



ASP

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CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT

PODIUM PAT SAYS FAREWELL TO UALBANY



Photo courtesy of Podium Pat



File photo from the Albany Student Press

Pat at 26 years old.

Podium Pat stands with his maintenance cart.

By **KASSIE PARISI**

As the University at Albany continues its sprint forward to maintain its coveted "engine of opportunity" title, the school will quietly lose one of the features that makes it truly unique within the SUNY system at the end of December. The pipe-smoking Podium Pat will retire on Dec. 30, after 27 years at the university.

Originally from Brooklyn, Patrick Hill has befriended countless students over his 27-year career at UAlbany. He talked to students, he listened to students and, if they weren't the chatty type, he gave them a friendly smile as they walked by him on the Podium.

Pat, who can be found driving his red maintenance cart everywhere on the Podium, began his career at UAlbany as a clerk at the university bookstore where he worked for 10 years. He then switched to doing maintenance on the Podium. Pat said he switched because he loves the outdoors, and being outside gave him more opportunities to talk to students.

"I'm a talker. I like to talk," he said. Pat said he's been trying to retire for three years, particularly during the long, gray winters, but he kept coming back because he enjoys the spring season on campus. His favorite place on campus is the East Garden, and he takes a lot of pride in keeping the Podium clean.

"The Podium is the living room of the university. It's one room you want to keep clean," he said.

Now, at 72, Pat has decided that it's finally time to go. However, he won't ever forget all his friends who took him to meet their parents at graduation and all his friends who chatted with him. He will never forget the students who thanked him for smiling every day, he said, and he wishes everyone the best of luck in their continued studies, their graduations, and their lives.

"I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a goodbye. To President Jones, Student Association, faculty over the years who I've become friends with, and all the students. It's been a real joy and it's really kept me going, being able to speak to you

and have you as my friends. You'll always be in my thoughts and you'll always be in heart," Pat said.

I always knew who Podium Pat was, but I had never spoken to him prior to this story because I didn't know how to approach him. As a journalism student engaging with strangers is something I've become less afraid of and I always saw Pat talking to different students, but the thought of speaking to him always made me nervous. What would I talk to him about? My problems? Who would care about the problems of one student out of 17,000?

As it turned out, Pat is the one who cares about the problems of one student out of 17,000. He talked to people about boyfriends, girlfriends, families, work, school, or anything else they wanted to talk about. For a few weeks while I was working on this story, Pat came to the newspaper office just to see how I was doing. I didn't have to give him a grand answer about where my life was going and I didn't have to pretend I knew what I was doing. I just talked, and he just listened.

College students don't have people who

will listen to them anymore. They rarely have time to listen to each other. Under the crushing pressure of school, jobs, extracurricular activities and the dozens of other personal issues each student on this campus has to deal with, often, no one has time to say anything. More importantly, no one feels like they have anyone who is interested in their enormous struggles, which might seem mundane to any other person. Of course, there are places students can reach out to on campus if they feel overwhelmed or upset, but sometimes that might be too much. Sometimes the only thing a student needs is to stop and talk for five minutes.

During his career, Podium Pat was that person to many students. The act of encouraging college students to talk and to be open and kind to each other should not go away just because Podium Pat is moving on. It's hard to find cheer on this huge campus sometimes. It's easier to walk with your head down, but if we work at it and start by simply smiling at one another, we can continue the work Podium Pat did to brighten up this gray place.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Twitter used for mourning

By **JANIE FRANK**

While details about the death of University at Albany student Johnny Paredes are still unclear, some students have taken to social media to remember his life. The hashtag "#HelpFindJohnny," was tweeted on Nov. 25 by 14 people when Paredes was still missing. Eight of the posts shared the same picture with their tweet: an image of Johnny "J5" Paredes with text. "Johnny Paredes last seen Saturday. Left to NYC at 5:45 p.m. on trailway

bus, phone is disconnected. Please dm me if you have any information about his whereabouts," it said.

Paredes' body was found later that day, according to an incident report from the University Police Department. Aran Mull, Deputy Chief of UPD, explained that the university was checking with authorities to confirm a rumor.

"We checked to ensure that the authorities there were talking with the family about it. Past that we stepped back,"

Please see **PAREDES** page 8

RESEARCH

A fingerprint may be all you need

By **LINDSEY RIBACK**

Chemists at the University at Albany have found a way to narrow down a suspect pool in an investigation using bodily fluids left at the crime scene instead of waiting for DNA to return from the laboratory.

Jan Halámek, an assistant professor in the chemistry department, along with his team of six undergraduate and graduate research assistants, designed a test which extracts the amino acids left behind in a fingerprint and allows not only forensic scientists, but

potentially anyone, to determine the gender of the individual who left the fingerprint. By identifying the gender of a fingerprint left at an actual crime scene, professionals can shrink their suspect pool before the actual DNA results return from the forensics lab, which can take weeks or even months.

To validate this process, the team created a crime scene and had three female volunteers leave their fingerprints along different surfaces, according to a press release from the UAlbany Media Relation's Office. The chemists extracted the content left behind by the fingerprint sweat,

isolated the amino acids and then analyzed them.

Halámek explained that a higher level of amino acids found in the sample indicates that the suspect is a female, while a lower level signals that the suspect is a male.

The work done by Halámek and his group began a year ago, but this is just the beginning. They are writing grant proposals and looking for partnerships with other institutions so that they can further develop this technique. Their goal is to expand their population study, which will hopefully enable them

Please see **FINGERPRINTS** page 8

Behind closed doors: What it's like to have an eating disorder

By CLARISSA SCHMIDT

Carmela McNaught from Mastic, N.Y. is a senior at the University at Albany majoring in English. She is 22 years old and has been struggling with an eating disorder for nine years. She decided to finally open up and talk about her experience this year.

"I've always been a tall, bigger girl," McNaught said. "I've always been insecure about that."

During the summer of 2006, she decided she wanted to lose weight and look "good." She began dieting and tried the "Special K challenge," which replaces two regular meals with a bowl of Special K cereal. She lost 20 pounds quickly.

"People kept telling me I looked good and I liked it," McNaught said.

According to Dr. D. Catherine Walker, a licensed clinical psychologist and visiting

assistant professor for Union College in Schenectady, N.Y., there is a social environment that sets up individuals who are predisposed to have concerns about their shape, regarding weight and disorders.

"There is an aspect where dieting is supported, fat talk is a cultural norm for women, and there is a negative stigma against those who are obese or overweight," said Walker.

After continuing the diet for a few months, McNaught realized her body wasn't functioning properly. She went to her doctor and was told she was underweight for her height. She was at her lowest weight at that time: 130 pounds.

"The worst part was, I didn't think it was a problem," McNaught, who is 5-foot-11, said. "I wasn't phased, I didn't get it. When you're so consumed, you're in denial. All I kept thinking was that I felt better when I

was thinner."

McNaught was then given the nutritional drink Ensure to help gain some weight back. By the end of that summer, she had gained 10 pounds. She maintained a healthy weight for a few years.

In August of 2012, she transferred from Suffolk County Community College to UAlbany to finish her college education. The following October, her father, James McNaught, was diagnosed with Hepatitis C and passed away that fall. She was very close with him and the loss hit her hard. To cope with her feelings, she started to binge eat.

Bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder are two of the most common eating disorders, more than that of anorexia nervosa, according to Walker.

"I was not happy, I was out of control," McNaught said. "I would hide the food in

my room because I was so ashamed and embarrassed. I didn't want people to see, it's disgusting."

To punish herself, she would restrict herself from eating after bingeing and work out excessively instead. She had hit her "rock bottom" this past summer.

"This summer was the skinniest I'd ever been," she says. "I would look in the mirror and see my bones showing."

This past summer, she decided to seek counseling. She realized that developing an eating disorder became her outlet for dealing with emotions and body image issues.

"My anxiety was really bad and it [eating disorder] was a reducer," she said. "I noticed that my panic attacks stopped because that was my way of dealing with it."

Please see **DISORDER** page 8

CRIME BLOTTER

MEDICAL INCIDENT

11/23/2015
Dutch Quad
Report of female student with a ruptured cyst. Transferred to hospital by 5 Quad.

