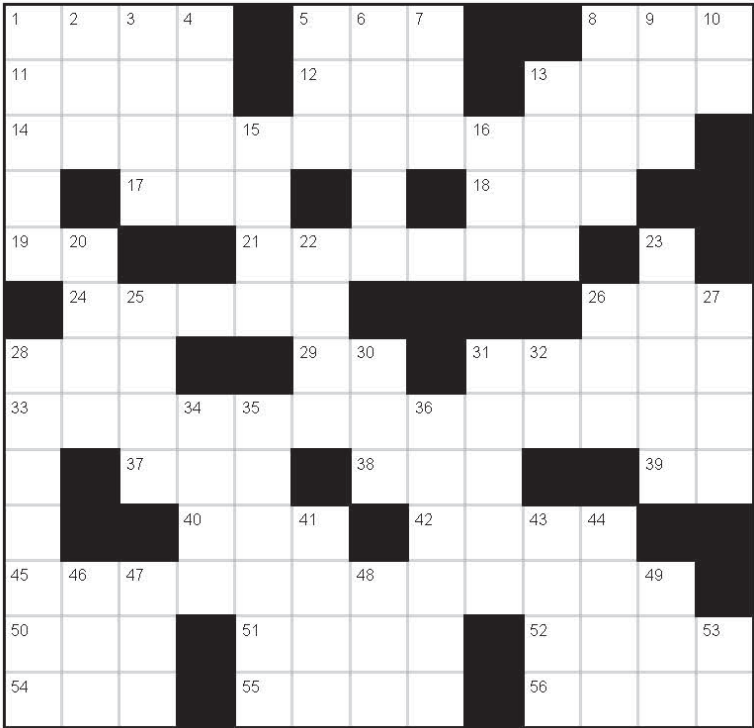
For Julianna, engaging with service workers is an opportunity to form new friendships. Students who choose not to are “missing out, and that’s their loss.”

Despite occasional unsettling incidents, Shamika says most of her interactions with students are pleasant.

“There are a lot of sweet kids at this school,” she says. “You just, you know, get a bad apple every once in awhile.”

Listro is a member of the Class of 2017.

It's Only a Phrase, Mom



BY **DAVID SHILDKRAUT**
'20
DIFFICULTY **HARD**

ACROSS:
1. A short note

5. Hawaiian stringed instrument
8. Frequent Reddit feature
11. Japanese flower
12. Citation format
13. Niagara's Maid of the _____

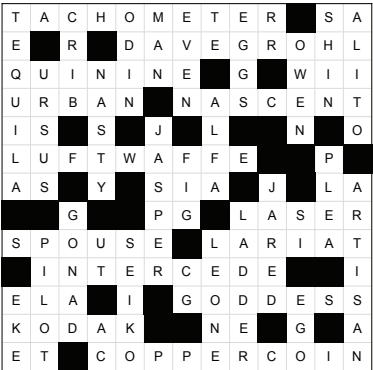
14. Where the proof on the golf course is...
17. Out of Office, abbr.
18. Time for a Brit
19. Writer of Charlotte's Web White
21. Off-limits area
24. God of luck
26. Reason for athlete's suspension
28. 24 hours
29. Species, in short
31. A political mess-up, for one
33. An instrument's buzzing sound is ...
37. Poet's "before"
38. The Navy's intel., briefly
39. Goldman Sachs on the ticker
40. PB ____ J
42. Six to Presidente Nieto
45. A penny left in a house fire is...
50. With "code," mail routing number
51. Nuclear and solar, for example. Abbr.
52. Average grades
54. Time your flight is due in

55. First line of a news article
56. "I smell ____"

DOWN:
1. A type of bell
2. Ancient Chinese dynasty
3. "____ the Woods"
4. Philippine snack made with tofu
5. Ref. on the diamond
6. Clumsy individual
7. Consume
8. Word that isn't "a word"
9. Debated food chemical additive
10. 2160 mile trail, in passing
13. Show without speaking
15. Billions of years
16. The Gamers Network
20. Uncle Joe's late son
22. Deprive from ownership
23. Windshield feature in cars
25. Bit's relative
26. La ____, capital of Bolivia
27. Pairs
28. Summer bewilderment, aka...
30. Vietnamese noodle soup
31. One who hits the squares, circles, and diamonds

