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Xavier University Newswire

Xavier University - Cincinnati

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Part of the Higher Education Commons, and the History Commons
By Alex Budzynski
Staff Writer

To say that Dr. Kyra Shahid has been an active member of the Xavier community would be an understatement. Her involvement throughout her time on campus has included working with student groups, creating and teaching her own class, advising students and even leading a study abroad program to West Africa.

Now, a new challenge awaits her: serving as the Director of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI).

Shahid replaces Dr. Taj Smith, who left Xavier on Jan. 25 to pursue a position at the Rochester Institute of Technology. She had previously served as the CDI’s associate director before being named director earlier this month.

Though Shahid officially began working at Xavier in the fall of 2015, her first time on campus came earlier for a seminar followed by a practicum study on the Jesuit experience and tradition. After spending a year at Mount St. Mary’s College in Maryland, she returned to Cincinnati for the chance to work at Xavier.

“I felt that this was a space I was called to and compelled to,” Shahid said.

Since coming to campus, she said she has taken it upon herself to build a more inclusive environment at Xavier. Describing herself as “a scholar practitioner and an intellectual activist,” she said she engages in research for her discipline through her work on campus.

“This is a place where your heart can work out loud,” she said. “Xavier has been this space of family where I can really do this work out loud, and I am grateful for that.”

For example, Shahid was a member of the Working Group on Xavier’s Connexion with Slavery, which Father Michael Graham, president, charged with looking into how the university could work toward racial reconciliation. The group included students, faculty and staff members.

As part of the Working Group’s response to bias-related incidents on campus, she developed a class entitled “Anti-Black Racism and Epistemology.” The class acted as an extension of her own thesis work examining the intersection of race and spirituality in higher education.

The course provides students with the opportunity to explore systemic oppression on both the societal and personal levels as well as understand how to promote social justice through intellectual activism. Last year, Shahid published a book describing the research and her experiences teaching this course.

Recent graduate and current CDI employee Adrian Parker was the teaching assistant for Shahid’s class in the spring of 2018. He said the course was “by far the best class I have taken at Xavier and the most impactful.”

Beyond Xavier’s campus, last summer Shahid, Parker and four other Xavier students are currently planning to make the same excursion this coming summer.

In terms of working specifically with students, as the CDI’s associate director, Shahid was involved with numerous student organizations, including the Black Student Association, the African Student Association and the Latinx Student Organization, to name a few.

Outside of the CDI, she also acts as a thesis adviser for philosophy, theology and philosophy, politics and the Public students.

“I do this work for and with students,” she said.

Parker echoed Shahid’s statement and said she never does anything without student input. She chooses pur- pose over payment, he added. ‘Her work is all about aligning with what she believes,’ Parker said.

As the new Director of the CDI, Shahid hopes to continue to further her own research as well as build on the work of students, faculty and staff.

“My vision for the CDI includes three things: that we deepen, strengthen and broaden the great work that has been happening for the past year,” Shahid said. “Xavier prides itself on caring personally, to take care of the whole person. My goal is that my office demonstrates that in a way which is genuine and congruent with our mission.”

Shahid concluded by saying she draws inspiration from the Xavier community and her 6-year-old daughter, whom she described as her rock.

“I love Xavier because the people here are genuine, because it is a space where we have remarkable students and because it is in a city and a space that at this time in history compels me to do the work that I do,” she said.

The CDI is located on the second floor of Gallagher Student Center and is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Dr. Kyra Shahid was named the newest Director for the Center for Diversity and Inclusion earlier this month. Her other roles on campus include teaching a course she developed and working with different student groups.

For the Xavier community and Inclusion earlier this month.

To say that Dr. Kyra Shahid brings extensive campus involvement to her new position is an understatement. Her involvement throughout her time on campus has included working with student groups, creating and teaching her own class, advising students and even leading a study abroad program to West Africa.

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Dr. Kyra Shahid brings extensive campus involvement to her new position

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Read the legend of Jon Nicholas, the mythical man hiding behind the TV studio curtain.
Campus files away data exposure incident
The IT Division and Associate Provost’s Q and A session saw low attendance

Campus was alerted last Wednesday that cheating prevention software installed on computers in three labs in Smith Hall and the Conaton Learning Commons left student data exposed. There is no report of a data breach.

“IT can be a pretty big deal,” junior Philosophy, Politics, and the Public and computer science double major Elizabeth Bagley said. She further explained that “it depends what kind of data they can get to, but without strong passwords... a breach like this leaves individuals open to identity theft.” Bagley added that identity theft is only a concern for extreme cases.