FIGHT

11/23/2015
Empire Commons
Report of a female student verbally threatening another female student.

CHECK A SUBJECT

11/23/2015
Podium
Report of subjects skateboarding in tunnels, subjects advised to cease activity.

CHECK A VEHICLE

11/23/2015
Roadways
Report of male subject driving erratically.

DRUG COMPLAINT

11/23/2015
Colonial Quad
A male student and a female student were found to be in possession of marijuana paraphernalia and referred for same.

ASSIST RES LIFE

11/24/2015
State Quad
Report of an unknown male trying to obtain access to female students dorm room.

MEDICAL INCIDENT

11/24/2015
State Quad
Report of a male student having adverse reaction to marijuana. Transported to hospital by 5 Quad.

CHECK A SUBJECT

11/24/2015
Podium
Report of a female student being a nuisance to a male subject.

ASSIST A PERSON

11/24/2015
State Quad
Report of threatening drawing in dorm room. Nothing found.

MAINTENANCE PROBLEM

11/24/2015
Liberty Terrace
Elevator malfunction. Albany Fire Department called to extract occupants.

AGGRAVATED UNLICENSED OPERATION OF A MOTOR VEHICLE

11/25/2015
Roadways
A male subject was found to be operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license and expired registration. An arrest was made, vehicle was towed.

DRUG COMPLAINT

11/25/2015
Colonial Quad
Report of found marijuana stems.

ASSIST A PERSON

11/28/2015
Liberty Terrace
Assisted a person that had fallen.

MEDICAL INCIDENT

11/28/2015
Roadways
Report of a female subject conscious but incoherent. Transported to hospital by Mohawk ambulance.

LOST PROPERTY

11/30/2015
Empire Commons
Report of a lost portable radio.

CHECK A SUBJECT

11/30/2015
Podium
Report of a female subject sleeping in the food court.

ASSIST A PERSON

11/30/2015
Podium
Assisted a female student in return of iClicker from borrower.

ASSIST RES LIFE

11/30/2015
Colonial Quad
Report of knife on window sill.

ASSIST OTHER PD

12/1/2015
Roadways
Assisted Albany Police Department in altercation between two male students. Students were referred.

PETIT LARCENY

12/2/2015
Podium
Report of a stolen bracelet.

PETIT LARCENY

12/2/2015
PE Complex
Report of a stolen iPhone and cash.

PETIT LARCENY

12/3/2015
Colonial Quad
Report of a stolen prescription and suite keys.

ASSAULT

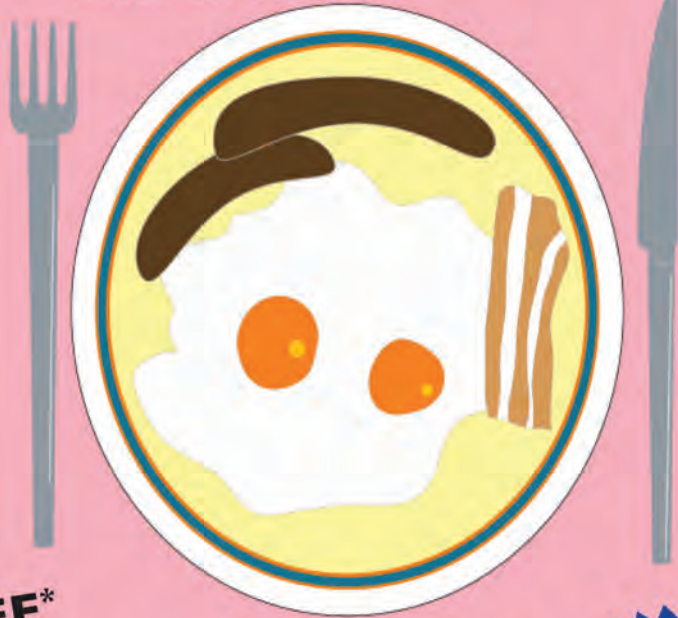
12/3/2015
Podium
A male student had assaulted a female student. An arrest and referral were made.

PERSONS ANNOYING

12/3/2015
Parking Management
Report of an irate customer making threats.

FOOD FOR FINALS

IT'S **FINALS** week
Food is good for the brain!



FREE*
ALL STUDENTS WELCOME!

LATE NIGHT BREAKFAST

ALL RESIDENT DINING ROOMS
THURSDAY, DEC. 10TH 8:30P-10:30P

Featuring
FACULTY & STAFF SERVERS

LATE NIGHT
COFFEE LOUNGE
Dec. 13TH 8:30P-10:30P
Campus Center Ballroom

LATE NIGHT
SNACKS
Dec. 14TH 8:30P-10:30P
Dutch & State Quad

The Patroon Room will be open for studying & complimentary coffee from 8:30p-10:30p, Dec. 13-Dec. 16.

*A student ID is necessary for entrance to late night events. A meal plan is not required.



JOIN THE ASP!

Hey! You! Do you like to write or take photos? Do you care about the UAlbany community? Then get involved with the ASP!

If you'd like to get published online and build up your portfolio over winter break, email Kassie at theasp.eic@gmail.com for more information.

Also email Kassie for info on how to get involved next semester. We're always looking for more writers and photographers.

FINALS SURVIVAL



Brittany Gregory / Albany Student Press

A few places around campus where you can get your study on.

By **RUSSELL J. OLIVER**

Depending on your major, finals week can be the most stressful time of the year for college students. This year it's important to keep things on fleek when it comes to studying. Knowing the prime study locations during finals is key. Here's a list of the best places to study around campus:

- 1** Libraries can be loud. Sometime your study group just needs their privacy. The best place for a quiet study group is in the Science Library group study rooms, known as "nerd rooms." They can be reserved for free for three-hour intervals long as you bring a friend (study groups are for two or more people only). The Science Library is also a great place to study, as it's normally not as crowded as the Main Library.
- 2** Another hidden gem that not a lot of people know about is the Main Library basement. That's another place to go if you need to work on a group project. It's also a great place if you want to chat a little with your friends while you study. There's a bunch of vending machines and bathrooms nearby, which we all know are necessities during finals week.
- 3** There are many different help centers around campus that you can use if you need some assistance on school projects or papers. There's a computer lab that you can go to through the Lecture Center

5 BEST PLACES TO STUDY ON CAMPUS DURING FINALS

- 4** Another great lifeline during finals stress are your teachers. Going to your teachers' office hours is a great way to get the information you need straight from the source. Teachers don't mind helping you either - they're here for that reason. Some teachers offer extended office hours during finals week. Attending office hours gives you the chance to know exactly what your teachers expect and what kind of material they are looking for in texts and projects.
- 5** If you can't find that perfect study spot, roam through the halls and look for empty classrooms. Sometimes it's great to study by yourself or with your study group in a room without any other interruptions. Just make sure there isn't a class going on when picking your classroom. Also, if you're studying in a classroom and someone comes in and says there is class, politely leave. It's a common thing, so just go find another empty classroom.

STUDENT PROFILE

Getting to know the president of the Student Association

By **ARIANA MELIS**

Jarius Jemmott grew up in a neighborhood where most kids didn't attend college. With the support of strong mentors in his life, Jemmott not only attended college, he has used his college career to take leadership roles that allow him to change campus life and inspire youth to follow his path. Jemmott, 21, is the University at Albany's Student Association president, grew up in the north Bronx, N.Y. Jemmott has seven half-siblings, a sister and seven brothers. At an early age Jemmott was motivated by strong mentors in his life to go on to higher education. In kindergarten his father told him he would attend the prestigious Bronx High School of Teaching. Jemmott was a member of the wrestling team and toured the tri-state area competing in taekwondo tournaments. "My mom was always my biggest supporter. Everything I did she was in the front row," he said. His mother's unconditional support and his father's disciplinary attitude molded

Jemmott into the individual he is today. He graduated junior high school third in his grade and went on to attend one of New York City's specialized high schools, the Bronx High School of Science. Jemmott is now a senior at UAlbany majoring in informatics. "Being the president is the biggest accomplishment I've had," Jemmott said. He was elected president of the Student Association in March of 2014. His campaign slogan "Vote for Change" was more than just a slogan for him. "I wanted to be a leader, not just a president, I want to advocate for students who feel they aren't heard," he said. After getting involved with SA, he realized that his future would be in government. "I believe that I can make a direct change on people's lives through working in the government," Jemmott said. President of SA is not the first leadership position he's held since attending UAlbany. Jemmott is also heavily involved in

Greek life at the university. He is president of the Delta Rho Chapter of Iota Phi Theta Fraternity Inc. Besides being president of his chapter, Jemmott was president of the National Pan-Hellenic Council Inc. and director of Fraternities on behalf of the All Greek Council. He had to resign his position as president of the national Pan-Hellenic Council Inc. in March after he was elected president of SA. Jemmott intends to create a President's Council with 30 representatives elected by the presidents of SA groups on campus. The Council would unite all university groups and give them a way to directly engage in the law making process. Representatives would have a forum to express student's concerns and provide their input to university officials. Along with being the president of SA, Jemmott mentors students at the Albany School of Humanities. "One time, this teacher asked the students what they wanted to be when they got older, this one kid stood up and said when he grew up he wanted to be just like me," he said.