32. North America, abbr.
34. HP restoring ber-ry from Pokemon games
35. Carrot's herbal relative
36. Guarantee
41. Unit of force
43. South American empire
44. The Oracle, for one
46. Popular WilCo eatery
47. Pruitt's charge, perhaps
48. A place to sleep
49. Latin goddess
53. Shorthand in an address

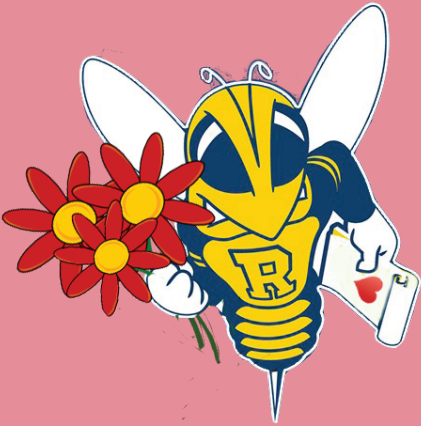
Last Week's Answers



Campus Times Valentine's Cards

UR cute...
Be my valentine!

To:
From:



I would use my last guest
swipe on you...
Be my valentine!

To:
From:



You are the Selig-MAN of
my dreams.
Be my valentine!

To:
From:



I have more love for you
than I have student loans.
Be my valentine!

To:
From:



CLUB SPOTLIGHT

Undocumented Students Dare to Dream

By **SREYOSHI SUR**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

UR DREAMers: the student group gets its name from the federal DREAM Act, which protects young undocumented immigrants from deportation and allows them to pursue higher education, receive driver’s license, and obtain a work permit.

It was created a year ago by junior Raul Ramirez in an effort to bring solidarity among the undocumented and DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) students at UR.

“Through this group, we can keep in contact with each other while we are here” Ramirez said.

But things have changed in the past few months, fol-

lowing the election of President Donald Trump, who has vowed to ramp up deportations of undocumented immigrants and to build a wall between Mexico and the United States.

As a result, UR DREAMers

But things have changed in the past few months following the election of President Donald Trump

is gaining momentum.

The group organized several events last semester with the goal of making everyone aware of their presence on campus and eradicating some

of the misconceptions associated with immigration.

At the end of last semester, UR DREAMers organized the event called “#MorethanA-Label: My Immigrant Story”, at which many students came forward, sharing their experiences, journeys, and struggles as immigrants.

“It was really interesting being able to hear their story, see where they come from and able to connect with them,” Ramirez said.

UR DREAMers has an eventful spring semester planned, starting with the “#ToImmigrantsWithLove” event, at which students will be able to write letters of support to undocumented students on campus to be displayed in Douglass.

“My community, my family

feels afraid now,” said Haydi Torres, sophomore and member of UR DREAMers “By writing letters, [you are] do-

‘If I say that I am undocumented, I am an illegal alien, will they change their mind?’

ing something. That makes a difference.”

Torres describes herself as, “undocumented, unafraid, and unapologetic.” She is originally from La Ceiba, Honduras.

“If I say that I am undocumented, I am an illegal alien, will they change their mind? What would they think?” Torres said in reference to her

fellow students.

UR DREAMers are trying to break the myths and stigma associated with terms like “DACA,” “undocumented,” and “illegal alien.”

“UndocuAllies Training” is a workshop that Torres and a couple of other members of UR DREAMers are organizing next month. Its name refers to people who support undocumented students.

Faculty, students, and administrators are slated to talk about immigration policies and how they can facilitate an inclusive environment for undocumented students.

“You are more likely to defend and protect people that you know,” Torres said of the group’s efforts.

Sur is pursuing a master’s degree in chemistry.

CAMPUS UNDERDOGS

Reefat Aziz: Debating Across Borders



By **ETHAN BIDNA**
COLUMNIST



By **MELISSA HOLLOWAY**
COLUMNIST

For Take Five student Syed Reefat Aziz, who goes by Reefat, debate is not just the sport he plays,—it’s the medium through which he’s embraced the world.