Edwards asserted that information would not have left Xavier’s system because of firewall security. The test taking software installed could not track everything the users do on a computer and could not release information as personal as Social Security numbers or bank records.

Students at the Q and A session raised questions of cyber security awareness and bringing attention the importance of cyber literacy. One student suggested that students be required to go through complete cyber security training. Other students expressed concern that Xavier students might not understand the severity of the situation. They pointed out that some students have simply brushed off the incident and fewer than 20 students felt compelled to attend the Q and A session.

Miranda Cocca, a senior entrepreneurship and marketing double major, shared that being in one of Laker’s classes opened her eyes to the severity of a potential data breach. “It has given me a greater respect for some of the Xavier faculty, as they have demonstrated a true care for their students,” Cocca said.

Cocca and Jack Graber, a senior business analytics major who attended the panel, both shared that they were appreciative of Laker and Edwards for maintaining open communication with the student body regarding the incident.

“Dr. Laker and other professors recognized that many Xavier students didn’t realize the significance of the incident, which is why clear communication to students was, and still is, so important,” Cocca said.

Gaber hopes that the university takes this incident as a lesson and will be more proactive in the future.

“I still believe that this issue should have never happened. I hope that this scare is going to pave the way for the future of Xavier University’s data security systems and an action plan for the students if something like this happens again,” Graber said.

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- Eli Bedel - Northern Ireland
- Amber Minefee - South Africa
- Leo Peyronnin - Spain
- Charlie Gonzalez - Europe

Friday March 1 4pm-6pm
Kennedy Auditorium, Xavier University

2017-2018 Brueggeman Fellows’ Presentations
Muskie Tigers host refugee stories

By Brittany Wells
Staff Writer

Asmaa Masto, a senior at Withrow High School, shared her story of fleeing government turmoil in Syria and awaiting resettlement in Louisiana, as 45 Xavier students sat gripped by her bravery in Arrupe Overlook on Feb. 12.

The event, called Home is Where the Heart Is, was facilitated by Muskie Tigers, a club on campus specifically for tutoring and mentoring refugee and immigrant students at Withrow. The night focused on celebrating the stories of home within all of us and understanding what home is for others.

Masto’s mother, Ibtisam Masto, catered Syrian cuisine — which drew many students in by their noses. “I want everyone here to think about my country from my food,” Ibtisam Masto said with a smile across her face.

After Masto had finished presenting to the room, the crowd dispersed into small groups of Xavier students and Withrow students. Each group reflected on the presentation and their own experiences with questions that focused on “home,” such as “What does home feel like to you?”

Muskies Tigers president Nick Foley thought that Masto’s storytelling and experiencing finding a sense of home in different countries were a good fit for the event.

“I think one of the most powerful messages that came from Asmaa’s story was that despite some of the difficulties that she faced in Syria, there was still that natural sense of belonging that made it feel most like home to her,” Foley said.

Muskies Tigers vice president Relsey Kraft ensured that the club worked hard to prevent the event from exploiting the experiences of the Withrow students.

“We both just tapped into any people we thought might have knowledge of planning this type of event or knowledge of working with the population just to try to make sure we were doing right by them,” Kraft said.

Masto shared that she loved to tell her story so that listeners can learn about what her life was like before arriving in America with her parents and brothers.

Besides presenting to crowds, Masto also shares stories through writing. She is currently working on a book titled “Wander Beyond the Fair” about her mother.

“It is everything about my mother, because she is the strong woman who (protects) her children from the war,” Masto said as she glanced at her mother across the room.

Megan Scharrer, a sophomore social work and Spanish major, came to the event to prepare for her future. Scharrer eventually hopes to work to reform immigration policy and in just a few weeks will lead an Alternative Breaks trip to Boise, Idaho, that will focus on refugee resettlement.

“I know on my trip I’ll be listening a lot, so I wanted to work on that skill as well for when I get to work with the refugees in Boise,” Scharrer said.

“I just overall wanted to listen and to hear stories because I think it is very interesting and a great learning opportunity,” Foley felt that “showing the support of the Xavier community and expanding it beyond what (Withrow students) see at Muskie Tigers twice a week was a really special message that the Xavier community could send.”