DISCOUNTS

Get the most out of your college ID

By **AMANDA CASE**

Your college ID could save you up to 20 percent next time you're shopping around or eating in downtown Troy, thanks to a Student Discount Program. The program, started in 2011 by the Troy Business Improvement District, gives students between a 10 TO 20 percent discount at about 49 local businesses ranging from restaurants to clothing stores to recreational classes. "I think the Student Incentive Program is great because I've been able to get discounts at places downtown that I would never thought I could," said Rachel Martin, a student at Russell Sage College. Some of the more popular student hangouts that offer discounts are Plum Dandy on Sixth Avenue, which has buy-one, get-one-free frozen yogurt on Tuesdays and offers 10 percent off every other day of the week; Spilln' the Beans Coffee House, which gives students 10 percent off; and Muddaddy Flats Quesadillary, which offers 15 percent off. According to Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company, the average student only makes around \$240 a week, so these small discounts can make a big difference. About 44 percent of Troy's population is students and the city is trying to attract the 22,000 who go to school here. The downtown district has become a place where students frequently spend their downtime, so the city has decided to give students an incentive to stick around. The list of businesses that participate is located on downtown Troy's official website: <http://www.downtowntroy.org/information-for-students/special-incentives.html>.

However, students should first verify that the businesses on the list remain active participants. "Keeping this list updated is a significant part of our job, but a hard one to maintain," said Elana Zinoman, an official spokesperson for the Troy BID. "We hope to have a fully updated list by the beginning of 2016. If business are going to make changes, we advise them to let us know." Zinoman could not provide a figure regarding the amount of money the program brings in to the city and no other officials were available to comment. Most businesses that participate display a sticker on their doors or storefront windows that let students know if they provide discounts, but one problem students have come across is the lack of knowledge about discounts from the staff. This reporter recently tried to use her college ID at Bootlegger's on Broadway. The restaurant has the sticker on the front door, but a staff member told the reporter that they no longer give discounts. "I don't know why they were denied," said Nate Rock, owner of Bootlegger's. "I'll have to assure my staff that we still give students 10 percent off."



Mark Schmidt/UAlbanyphotos.com

The University at Albany is one of many colleges that has underrated its students capability and has constructed a curriculum that doesn't challenge one's learning.

ACADEMICS

COLLEGE OR HIGH SCHOOL?

The decreasing standards of the University at Albany

By PAT GAREAU

At some point this semester, I realized I could get good grades with minimal effort. It may have been as late as mid-November when I slept through a quiz in the morning and my professor let me make it up without question, or it may have been as early as the first week when my statistics professor assured the class that everyone should do fine, regardless of their background in math.

This says much more about the University at Albany's academic standards than about my particular ability as a student.

I transferred to UAlbany this fall from Hudson Valley Community College, where I was able to coast through classes and get good grades. I thought that was unique to community colleges, where the rate of students needing remedial education is sometimes more than 50 percent. What I've found is no significant leap in difficulty at this four-year research university that I commonly hear branded for excellence in academics.

To be fair, I am only in my first semester of my major, so perhaps I haven't gotten to the challenging parts yet. Perhaps the lack of rigorous academics is limited to my majors of psychology and economics.

I think the more likely answer is that UAlbany is in lock-step with the national trend in higher education of grade inflation and lower standards.

Studies have found that in the last 20 years, GPAs have

gone up while the average amount of time spent studying has gone down. Some measures suggest that students aren't learning a whole lot at college, and many surveys show that employers believe new entrants to the workforce are often inadequately prepared.

Going from an eyeball test after one semester at UAlbany, it looks to me like this would be an accurate assessment.

In many ways I appreciate the university's leniency for subpar academics, as I'm sure many other students here do. I'm busy, so it's really nice sometimes to know that I can skip classes and still do fine on quizzes with a quick review of the lecture slides the night before.

I'm also not too worried about the impact on me, personally, of what appears to be a common course model of catering to students that are either lacking the academic skill or unwilling to put in significant effort. I challenge myself in many ways outside of the classroom and make sure to learn independently. Thousands of students at UAlbany are doing the same and for people like that a lighter academic workload allows more time to be spent on passions.

But what about the students who need to be challenged academically? They will cut corners in class and do nothing on their own to cultivate personal and intellectual growth while in school. There are surely many students like that here as well.

There are a few options for the university if a big chunk of the student body is leaving here without a lot

of intellectual growth because of middling academic standards.

One of these is just to be honest. If UAlbany just markets itself as a place where the motivated can find challenging opportunities in research and high level courses, plus the slackers can get by too, then maybe we'll see the spike in enrollment that the administration is looking for. In any case, stop spreading the myth that students will have to spend two hours outside of class for every hour in class. That is simply not true in most cases, and may dissuade students from pursuing work or extracurricular activities.

Another option, and one that I would suggest, is that UAlbany tell all departments that we'll be moving to a more rigorous academic standard. Over the course of a few years, consciously make all courses more difficult. At the same time, make it easier for students to receive more credit for the productive things that they do on their own.

Lots of activities develop skills as much or more than sitting in a lecture: working, being active in student organizations, or self-directed research, to name a few. By doing this, students could take four challenging courses and still receive 15 credits or more per semester by being active outside of class.

As I sit in my class on this Friday morning writing, not paying attention whatsoever to the lecture that my professor is giving about something related to economics in the developing world, one thing is clear: Something needs to be done to change the way academics are dealt with at UAlbany, and everywhere else.

WEATHER

Missing: Winter wonderland

By ALLEN ENRIQUEZ

The University at Albany has been experiencing some strange weather recently. By strange, I mean that it hasn't snowed all that much this semester. That's something everyone at UAlbany isn't used to by this time of year.

Usually around late October and November, temperatures are very low and people are already taking the tunnels. But this year, during the colder months, there have only been 11 days where the temperature has been below 50 degrees, compared to last year where there were 23 days according to accuweather.com. The lowest temperature Albany

has reached this year was 39 degrees on Nov. 30.

The sun shining on random fall days makes the day feel less cold than it should be. These days are filled with students only shorts and a sweatshirt, thinking that summer and early fall weather is still upon us. These days are soon to be over.

Recently, it hasn't been as

cold as everyone at UAlbany expected coming into the semester. The weather has been pretty unbelievable.

Upperclassmen know how cold this place can get, and even though it has been cold, the underclassmen don't know what's coming to them.

Coming to UAlbany, new students most likely assume that it will get cold, but one never really knows how cold it can get until one experiences it. I remember my orientation assistant during my freshman year telling me how cold Albany can get and how early it hits. At first I didn't believe him because the weather during the 2014 fall semester wasn't terrible. But when late October hit, I brought up all my winter clothes.

The weather this year has been

bearable - not really cold enough to justify taking the tunnels from class to class. Freshmen can be eager to know when the first snowfall of the year will happen, but trust me, it isn't as enjoyable as it sounds.