It is the tool he has used to affect change throughout the world, both here in Rochester and in his home country of Bangladesh.

Despite English being his second language and his admitted unfamiliarity with American subjects of debate, Reefat has defeated countless opponents and led Rochester’s Debate Union team to numerous successes.

Reefat’s story began in Dhaka, Bangladesh, where he grew up with his family.

“In Bangladesh,” Reefat explained, “there are a number of different school systems,” including a national school system, which teaches education in line with the UN’s “Education for All” standards.

“Since I went to a national schools, I learned English in kindergarten,” Reefat said.

It was also in these nation-

al schools where he found his love for debate.

“I first discovered debate in the 7th grade, and have been doing it ever since.”

Growing up, Reefat dreamed of studying in America, though he admitted that “as kids in Bangladesh, the only American schools we’d ever heard of were Harvard and MIT.”

But as he neared graduation, he attended an admissions event hosted by the University. It was there that Reefat met Dean of Admissions Jonathan Burdick and learned about UR’s open curriculum, a major factor attracting him to the school.

Eventually, despite his parents initial reluctance to send him 1 so far from home, they agreed, he applied, and soon he was on his way to Rochester.

Reefat described his first coming to America as a “culture shock,” but he soon embraced and joined what he called the “vibrant international student community” at UR. He also credited his assimilation to graduate students from Bangladesh, who helped him learn how to bridge American and Bangladeshi culture.

For Reefat, the largest cultural adjustment he found was in debate.

Though he had debated in Bangladesh before, American debate was an entirely new struggle.

“I think in Bengali,” he said, “and so when I debated, I had to translate to and from Bengali to English.”

He noted as well that American debate is quite different from international debate, in that it focuses heavily on American issues.

“I had to learn U.S. culture to be able to compete in these

debates,” he said.

The adjustment for him didn’t take long, though. As he studied in Rochester, Reefat grew as a debater. Eventually, he became president of the team. Though the team is more focused on competition, Reefat took time to expand the club’s campus programming. He worked with others to grow their “Public Debate” program, collaborating with other clubs on campus to host public debate on pertinent topics.

Now in his fifth year, having completed his Biomedical Engineering major and his Legal Studies minor, debate and American culture are second nature to Reefat.

In fact, Reefat has turned the table, using his Key Scholar project and his mastery of debate to help both his new community of Rochester and his home back in Bangladesh.

The first part of his Key project is a collaboration with East High, the local Rochester high school that the University has collaborated with, where he has started a debate program.

“Debate teaches such important skills, but it is often seen as a rich, suburban thing,” he said.

Before graduation, he hopes to introduce a permanent debate class at East High, and is currently teaching local teachers to assume his role once he leaves.

For the second part of his Take Five, Reefat is working with a Madrasa (religious) school back in Bangladesh to leverage debate in ways that can help empower female students, through a program he first developed in high school called Leaping Boundaries.

As he explained, the Madrassas are “outdated and out of touch with the international

world,” explaining that they “won’t teach some modern concepts,” and also suffer from a shortage of teachers.