Snow can be all fun and games for everyone, until you're walking from your dorm room racing to get to the tunnels with snow flurries blowing into your face. The snow makes walking the simplest, shortest distances much harder than they need to be. The snow can also make you contemplate your every step when walking from destination A to destination B, thinking "why did I ever leave my dorm room," or "the things I would do right now to go to a school down south."

The only thing worse than

the snow here at UAlbany is when the temperature gets low and the windchill is not exactly "chill." Like the snow, when it is freezing and there is wind blowing in your face, winter quickly goes from your favorite holiday season to the top of your most-hated list.

There is a solution to the winter woes, however. The tunnels can be your best friend during the winter season. The tunnels keep everyone toasty and warm, and become most peoples' main path when going to different places on campus.

Some may complain that the tunnels are too hot, especially when you're bundled up, but I'm sure those students would rather be walking in the tunnels than in the freezing cold.

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Kassie Parisi
Editor-in-Chief
theasp.eic@gmail.com
518-225-5759

Madeline St. Amour
Managing Editor
production.asp@gmail.com
518-369-5505

Janie Frank
News Editor
theaspnews@gmail.com

Aaron Cheris
Sports Editor
sports.asp@gmail.com

Julia Day
A&E Editor
artsent.asp@gmail.com

Kevin Mercado
Opinions Editor
opinions.asp@gmail.com

Keith Heesemann
Business Manager
asp.advertising@gmail.com

Advertise in the ASP:
Keith Heesemann
Business Manager
asp.advertising@gmail.com

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Contact the ASP for information and publication schedules:
Newsroom:
Campus Center 326
Email:
theasp.eic@gmail.com;
production.asp@gmail.com
Phone:
518-225-5759
www.albanystudentpress.net



Source: Wikimedia.org

Planned Parenthood clinic in St. Paul, Minn. One of the many Planned Parenthood clinics across the nation. There was a shooting in a Planned Parenthood in Colorado Springs, Colo.

IN THE NEWS

Planned Parenthood shooting: Pro-life to domestic terrorism

By DANIEL PINZON

People have a right to their opinions, but when their opinions result in death, it is no longer respected.

Lewis Dear had no right to kill three people at the Planned Parenthood in Colorado Springs, Colo. His actions transitioned him from a person who is pro-life to a terrorist. Even those who are pro-life did not see his deed as an act that was justified or necessary. "I think there's a lot of belief that this qualifies as a form of domestic terrorism," said Planned Parenthood's Chief Experience Officer Dawn Laguens.

Even the conservative presidential candidate Mike Huckabee called Dear's act too extreme.

"What he did is domestic terrorism, and what he did is absolutely abominable -- especially to us in the pro-life movement, because there's nothing about any of us that would condone or in any way look the other way on something like this," he said.

Dear is an extremist who deemed his opinions as superior and sought to punish those

who went against him. From his previous charges, such as his domestic violence charge against his wife in 1997 and charge for being a peeping tom in 2002, it can be concluded that he lacks some rationality.

Dear is an example of a person who hasn't come to terms that other opinions exist. This society is divided between pro-life and pro-choice. No matter what, neither is going anywhere, so we might as well just live in this society and acknowledge that there is more than one opinion.

Lewis Dear claimed Planned Parenthood is just "baby parts." But the organization goes beyond abortions. It's an educational facility that specializes in sex. It's a place that provides contraceptives and helps women to prevent the need of abortion. It even helps men with sexual problems. If woman wants an abortion, Planned Parenthood is there for more support and resources.

Planned Parenthood is a woman's best friend, as this institution caters to situations specialized for women.

Once we acknowledge and embrace women's inherent deserved rights, rights which they should have had since the beginning, we will be a more

humane and just society.

Yet if humans have a right to do as they please with their body, why should abortion be excluded?

Abortion is not something that I would personally encourage, however if a person chooses to do so, so be it. I would strongly encourage being cautious during intercourse, utilizing contraceptives and being mindful of what can happen during sex. Yet who am I to dictate another person's sex life?

I'm purposely disregarding the scientific evidence of when a fetus is considered alive or the benefits stem cells have. That argument can go back and forth forever. I'm strictly coming from the perspective that women have been acknowledged as humans, and just as men can ejaculate millions of potential humans, a woman can take control of her body.

More so, a woman has a say on whether she wants to carry something in her for nine months, and those who are not her shouldn't have a say. They aren't carrying it for her.

At the end of the day, it's all her choice.

VETERANS

THE INVISIBLE PROBLEM PLAUGING VETERANS

Lacking treatments for post-war soldiers

By MILO VOTAVA

On Nov. 27 an anonymous war veteran, only 34 years old, jumped to his death from the top of the parking garage of the Albany Stratton V.A. Hospital around noon. He had just been discharged from the hospital a few days prior.

On Black Friday, a day usually reserved for holiday shopping or spending time with family, this man chose to go to the roof of the 10-story parking garage and end his life.

Unfortunately, this tragedy is common.

It's a sad reality that veterans have an incredibly high rate of suicide. In a study done in 2012 by the U.S. Veterans' Association, it was found that every day 22 veterans commit suicide in the United States.

Annually, that number stacks up to an incredibly high 8,008 suicides in total. The national total number of suicides so far in 2015 is 38,364, meaning that veterans alone make up about 20 percent of all suicides that happen in the United States annually.

War is a terrible thing. Seventeen percent of veterans have Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) according to a 2014 study. The programs in place to help veterans are horribly lacking and don't do nearly enough to help them get through the mental problems that war and the military cause.

PTSD is caused by residual stress from traumatic and stressful situations, so it makes sense that war veterans would have a significantly higher rate of PTSD than many other demographics.

Out of the 17 percent of all war veterans who have PTSD, only 25 percent of them get care that is deemed "minimally adequate." The rest do not seek help.

The majority of war veterans, people who have served this country and put themselves in dangerous situations, can't even get quality care for the problems caused by their bravery. Many people go into the military expecting to serve



Source: Mark Schmidt

Photo from Veterans Day ceremony 2014. Veterans are not getting treatment they need.

their country, but they don't realize that their country might not help them back when they when they need it.

The Veterans' Affairs Center also gave an incredibly lacking response to the death of the nameless Albany veteran. It said it was "saddened to learn of the loss of a veteran," and brought attention to its own suicide prevention hotline.

From a center whose main objective is helping veterans, the reply seems impersonal and cold. The section of the Veterans Affairs Center dedicated to PTSD is easy to navigate and find information, including well labeled videos with clear audio, such as "Understanding PTSD."

The information is there, but there is no push for veterans to find it. From the low numbers of veterans that find their care and treatment for PTSD satisfying, one can assume there is no real emphasis put on it.

The veteran from Albany is one casualty from a problem that continues to grow. It will only continue to do so until there are serious changes in the way the military and the Veteran's Association treats PTSD and mental illnesses in general.

STUDENT LIFE

Are campus 'safe spaces' too safe?

By KEVIN MERCADO

I hope that this article doesn't offend anybody, but with everything going on in our country and in the world, we can just shut that out.

I say to hell with "safe spaces" at the university level. By initiating "safe spaces" on college campuses, the discourse on racism, classism, sexism, and more are stunted.

I shouldn't feel uncomfortable using the word "black" or "white" in an academic setting because it is deemed politically incorrect.

An article for the National Review explains this concept best when writer Charles C. W. Cooke says, "A visiting speaker is skeptical of 'rape culture'? She's a 'threat.' The College Republicans aren't sure that Caitlyn Jenner is a woman? That's 'violence.' Someone in your philosophy class disagrees with your politics? They're literally imperiling your 'safety.'"

I speak on this because the ability to have an opinion on an issue, whether the greater public agrees or not, should be granted to an individual. Not every opposing viewpoint is an individual attack on a culture, race or gender.

Hannah Oh, Steven Glick, and Taylor Schmitt, editors at the Clermont Independent at Claremont McKenna College, wrote in a recent article, "College is the last place that should be a safe space. We come here to learn about views that differ from our own, and if we aren't made to feel uncomfortable by these ideas, then perhaps we aren't venturing far enough outside of our comfort zone."

Students need to be comfortable enough to speak their opinions freely without getting major backlash for it. It seems as though not much can be said without offending somebody. As an institution, however, it is important to figure out what is appropriate to say and what is inappropriate to say. In a classroom setting, people should not be offended when someone brings up racial cultures, for example.

Of course, I would never say that people can be overtly rude or offensive, and claim it as free speech - that would be insane. I would never encourage racism or sexism or any similar idea.

Peoples' ideas should not be hindered or hidden due to the possibility of it being offensive. Today's society is becoming far too politically correct to the point where we

can't really say anything at all.

The idea of a "safe space" should mean that students feel physically safe on their campus - that they can walk across campus and feel like they aren't in danger, they won't be antagonized by a factor that they can't control outside of the classroom, and they won't be victims of assault in any form.

A "safe space" is not one that censors someone's opinion within the classroom that gives way to discussion or enhances an understanding of the subject that is being talked about. There are issues going on in the world and they do need to be addressed, on campus and off, but not every response to these issues comes from a malicious or hurtful place.

I just wish that the maturity level on college campuses would rise so that as college students we could appropriately assess the topics and protests going on regarding racism, sexism and different cultures and backgrounds.

And again, I am not writing this piece to offend anybody, but at the same time I will not be censored just because someone, somewhere will be offended by the things I say.

LOCAL THEATER

'A CHRISTMAS STORY: THE MUSICAL' COMES TO THE CAPITAL REPERTORY

By TENDRINA ALEXANDRE

The Capital Repertory Theatre is hosting "A Christmas Story: The Musical" which will be showing until Dec. 27. It opened to a packed theater on Tuesday, Dec. 1 after a weekend of previews.

The show, based off the 1983 classic film, "A Christmas Story," takes place in the 1940s and follows the life of Ralphie Parker (played by Jake Goodman), a 9-year-old boy from Indiana. Ralphie is on a quest to obtain the most epic Christmas gift: an Official Red Ryder carbine-action 200-shot Range Model air rifle.

Narrated by an older Ralphie (Kilty Reidy), the audience is taken on an exciting journey through the boy's life and vivid imagination. The story is colored with a series of dance numbers, hilarious lines and an overall perfect portrayal of the holiday season in the '40s. Ralphie's story entices memories of one's own childhood, and his desperate attempts to receive his only Christmas wish is beyond relatable.

Spoiler alert: this cast is a force to be reckoned with. They are fun, witty, character-conscious and filled with a unique energy. Ralphie's mother, played by Julia Burrows, pulls at heartstrings in the most warming way. Her relationship with her father, Gary Lindemann, turns the theater into a love-driven home filled with lessons and happiness. Let's not forget about Kara Mikula who plays Ms. Shields, Ralphie's teacher. Her endless energy and serious spunk were a large percentage of the humor

A CHRISTMAS STORY THE MUSICAL



Source: capitalrep.org

provided throughout the show.

The kids in the show were phenomenal. Ranging from eight to 15 years of age, these Capital Region talents brought a spirited vibe to the play. Their impressively crisp voices and tapping toes left the audience in awe. The show belonged to them, and they are certainly a new and

exciting light that all in the city should be a part of.

The play is a proper message about the importance of family and love. Ralphie's crazy experiences speak to the child in all of us. As we watch his attempts to "stay good" before Christmas, while subtly reminding his parents of his only wish, we begin to share his same hope.

TELEVISION

Marvel's 'Jessica Jones' bravely tackles many topics

By DIEGO CAGARA

Topics like gender, rape, sexuality, abuse and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are often sidelined in live-action superhero films due to their sensitive nature. However, Marvel is finally addressing those topics upfront with its latest effort, "Jessica Jones," based on the comic book character of the same name.

With all 13 episodes released on Netflix on Nov. 20, the series revolves around Jessica Jones (Krysten Ritter), a superhero-turned-private-investigator, who is forced to take action once again when an enigmatic, villainous figure named Kilgrave (David Tennant) returns to Hell's Kitchen, N.Y.

The series, created by screenwriter Melissa Rosenberg, is Marvel's second collaboration with Netflix after "Daredevil" (2015) was released back in April to critical success, both of which encourage binge-watching. It is also the second effort in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) to have a lead female protagonist, after ABC's "Agent Carter" (2015) came out in January, but Jones is nonetheless the first true superheroine to lead her own series.

While Jones has superhuman strength and flight abilities, Kilgrave can verbally control people to do his bidding. Kilgrave's power may initially sound clichéd and even cartoonish, but it's proven to be extremely dangerous as he often uses it to compel innocent victims to satisfy his selfish needs, treating them as slaves.

Marvel uses Kilgrave's power to help darken the series' tone as he verbally and physically abuse his victims. Examples include forcing an old man to throw hot coffee into his own face, instructing one of Jones' neighbors to slit his own throat and making Hope Shlottman (Erin Moriarty), a New York University student, shoot her own parents.

As a result, Jones, whom Kilgrave already victimized prior to the season, remarks that Kilgrave literally "leaves a trail of broken people behind him."

Jones suffers from PTSD as she reveals that she was mind controlled, raped,

manipulated and forced to murder an innocent woman under Kilgrave's orders. Throughout the season, Jones suffers from vivid and haunting flashbacks to when Kilgrave abused her and she eventually decides to stop Kilgrave once and for all. Although there are no rape scenes in the first half of the season, Marvel already has pushed the envelope by mentioning rape alone.

Another new topic Marvel tackles is sexuality with attorney Jeri Hogarth (Carrie-Anne Moss), who is the first lesbian character ever in the MCU. Known originally as Jeryn Hogarth in the comics, her sex and sexuality change for the live-action series also challenges the negative stereotypes associated with lesbians as she dresses in feminine outfits, wears makeup and is not a tomboy.

Gender is also brought up as Ritter's portrayal of Jones does not conform to female gender stereotypes. She never really wears overtly feminine clothes, constantly uses foul language, is very assertive and frequently drinks alcohol. Her defiant no-nonsense and unapologetic attitude contrasts her from the more mainstream superheroes like Spider-Man and Superman. Jones' persevering nature also connects with audiences, particularly with real-life viewers who have personally suffered from abuse, PTSD or rape. This makes Jones a more human character with flaws that differ from how superheroes are often perceived as ideal and perfect beings.

As the series is stretched into 13 episodes, viewers are given more time to watch characters grow, understand their individual backstories and realize that there are comic book heroes and villains who, at the heart of it all, are still humans with faults. Doing all these things is harder in a single two-hour MCU film because viewers are given limited time to connect with the film's characters and MCU films often favor action sequences over in-depth characterization.

While a second season has yet to be confirmed, the first season is currently available for streaming on Netflix.



Source: wikipedia.org

CINEMA

Seth Rogen & Co. take on Christmas

By RUSSELL J. OLIVER

Most Seth Rogen comedies are usually full of stoners who end up in comical hijinks they have to get themselves out of. Numerous Rogen-fueled movies have similar tropes, such as "Knocked Up" (2007) and "Pineapple Express" (2008). His new movie, "The Night Before," doesn't vary, but it does come with more Yuletide joy and Christmas flare.

Rogen stars as Isaac, along with Joseph Gordon-Levitt as Ethan and Anthony Mackie as Chris. Ethan's parents died when he was young on Christmas Eve, which leads to a tradition of the trio of friends going out every year. As they grow older, this becomes difficult with Chris' exploding athletic career and Isaac's pregnant wife nearing her delivery date. Ethan agrees with them that this will be their final year.

Jillian Bell, best known for her role on "Workaholics" (2011-present), plays Betsy, Isaac's wife. On their last Christmas Eve of going out, Betsy gives Isaac a box filled with different drugs so he and his friends can have one last crazy night together.

Of course, the trio runs into tons of crazy characters on their night out. Lizzy Caplan, from "Masters of Sex" (2013-present), plays Diana, who is a love interest to Ethan. Ilana Glazer, who plays one of the two queens from "Broad City" (2014-present), plays Rebecca, a girl with Grinch-like qualities. Notable stars such as Michael Shannon, Mindy Kaling and Miley Cyrus also encounter the boys on their night out on the town.

Ethan tries to keep the others focused on enjoying their last night out together, but Isaac keeps worrying about his family responsibilities and Chris is more

concerned about his social media fans. After the trio has a few drinks and a couple of drugs, Isaac starts to freak out, even more so when he realizes he swapped phones with Mindy Kaling's character.