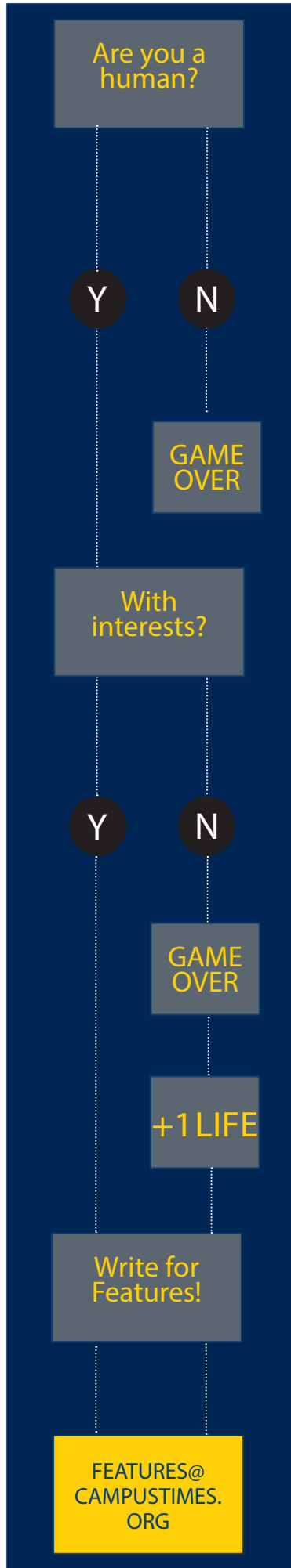
To this end, Reefat and others have begun a program where they trade teaching labor to the Madrasa in exchange for the Madrasa allowing them to teach the UN educational system. In this iteration, they supplement the Leaping Boundaries program with debate, sending teaching videos to students in Bangladesh on best debate practices, and reviewing videos of their students debate performances. “We taught students of all genders, and we teach the curriculum that will actually help them get the jobs. It helps these students learn how to present themselves, and learn how to speak good English. For the female students, it helps them grow and break free of the cycle of dependency.”

With his fifth year coming to a close, Reefat is not sure what comes next. He is considering expanding the business he began, where he and others developed a more efficient procedure for neurological surgeons to treat “nerve block.” He may also stay in Rochester to expand the projects he’s started.

Regardless, he looks back fondly at his time in here. He admitted there were some things he would have done differently, including applying more critical thinking to his career choice early on and being more honest with himself about how much work he could handle.

Nevertheless, he wants students to remember: that, “This is literally going to be the best years of your life. Make it yours.”

Bidna and Holloway are both Take Five Scholars.



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Tradition and Talent Intermingle at UR China Nite

By MUHAMMED HADI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Chinese Students Association welcomed the new year with luck, music, and togetherness at its annual celebratory China Nite, a diverse three-hour display of traditional performances.

“I started thinking and planning for China Nite approximately two weeks before winter break,” sophomore and event coordinator Zihan Li said. “The general formation of the event has not changed, yet we try to make the performances more various and more representative every year.”

The night kicked off with the majority of upper Strong Audi-

‘The aim of China Nite is to provide a platform for people with talents or passion to showcase themselves. We [...] learn about the different cultures here.’

torium filled with guests sipping the bubble tea offered, to the sound of No Jackets Required as the opening act, playing “Young Turks” by Rod Stewart and “Sweet Child O’ Mine” by Guns N’ Roses.

Afterwards the stage was passed onto several other performances, both in English and Chinese. UR’s K-pop group Rice Crew, the Chinese Music Ensemble of Rochester, and the Rochester Tai Chi Chuan Center all contributed their time onstage to honor Chinese history and tradition.

Several raffle drawings were held throughout the night. Prizes included several coupons and vouchers, a pair of Mira water

bottles, and a polaroid camera.

University President Seligman was present and acknowledged how CSA was doing a great job in promoting diversity and unity among the University community, a fact that was echoed by the winner of the musical chair contest.

“You don’t need to speak Chi-

The song represents the idea that no matter where the students are, they always share the same culture.

nese to have fun tonight,” he said to the crowd, who made their agreement quite clear with a strong round of applause.

China Nite, originally designed for international students to celebrate traditional festivals, has become one of the CSA’s main annual performances.

“The aim of China Nite is to provide a platform for people with talents or passion to showcase themselves,” Li said. “We also cherish the opportunities of studying at U of R and learn about the different but fascinating cultures here.”

The show ended with a song performed by six singers from different performances joining together for a well-known song in China. The song represents the idea that no matter where the students are, they always share the same culture.

“It will enhance the intimacy of our community overall and provide a piece of connection between students and faculties outside of classroom,” Li said.

The night ended with wild applause, as many ushered in the new year once again with high hopes and aspirations.

Hadi is a member of the Class of 2019.



VIVIAN LI / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

UR k-pop group performed at the Chinese Student Association’s China Nite.



VIVIAN LI / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

The Rochester Tai Chi Chuan Center worked with UR to bring China Nite together.