Rogen, as the paranoid and eccentric Isaac, is the comedic highlight of the film. Isaac has numerous freak-outs throughout the night and his drug-induced anxious persona is hilarious to watch. At one point in the night, he has a vision into the future where his adult daughter is working as a stripper, while his wife, Betsy, shockingly eggs her on.

Eventually, Isaac runs away in a panic to find his phone and Chris runs away to catch Rebecca, who stole the gang's weed. Ethan, angry at his friends, gets into a fight with two Santas.

The trio meets up again and argues about the distance that's been created between them. This feels true to a lot of friendships that are struggling to stay intact when the life gets in the way. While the mishaps that take place during the night are over the top, the relationship between Ethan, Isaac, and Chris are accurate depictions of many friendships nowadays.

The gang forgives each other and reunites for one last party. Before the night is over, the film shows a flashback of Ethan on the night of his parents' death. Isaac and Chris comfort him, convincing him to go out and enjoy their Christmas Eve together. The actors all play their younger selves, which sentimentally shows the viewer the beginning of this tradition.

"The Night Before" is definitely the kind of movie you should see in theaters with your best buds. The film was released nationwide on Nov. 20 and is currently playing in theaters.

FILM REVIEW



Source: StudioCanal

Tom Hardy stars in "Legends" as both Reggie and Ronnie Kray, two brothers who terrorized London in the '60s.

TOM HARDY SHOWS THE 'LEGEND' BEHIND THE INFAMOUS KRAY TWINS

By NICOLE WALLACK

The word gangster often elicits images of bootleggers in Chicago in the 1920s and people like Vito Corleone ordering hits on rivals in New York City. Possibly the furthest from most people's minds at hearing the word gangster is London in the 1960s. "Legend" shows that crime and gangsters are just as at home in London in the 1960s as they are in any dimly lit backroom of an Italian restaurant in America.

"Legend" is a biopic of the Kray twins — vicious killers from the East End of London. Reggie Kray and Ronnie Kray (both played by Tom Hardy) ruled London for years, controlling clubs and casinos and even getting involved with the American mafia. Ronnie and Reggie, despite both being self-proclaimed gangsters, were as different from each other as could be. Ronnie was mentally unstable, paranoid schizophrenic, and openly homosexual at a time when being so was illegal. Reggie on the other hand, was suave, a ladies man, and the more likeable of the twins. According to the film, the twins were untouchable by Scotland Yard for years aside from small inconsequential sentences. The Krays were able to practically flaunt their organized crime because Ronnie ran something of a homosexual brothel

in his apartment that a Member of Parliament attended. In order to prevent bad publicity and the necessity of arresting a Member of Parliament on homosexuality charges, Scotland Yard stayed out of the Kray brothers' way until they could arrest them on serious charges which ended up being a murder charge for each brother.

The differences between the brothers are really what show how extraordinary Hardy's acting is in this film. The manic behavior of Ronnie juxtaposed with the easy elegance of Reggie shows just how comfortable Hardy is playing a variety of roles. Hardy wonderfully plays both roles, interacting with himself in an entirely natural and brotherly manner.

In addition to the exquisite acting, the film is also rather artfully crafted. The film is narrated by the physically abused and neglected wife of Reggie, Frances (played by Emily Browning), who gives a more human perspective on the vicious Krays. She explains how she fell in love with Reggie and her experiences with Ronnie. Her almost omniscient narration provides more depth to the Krays and insight into their rather tumultuous world.

However artful the film and great the performances by Hardy, the film falls short in terms of historical accuracy, as is common for biopics. It seems only

fitting that a story about gangsters would further stretch the truth to make it more entertaining, and "Legend" does just this. According to the biography of the Kray twins, "The Profession of Violence," on which the film is based, and those that knew the Krays, Reggie was not quite as sane as his brother was unstable. Reggie had his own psychological problems and emotionally abused Frances, allegedly dripping his own blood on Frances while she slept because he knew of her fear of blood and wanted to torture her.

According to the biography and those that knew the Krays, Frances was the innocent and emotionally tortured woman who hated her husband's criminal enterprises as portrayed on screen. Another area of contention with the truth of the film relates to the sexuality of the twins. Both twins were reportedly bisexual, with Ronnie leaning more towards men than Reggie. The film does play with the truth, but that does not mean that it is not enjoyable or riveting.

"Legend" boasts wonderful on screen portrayals and an intriguing script. Despite its aberrations from the truth, the film is fully entertaining for its rather long over two hour runtime and does show how the infamous Kray twins became something of a legend.

CULTURAL EVENTS

Shabbat 360 brings students together

By ELENA POLLACK

Hillel and Shabbos House hosted Shabbat 360 to bring the Jewish community on campus together and to welcome in the non-Jewish community on Friday, Dec. 4. The massive Shabbat dinner was open to all and was held at the Campus Center Ballroom. There was plenty of food, great company and laughs. The Albany Student Press had the opportunity to interview Hillel President David Schnall and L'Chaim President Grant Hilsenrath, the masterminds behind the event.

ASP: What exactly is Shabbat 360?

GH: Shabbat 360 is "mega-Shabbat" where different Jewish groups are trying to bring together the whole Jewish community at UAlbany. Our goal is to get 360 student[s] to come to this awesome Shabbat meal at the Campus Center.

ASP: What is the most important part about this program to you?

DS: It allows Jewish students who do not normally come to Shabbat dinner a chance to see what we do every Friday, while also allowing them to make new friends at the same time.

GH: It's definitely the possibility of reaching Jewish students who wouldn't have otherwise come to any other Jewish event during their time here.

ASP: What is the significance of 360?

DS: Shabbat 360 is very significant because it is showing the UAlbany community that although we are labeled as Jewish groups on campus, we allow anyone to join our events.

GH: The significance of Shabbat 360 is that it is an event like no other. UAlbany has never had an event like this and we intend to break some records. This is a chance for every Jewish student to feel more welcome than ever and come for a night of good food, good atmosphere, and general fun.

ASP: Would you do more events like this in the future?

DS: I would love to do more events like this in the future because it will allow new students to see what the Jewish groups on campus can do when we collaborate on an idea.

GH: I would love to make this an annual event. I would like to transform it into Shabbat 500 somewhere down the line and try to bring in at least 500 students.

ASP: What inspired this event?

DS: This event has been something that I have always wanted to plan ever since I was the Public Relations Chair for Hillel my sophomore year. From talking to past Hillel presidents, I came to understand that not only was this something that they wanted as well, but it was something they tried to set in motion the day they were elected.

ASP: What message, if any, would you send to the student body?

DS: If I could send a message to the student body, I would



Source: Shabbat 360 Facebook Page

say: don't feel discouraged from coming to any of our events, we are an open community that wants the entire UAlbany campus to enjoy our events.

GH: I would say: "Just come!" The event will have an amazing atmosphere. Do not be intimidated for any reason. Whether you have practiced Judaism at home, just know you're Jewish, or aren't even Jewish and are just curious, just come! It will be a great event with great people. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

SEMESTER SURVIVAL

HOW TO GET AWAY WITH FINALS

Five ways to relieve stress during the hardest time of year

By RUSSELL J. OLIVER

1 Yoga is a way to relax and release tension during finals week. It's a good way to loosen up your muscles and stay focused while studying. Taking yoga breaks during study sessions is a great way to stay relaxed. There are yoga classes in the Physical Education building offered by campus on a daily basis. Most smartphones have yoga apps that can take you through the positions if yoga classes aren't your thing.

2 It's been proven that taking a break while studying is proven to increase tests scores, based on a study from Psych Central. They are found to improve attention span. Go home, get some food, or even take a short nap. Scientists have said that even short breaks from tasks can increase productivity on them.

3 The University at Albany is also there for you during finals week. This year they have a #StressLess program to help students get through finals by providing stress relieving activities. These include free coffee, a chair massage, therapy dogs, and snacks.

4 Sleep! Sleeping is so crucial to having an attentive mind. Most studies prove that sleeping rather than cramming all night improves test scores. A lot of people try to stay up all night studying the night before a test, but this can in fact decrease test scores. Also choose sleep over staying up all night to cram.