Little Theater Brings Big Ideas to Screen

By NAOMI RUTAGARAMA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Raoul Peck’s “I Am Not Your Negro,” now playing at the Little Theatre, is a meditation on and continuation of writer James Baldwin’s investigation into the black American experience.

In the wake of the assassinations of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and Medgar Evers, Baldwin set out to write a novel on the lives of these three men, with whom he shared close connections because of their pursuit of justice for African Americans. In a letter to his literary agent, Baldwin said he wanted the lives of these three men “to bang against and reveal one another as they did in life.”

By the time Baldwin died in 1987,

however, the novel was only partially completed.

Baldwin’s literary voice is not easily matched, yet Peck manages to amplify the power of Baldwin’s

It took some time for young Baldwin to realize that by cheering for the hero—the white man—he was unknowingly rooting against himself.

words. Through a somber narration by actor Samuel L. Jackson, scenes from the film easily transition from

excerpts of Baldwin’s books to archival speeches and interviews with Baldwin. These different elements are woven together to create a stunning portrayal of Baldwin and his thoughts.

As the audience listens to the narration, various images and clips play on the screen: the violence against black protesters at the Greensboro sit-ins, angry white crowds shouting slurs and toting anti-black signs against the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School, and Black Lives Matter protesters facing the brutality of police officers. These images force the audience to come face-to-face with the ongoing oppression suffered by generations of African-Americans at the hands of white Americans.

We also see scenes from classic

films—like “King Kong,” “A Raisin in the Sun,” and “In the Heat of the Night,” juxtaposed with archival and current footage of protest and police violence. Meanwhile, we hear Baldwin’s words spoken by Jackson: “The story of the Negro in America is the story of America. It is not a pretty story.”

One of the first memories that Baldwin has of recognizing himself as a black person within the context of America was through media, specifically in westerns. It took some time for young Baldwin to realize that by cheering for the hero—the white man—he was unknowingly rooting against himself.

In “I Am Not Your Negro,” Baldwin explains the ways the entertainment industry created a narrative in which white characters were always

the heroes and the effect this had on him.

“I despised and feared those heroes because they did take vengeance into their own hands. They thought vengeance was theirs to take, and yes, I understood that. My countrymen were my enemy,” Baldwin says.

Baldwin’s deconstruction of American culture may help us analyze our current political and cultural atmosphere. When he speaks about films he is speaking about what they reveal about us as a nation: our fears, hopes, beliefs, ideologies.

“Not everything that is faced can be changed,” Baldwin says, “but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

Rutagarama is a member of the Class of 2018.

Embrace your creative side

Write for Arts & Entertainment

Email
a-e@campustimes.org

The 'Beginning of Everything' Should End Pretty Soon

By ISABEL DRUKKER
A&E EDITOR

Amazon Prime's new show, "Z: The Beginning of Everything," has taught me that there is nothing more disappointing than a failing marriage. Except, that is, for a failing television show.

"Z: The Beginning of Everything" has been flooding newsfeeds with silent ads sporting titillating quotes from the show, based on the life of Zelda Fitzgerald and her famously rocky marriage to literary giant F. Scott Fitzgerald. "How shall we celebrate, on the rocks or on the bed?" The trailers themselves imply the show is fast-paced and glamorous. It couldn't be more misleading.

The series is based on "Z: A Novel of Zelda Fitzgerald" by Therese Anne Fowler. It begins slowly in Montgomery, Alabama, and then trudges onto New York, where the newly married Fitzgerald couple faces obstacles: Zelda's clothes are weird, Scott lies about money, Zelda wants to be in a movie, Scott lies about finishing college, and most of all, someone had too much to drink.

Unlike in the trailers, Zelda is wearing ruffled frocks, and her attraction to Fitzgerald couldn't be more passive. Throughout the season, her character moves back and forth between rebellious southern belle and uptight husband-sitter. When faced with unresolvable conflict, Zelda, not once, but twice, undresses as a solution.

In the end, Zelda's character skips over being complicated and instead remains undecided, not due to personality, but poor writing.

Scott is mean and has little character motivation other than

his need to have a bottle of gin in one hand and Zelda in the other (And also not wanting to turn into his father? This is briefly mentioned and even more quickly forgotten).

Perhaps one of the most obvious failures of the show is that everything simply looks old.

"Z" is trying too hard to remind its audience that these

in plot. Only one event happens in each episode, leaving little setup for anything to happen quickly in its successor. So the season's storyline is trite and simple. If you've heard of the Great Gatsby or the Roaring Twenties before, you can probably predict the series as a whole.

It could be, however, that this association is what holds the series back. With "Fitzgerald," one thinks of parties, the green light, excessive wealth, and because of 2013's "Great Gatsby," a banger soundtrack.

Instead, though, "Z: The Beginning of Everything" is quiet. Its best moments include those of Zelda realizing the life she has chosen for herself, as the caretaker of a man drowning in alcoholism and trying to make something from it. If any, the series' successes comes from illustrating how Zelda's brilliance is limited by her desire to help her husband.

Time after time he uses her words in his work, and when he feels like his success is not matching his talent, she comforts him.

"I will never let you fail," she tells

him at one point, not realizing that

their marriage has already failed them both.

This could be a simple case of the show not matching expectation. After all, in reality the Fitzgeralds did have more arguments than they had money, and Zelda did have a painfully southern accent. But the trailers' illustration of glamour and excess brought in a demographic uninterested in reality, so the story feels like it's lacking.

Overall, "Z: The Beginning of Everything" has the sad and sour taste of a lost opportunity.

Drukker is a member of the Class of 2017.



LUISA NOVA / ILLUSTRATION EDITOR

'MEDIA MATRIX'

Sasha Fierce: Where Is She Now?



By JEFF HOWARD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It's 2017, which means that 2007 is just about old enough to be part of another era.

If you don't believe me, just listen to pop music from the time. That's right, a decade ago people listened to music on the radio where the kick wasn't the most compressed part in the mix. Can you imagine that?

It's hard to believe that this drivel even made it onto the radio when most SoundCloud producers these days have better beats. But what you have to remember is that this was 2007, and kids weren't making beats on their laptops like they do today. Producers had less pressure to raise the bar, and people were more easily impressed by mediocre production.

It's true—pop music is objectively more polished now than it was ten years ago. Compare Britney Spears' "Gimme More" from 2007 to her newest single "Slumber Party" from just last year. The latter is rich with spidery hi-hats and lush reverb, while the former consists of a kick, clap, and bass synth that I could assemble in five minutes.

However, with this simplicity comes an honest glimpse of what the 2000's were really like.

"I Am... Sasha Fierce" by Beyonce is a prime example of this kind of album. Although it is not as consistent as her more recent work, its production style and tender vibe make it an exciting little time capsule for an era that I associate with middle school dances, the color electric green, and the song "Boots with the Fur" by Flo Rida.

The opening song on "Sasha Fierce," "If I Were a Girl," makes me feel like I'm walking down the streets

of Brooklyn on a warm autumn afternoon as an extra in the movie "Akeelah and the Bee." Everything about this track, from the wistful acoustic guitar picking to the tight snare sample, brings me back to a simpler time when the biggest thing on my mind was Worksheet 4.2 for my Pre-Algebra class.

Another thing I really appreciate about "Sasha Fierce" is its often singsongy melodies. The power anthem "Halo" is a great example of this. I've noticed that melodies from pop music in the 2000s made more jumps, particularly to the sixth-scale degree, when compared to melodies in pop music now, which tend to hang on one or two notes over a changing chord progression. The difference is like comparing a Bach melody to a somber monastic chant. The former feels pure and cheerful while the latter feels darker and more foreboding. Call it a reflection of our blissful ignorance towards societal problems in the 2000s that has shifted to social-media-fueled existential depression.

If you listen to Beyonce's "Lemonade" and then listen to "Sasha Fierce," you'll detect a profound difference in the richness of the records. But this is a part of the appeal "Sasha Fierce." When I listen to the beats on "If I Were a Girl" and "Disappear," I imagine Beyonce's production crew leaning back on reclining chairs in a production studio in 2007, laughing to themselves as they explore exciting new production techniques that are now commonplace. With this comes a sense of beautiful naivete which manifests in the quirky snare pattern on "Disappear" and the stupidly simple synth line on "Broken Hearted Girl."