5 Go out and grab a drink. Staying in the library all day can be stressful, so go out for a couple of drinks with your friends after. This can significantly relieve stress because having fun does that. Make sure you don't go out the night before the test though.



Madeline St. Amour / Albany Student Press

The university's libraries have extended hours during finals to make things more convenient for students.

DISORDER

Continued from Page 2

Although she is recovering, she takes it one day at a time. She compares her eating disorder to that of an addiction.

"It's something I won't get over," she says. "I have to tell myself everyday not to skip a meal, not to just binge because I'm upset. You can easily relapse."

Now, McNaught has taken the initiative to raise awareness for eating disorders. Through her experience, she learned that

it is important to talk about, acknowledge and accept these kinds of struggles.

In efforts to encourage others to do the same, she created and filmed a video this October with the help of her sorority sisters. It shows that everyone has their own battles and conquering them is possible. In under three weeks, the video has reached over 2,000 views.

"At first, I was so nervous to put up the video," she said. "I was ashamed, I felt weak, and embarrassed. Now I'm like, I am that person. I have this issue. This is who I am, and that's okay."

PAREDES

Continued from Page 1

Mull said. "In part so as not to interfere with any of the work being done by those looking into the cause, but more importantly to avoid negatively impacting the family further."

On Thanksgiving, Ian "Chino" Peralta, another UAlbany student who knew Paredes, created a GoFundMe page for Paredes' family to help with funeral arrangements.

"He was very genuine, caring and fair to everybody. He was never one to judge anybody," Peralta wrote in the GoFundMe description. "He welcomed anybody with open arms and an open heart."

The same day, a new hashtag was started: #RIP-Johnny. More than 100 people

used the hashtag between Nov. 26 and Dec. 1. It was side by side with others, including #ForeverAGreatDane, #MissYouLikeCrazy and #JohnnyLivesForever. Many of his friends chose to use #LongLiveJ5, sharing pictures of him and words of encouragement for those who knew him.

On Nov. 30, the official UAlbany Twitter posted, "The #UAlbany community is saddened by the passing of Johnny Paredes," with information about a memorial and ceremony being held in his honor on Dec. 1.

"To lose somebody you've known for a lot of your life really hurts and I am sure his unexpected death is hurting a lot of people right now," Peralta wrote. "I am 100 percent sure his soul is in a better place right now."

FINGERPRINTS

Continued from Page 1

to further develop this test and determine what levels in the bodily fluid left behind indicate the age or ethnicity of an individual.

"One day we can say the person was old, Caucasian or vegetarian, I hope," Halámek, who was originally a biochemist, said.

This type of testing will not only allow forensic scientists to quickly narrow down their suspect pools while they wait for the labs to return with a positive DNA match, but it will also be helpful when the fingerprint sample is smudged and does not provide enough information for testing to make a confirmed match.

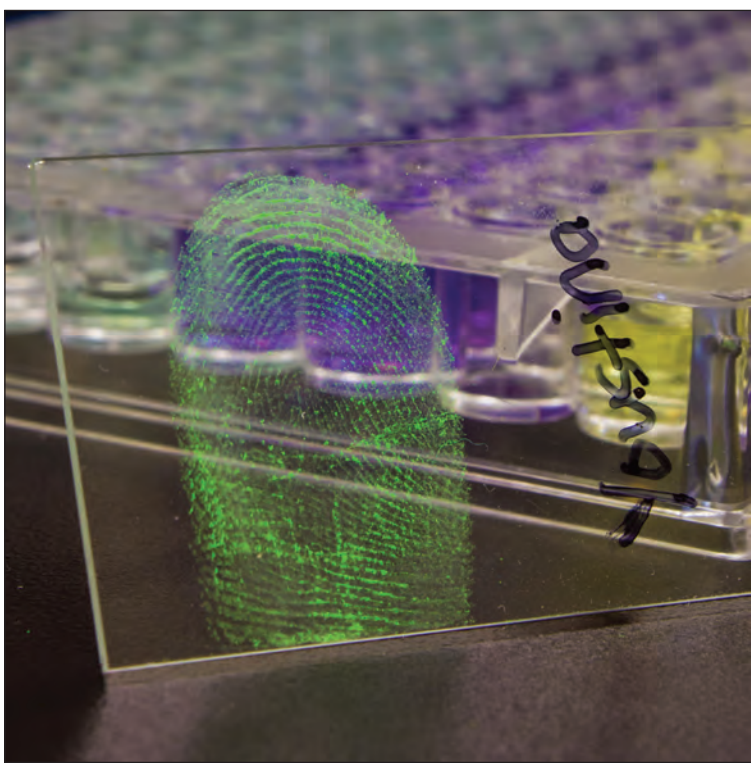
At this time, forensic scientists see fingerprints as pictures and compare them with databases, according to Halámek. He explained that with the tests he developed, a degree in forensic science is not necessary, as it works just like at home blood glucose and pregnancy tests.

These are "prescreening tests to really narrow a pool of suspects," Halámek said.

"It does not confirm somebody 100 percent, but it gives direction and it's quick, fast and it is cheap."



JAN HALÁMEK



Paul Miller / ualbanyphotos.com

Researchers at the University at Albany found a way to easily narrow down pools of suspects without using DNA.

He has also begun working with Averill Park High School in Rensselaer County, establishing a forensics lab within the school. Halámek hopes that these students will look to continue their work at UAlbany when they graduate.

"If it is possible to identify excellent high school students interested in forensics, why should they go away [for college]? Why can't they enroll into SUNY Albany and we can have them as undergrads and then as graduates if they like," the chemist said. "That's the plan, that's the dream."

The initial funding for this project, which took half a year

to develop, came from UAlbany when Halámek agreed to become an assistant professor at the university in the fall of 2013. The research group is in the process of writing grant proposals from outside sources like the Office of Naval Resources and the Partnership for Clean Corporation to pursue other projects related to the chemical compounds in fingerprints and bodily fluids.

Halámek's study has been published in Analytical Chemistry and his work has been featured in The New York Times and the Times Union, as well as on CBS6 Albany.

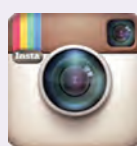
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STUDENT ATHLETE

Reflecting on a senior soccer season

By CELIA BALF

The thick, humid air of August seems like forever ago as I now layer up for the cold and take the tunnels to class.

In August, the University at Albany women's soccer team was one of the few teams on campus a month before the rest of the student body, enduring the brutal yet necessary preseason. Earlier in the semester I wrote a piece about the "preseason experience": the sweat, the commitment, the unavoidable tears and the excitement that overwhelms every athlete's body as his or her season is about to begin. Now, I'm here—a slightly washed-up retiree trying to reflect on a season of my dreams.

In August our group was jittery, but the anticipation of a season ahead was able to carry out great soccer. Practices flowed nicely and we all felt like this was our year—it was something about the way that we could connect the ball to one another, laugh during warm-ups and then transition to being fully tuned in for a session. There would be ups and downs ahead like any season, but there was this clearness in the thick summer air. We were sure of our goal: to be America East Champions.

The next two months were



The UAlbany Women's soccer after winning the America East Championship.

Source: UAlbany Athletics

get chills throughout my body from that championship game — we came back in a valiant effort to beat Hartford at their home turf 2-1. The moment the clock ran out our team embraced one another and screamed, cried and knew that everything up to that point was completely worth it. The dreaded beep test, the notoriously long SEBCO running test, the losses that made bus rides dreadful and awkward, the practices that ran rain or shine—all worth it. We will never get this one-in-a-million team back and I will hold onto that for the rest of my life. Few people can say they are champions, especially in college—but now, we can finally join the banner crew of so many other teams at UAlbany.

a grind— we traveled to North Carolina for seven days beating Davidson and fell in overtime to Campbell. For our next games we traveled to Syracuse to play Colgate and Syracuse in one weekend. On paper, our first chunk of the season seemed difficult, but it just reassured us that come conference play we were going to dominate. It was the feeling of running beside a Syracuse player knowing that despite her noticeable difference in thigh muscle from mine, I could


keep up with her. It was the feeling of making a tackle in the box and thinking I could just stay down right now and never get up, but I have to get up. It's that feeling of Syracuse having to waste time in the last seven minutes because we were pressing them so hard. It was all of these feelings starting a fire that would burn through the fall season.