Most of all though, "Sasha Fierce" provides us with a thrilling and valuable lens of what it meant to be alive during the 2000s—a time when the world was burning but we were just a little too oblivious to it to be sad.

Howard is a member of the Class of 2017.

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Oscars Predictions Read ‘La La Land’ Triumph

By SCOTT ABRAMS
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

On Febr. 26, the Academy Awards could go one of two ways: either “La La Land,” the film of the moment, is going to sweep and potentially tie or break the record for most Oscar wins, or the Academy will spread the love, leaving the film with a mere six or seven wins. Or maybe something in between. Who knows?

Best Picture: “Arrival”; “Fences”; “Hacksaw Ridge”; “Hell or High Water”; “Hidden Figures”; “La La Land”; “Lion”; “Manchester by the Sea”; “Moonlight.”
Will and Should Win: “La La Land”
Should’ve Been Nominated: “Jackie”

Anything besides “La La Land” would be a huge shock at this point. Next question.

Best Director: Denis Villeneuve, “Arrival”; Mel Gibson, “Hacksaw Ridge”; Damien Chazelle, “La La Land”; Kenneth Lonergan, “Manchester by the Sea”; Barry Jenkins, “Moonlight.”
Will and Should Win: Damien Chazelle, “La La

Land”
Should’ve Been Nominated: Tom Ford, “Nocturnal Animals”

Chazelle should easily break the record for youngest director winner.

Best Actor: Casey Affleck, “Manchester by the Sea”; Andrew Garfield, “Hacksaw Ridge”; Ryan Gosling, “La La Land”; Viggo Mortensen, “Captain Fantastic”; Denzel Washington, “Fences.”
Will Win: Denzel Washington, “Fences.”
Should Win: Casey Affleck, “Manchester by the Sea”
Should’ve Been Nominated: Jake Gyllenhaal, “Nocturnal Animals”

This is one of the toughest categories of the night. Affleck has won everything but the Screen Actors Guild Award, but the SAG winner has gone on to win the Oscar for over a decade, so I’m going to go with Washington.

Best Actress: Isabelle Huppert, “Elle”; Ruth Negga, “Loving”; Natalie Portman, “Jackie”; Emma Stone, “La La Land”; Meryl Streep, “Florence Foster Jenkins.”
Will Win: Emma Stone, “La

La Land”
Should Win: Natalie Portman, “Jackie”
Should’ve Been Nominated: Amy Adams, “Arrival”

Sorry, Amy Adams. The new Leonardo Dicaprio was inexplicably left without a nomination for her incredible performance in “Arrival.” But also my apologies to Natalie Portman, whose dynamic performance in “Jackie” will lose out to the “La La Land” juggernaut despite the fact that it might go down as one of the all-time great screen performances.

Best Supporting Actor: Mahershala Ali, “Moonlight”; Jeff Bridges, “Hell or High Water”; Lucas Hedges, “Manchester by the Sea”; Dev Patel, “Lion”; Michael Shannon, “Nocturnal Animals.”
Will Win: Mahershala Ali, “Moonlight”
Should Win: Lucas Hedges, “Manchester by the Sea”
Should’ve Been Nominated: Hugh Grant, “Florence Foster Jenkins”

Ali will probably take it, but I wonder if vote splitting between him and BAFTA-winner Patel might open a spot for Bridges to win his second trophy.

Best Supporting Actress: Viola Davis, “Fences”; Naomie Harris, “Moonlight”; Nicole Kidman, “Lion”; Octavia Spencer, “Hidden Figures”; Michelle Williams, “Manchester by the Sea.”
Will and Should Win: Viola Davis, “Fences”
Should’ve Been Nominated: Gugu Mbatha Raw, “Miss Sloane”

Williams does heartbreaking work with only ten minutes of screen time in “Manchester by the Sea,” but Davis is undeniable (and should’ve won for “The Help” five years ago).

Best Original Screenplay: Taylor Sheridan, “Hell or High Water”; Damien Chazelle, “La La Land”; Yorgos Lanthimos and Efithimis Filippou, “The Lobster”; Kenneth Lonergan, “Manchester by the Sea”; Mike Mills, “20th Century Women.”
Will and Should Win: Kenneth Lonergan, “Manchester by the Sea”
Should’ve Been Nominated: Noah Oppenheim, “Jackie”

I’m not sure that Oscar voters will reward Chazelle

with two awards in the same night, so I’m thinking Lonergan wins for his powerful screenplay. But I’d also love to see “The Lobster” get some attention, somewhere.

Best Adapted Screenplay: Eric Heisserer, “Arrival” (from “Story of Your Life” by Ted Chiang); August Wilson, “Fences” (adapted from his play of the same name); Allison Schroeder and Theodore Melfi, “Hidden Figures” (from the novel by Margo Lee Shetterly); Luke Davies, “Lion” (from “A Long Way Home” by Saroo Brierley and Larry Buttrose); Barry Jenkins and Tarell Alvin McCraney, “Moonlight” (from “In Moonlight Black Boys Look Blue” by McCraney).
Will Win: Barry Jenkins and Tarell Alvin McCraney, “Moonlight”
Should Win: Eric Heisserer, “Arrival”

Jenkins and McCraney will easily win here, but the film doesn’t belong in this category, as the academy only views it as an adapted work because it was based on an unproduced play.

Abrams is a member of the Class of 2018.

CT RECOMMENDS SHAKEY GRAVES

By BEN SCHMITZ
A&E EDITOR

Alejandro Rose-Garcia never intended to make a living as a musician. Getting his first brush of fame acting in “Spy Kids 3D” and the “Friday Night Lights” TV show, no one would have expected Rose-Garcia to be touring nationally and playing festivals as Shakey Graves a decade later.

Shakey Graves first started getting attention with his debut album “Roll the Bones” in 2011, which he self-released as a pay-what-you-want project on Bandcamp. His early signature sound of backwoods folk-blues, complete with self-harmonized vocals and percussive ham-boning all resting atop a warm bed of lo-fi recording and tape hiss, captivated listeners far and wide, quickly making “Roll the Bones” one of the most popular albums on Bandcamp.

After this initial release, Shakey’s sound evolved toward a grittier, biting style. There are many incredible live performances available on YouTube where he can be seen bringing a new vigor to the songs of “Roll the Bones,” among others. Shakey’s live act remained a one-man-show for several years after “Roll the Bones,” with him playing guitar, a suitcase bass drum, a foot pedaled tambourine, and singing, all in a fiery, intoxicating musical tempest.

Shakey’s second full-length release “And The War Came” saw his move to a label and the addition of more musicians under the Shakey Graves banner. This release brought his audience to national proportions, with songs like “Dearly Departed” even spending a few weeks on the charts.

When comparing “Roll the Bones” and “And The War Came,” one might feel that Shakey has lost a little bit of what made him unique. “And The War Came” still shines, but it perhaps shines a little too bright for those who fell in love with Shakey’s early dust-covered sound.

Luckily, Shakey’s discography has an incredible swath of hard to find releases that offer a treasure trove of weird and wonderfully diverse material for devout fans to sink their teeth into. Every year on Feb. 9 (decreed Shakey Graves Day by the mayor of Austin), fans are treated to new releases of rarities, demos, and live recordings. These releases and all prior Shakey Graves Day releases are only officially available for download on Feb. 9 through 11 every year, making them a bit hard to find online for new fans. Fortunately, they can be found on Reddit and other fan communities all year long. These releases contain some of his best and most experimental songs, including sentimental crooner “Chinatown” on the SG Day II EP “Story of my Life” and the borderline vaporwave track “If I Was Yours” from this year’s release “The Man from Taured,” to name a very limited few. Few artists have the flexibility and consistent ability to amaze with their songwriting as Shakey Graves. Digging in and exploring his discography is a rewarding and eye opening journey that everyone should try.

Schmitz is a member of the Class of 2019.