Our out of conference play was all over the place—we won some big games, and lost to some mediocre teams. Our

head coach had a baby, and our assistant coach took over as associative head coach. Our starting goalkeeper got injured and had to sit out the rest of her senior season. The ups and downs came in waves.

The biggest wave, however, was the one that took us from a point where we may have not even made the post-conference tournament, to going all the way and winning the program's first ever America East Championship. When I look at my teammates now I still

The scariest part is now. Soccer is done, and the retired life is too real. I miss the soreness of a long practice, I miss the feeling of sitting on the bus indulging in pizza after a hard-fought game, I miss losing myself in my sport with all of my teammates. These feelings will continue to be missed when the spring season comes along and Bob Ford Field is used once again by the Great Danes, absent the eight seniors I played beside for four years.



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Finals Week

WAKE UP & DE-STRESS EVENT

University Bookstore



12/11/15

9:30am-11:30am

- ☀ HELP MAKE FESTIVE HOLIDAY CARDS IN SUPPORT OF OUR TROOPS OVERSEAS
- ☀ FOOD & BEVERAGES
- ☀ GIVEAWAYS
- ☀ PLUS GET **25% off**

one apparel item

*Must check-in to event between 9:30am-11:30am on 12/11 to be entered to win. Only current UAlbany students are eligible. One winner will be announced at 1pm on 12/11 and will be notified via email. The winner will also be announced on the University Bookstore and UAS social media accounts.

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BASKETBALL

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against Siena.

The Saints (5-3) just had a four-game win streak snapped with an 81-80 loss to Cornell, but responded with an 89-54 trouncing of Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference rival Manhattan. Siena has won five of their last six since losing their first two games to national semifinalists Duke and Wisconsin in back-to-back games to open the season.

On the women's side, UAlbany (6-2) enters after blowing an 11-point halftime lead to Army West Point in a 65-62 road loss.

The Great Danes have two losses to NCAA Tournament quality opponents after suffering their first loss a week ago to fourth-ranked Tennessee. Shereesha Richards and Imani Tate continue to lead the team, while other threats look to emerge to help open up

the floor for the duo.

Three-point threat Erin Coughlin had nine points against Army and could be the key on the perimeter for the Great Danes.

After missing the season-opener against Pepperdine, Tiana-Jo Carter had 16 points and 10 rebounds against Rhode Island to help add to Albany's offensive threat. Regardless, Head Coach Katie Abrahamson-Henderson has stressed since the beginning that the UAlbany offense needs to be productive outside of Richards and Tate in order to remain successful.

The Great Danes will get a matchup with one of Siena's conference members, Fairfield, prior to Saturday's Albany Cup at 5 p.m.

Siena (2-5), a WBI finalist in last year's postseason, seems to be finding its identity after winning its last two games. Led by the sophomore duo of Kollyns Scarborough and Margot Hetzke, the Saints would be looking for its top win of the season in Saturday's matchup with UAlbany.



Source: UAlbany Athletics

UAlbany forward Shereesha Richards powers to the basket against a Siena player.

BASKETBALL

Danes prepare for Capital city battle



Source: UAlbany Athletics

UAlbany guard Peter Hooley (right) battles to the basket against Siena guard Jimmy Paige.

By **SHANE MARSHALL**

Get ready for a battle, Albany. Saturday's matchup at the Times Union Center is a showdown of two of the hottest men's basketball programs in the Northeast. University at Albany enters the week with wins in six of its last seven, and an overtime win over Holy Cross, in which

the Great Danes (6-3) shot a season-high 27-for-30 (90 percent) from the free throw line, and tied a season-high with nine 3-pointers. After averaging just 8.5 points over seven games, UAlbany guard Peter Hooley broke out for a season-high 20 points in the 88-84 overtime triumph over Holy Cross on Saturday. Meanwhile, freshman Joe Cremona has provided depth to

the Great Danes' perimeter, averaging 12 points off the bench for head coach Will Brown's squad. Perhaps the biggest surprise from UAlbany has been the play from its big men. Mike Rowley, Greig Stire and Travis Charles all have contributed solid minutes to reinforce Brown saying this group is more talented than a year ago, despite losing America East first-teamer Sam

Rowley to graduation. After improving to 2-3 on the road, UAlbany faces its toughest challenge since opening the season at Kentucky's Rupp Arena, the Great Danes play Saturday against Siena. The Saints (5-3) just had a four-game win streak snapped with an 81-80 loss

Please see **BASKETBALL** page 9

EDITOR'S FAREWELL

Sports editor hangs up the Albany Student Press

By **AARON CHERIS**

Joining the Albany Student Press was the best decision I've ever made in my entire life. The ASP has given me opportunities I never thought I'd have when I started as a freshman at the University at Albany in 2012. The ASP has taken me many places, from Columbus to Cornell, Colgate to Buffalo, and to channel 23, The Weather Channel, on your campus television. I have been the sports editor since the fall 2013 semester. My time as editor has been a whirlwind ride, but I wouldn't have traded it for anything.



Recently retired ASP sports editor Aaron Chervis stands on Bob Ford Field at Casey Stadium. Hey, Aaron, get ya head in the game! -KP

When I started as sports editor, I had no clue what I was getting myself into. The ASP was without a sports editor, and someone asked if I was interested in the position because of my love for sports. After an interview with then-editor-in-chief Lauren Mineau, I was in. That year was a learning experience for me. I learned field hockey, soccer, softball, and many other sports I wasn't too familiar with. Quickly, I was thrown into the fire. For the first time in decades, UAlbany made a football coaching change. The men's and women's basketball teams went on improbable winning streaks to take home the America East championships. I followed the pep band and interviewed the student inside Damien's mascot costume who made headlines after fighting Stony Brook's mascot on national television. Junior year was the most exciting.

Coaches welcomed me into their offices to talk sports, and I was comfortable in my position. Last spring, I didn't go more than two weeks without writing an article in the ASP. It started with an interview with UAlbany lacrosse player Lyle Thompson, arguably the greatest college lacrosse player ever. However, the highlight of my time at the ASP came in March. I'd seen UAlbany win plenty of conference championships, but that couldn't have prepared me for Saturday, March 14. Championship Saturday: UAlbany versus Stony Brook. A sold out SEFCU Arena rocked like I've never heard before as the Great Danes and Seawolves battled for a spot in the NCAA Tournament. It appeared UAlbany's luck was finally running out as they trailed by seven with under two minutes left. In a script too real for Hollywood, the Danes came back. In the game's waning moments, the ball found Peter Hooley,

the Great Dane who missed part of the season to go back to Australia when his mother died. His shot was a perfect swish, and UAlbany won. As the fans stormed the court, I fired off a tweet from the Albany Student Press account that would be retweeted and favorited dozens of times. The play was number one on SportsCenter's Top 10 that night. After plenty of hugs and high fives on the court, it was time to get back to work. Leading into spring break, I knew I had to get to the NCAA Tournament game. Shane Marshall, my friend and fellow December 2015 graduate, offered me a spot in his car for the eight-hour drive to Columbus. I took it. In the days leading up to it, I was asked to appear on The Weather Channel for a segment about college basketball, the NCAA Tournament, and of course weather. During my interview with Sam Champion and Jim Cantore, I held up an ASP for the nation to see, and proceeded

my workload and made my job a lot easier. My search for a replacement led me to one of the athletes who I covered: women's soccer player Celia Balf. She will be sports editor next semester, and I believe she will do great things for the ASP. Working for the ASP helped me get an internship with Anton Community Newspapers in my home on Long Island. It's given me a chance to work for two professional sports teams, the New York Cosmos and Albany Devils. The ASP has given me the skills I need to move forward as I pursue a career in sports journalism. I have met some amazing people who have really helped me during my time at UAlbany. Lastly, the ASP has given me some of the best memories of my college experience. It has been a ride I'll never forget. Thank you, Albany Student Press.