Alternative Breaks panel talks faith and service

By Alanna Belmont
Staff Writer

A panel of local activists spoke on the intersections of faith and service in Arrupe on Monday. Alternative Breaks (AB) ran the panel 19 days before they send 19 service groups on educational trips during Spring Break.

AB Board Member Viktoria Schumacher was inspired to create the panel by a retreat with the Center for Faith and Justice (CFJ). “One night they hosted an interfaith talk with the Center for Faith and Justice,” CFJ’s then director of the Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center, the panelists, two Catholics and an ex-Southern Baptist,” answered challenging questions, like “how does your faith come in conflict with your work?” and even “how do you organize or rally a group of people together despite the fact they might have differing beliefs?” with anecdotes and smiles on their faces.

“Toward the end of the discussion, Jenkins emphasized that the motivation for her honesty and openness with the students grew out of her desire for dialogue — even if it’s uncomfortable. “I want to have these hard discussions, and I want to be open and honest about my beliefs and trying to understand those around me. Justice is necessary. I cannot be free while someone else is oppressed, and that won’t change as long as we remain silent,” Jenkins said.

Kayla Pierce, a junior social work major who has gone on AB trips, enjoyed the event and thought that the panel would have been useful for people who wanted to incorporate their faith into their service.

“I’m not faith-oriented, but I think that it was informational and inspirational,” Pierce said.

AB Board member Tyler Norris also saw good in the event.

“I thought it really helped to broaden people’s horizons. It was a great conversation that can help to fill in the blank space some people may have when it comes to doing service. Not only outside the CFJ, but also in relation to one’s own faith.”

Feb. 20 Student Government Association Meeting Recap

Goal for first-year class, new residence hall and CFJ and Interfaith to merge

• The goal for the next first-year class is 1,250 students.

• There was discussion over building a new residence hall to accommodate for the growing undergraduate population.

• Residence Life will host a renter’s fair this Thursday to help connect students to off-campus housing opportunities.

• The Center for Faith and Justice will be absorbing the Center for Interfaith at the end of this semester. As a result for the merger, the university will hire a Muslim, Jewish and Baptist chaplain.

students listen to activists speak on the intersection of their personal faith and their service to others on a panel run by Alternative Breaks.

Montoring club Muskies Tigers hosted refugee students from Withrow High school on campus. Withrow senior Asmaa Masto recalled her journey as a Syrian refugee and the audience pondered their conception of “home.”

Photo courtesy of Tyler Norris

Photo courtesy of Relsey Kraft
El Chapo convicted of 10 felonies
Joaquin Guzmán now faces life imprisonment, sentencing set for June 25

By Jabari Turner
Staff Writer

Joaquín Guzmán, infamously known as “El Chapo,” is now facing a mandatory life sentence after being found guilty on Feb. 12 of 10 federal counts, including drug trafficking and money laundering.

The trial in New York City brought startling revelations of the life of El Chapo. Witnesses’ testimonies accused El Chapo of many things, from having a high tech murder room to ridiculous bribes and conspiracies.

The New York Times reported Alex Cifuentes, who was known as El Chapo’s right-hand man, said in court that El Chapo even raped and drugged minors. Cifuentes was a key witness in the trial and dropped shocking allegations against El Chapo. The testimony proved important in his conviction.

El Chapo has captured the public eye with his enormous wealth and being the former leader of the notorious Sinaloa Cartel. Known as simply “The Cartel,” this criminal organization is an international organized crime syndicate that was founded in the late 1980s.

The criminal organization started in Sinaloa, Mexico, and has grown into an international enterprise. The organization engages in activities such as drug trafficking and money laundering.

The United States Intelligence Community considers The Cartel “the most powerful drug trafficking organization in the world.”

The Cartel has had a major impact on the drug problem in America including the recent fentanyl problem in Cincinnati. In March of last year, 12 people in Cincinnati were charged in connection with The Cartel.

The FBI found that those 12 individuals allegedly distributed fentanyl and heroin from Mexico, where The Cartel is based, to Middletown, Ohio. The laundered earnings in Ohio were then sent back to Mexico. This was confirmed in court by witnesses Junior and Peter Flores, also known as the “Chicago Twins.” The two testified against El Chapo in November of last year, saying the organization had satellite operations in multiple American cities.

In 2006, Forbes listed El Chapo with an estimated net worth of $1 billion. However, the U.S. is looking to seize approximately $14 billion in cash from narcotic sales.

Joaquin Guzmán, better known as El Chapo, is facing a mandatory life sentence after being found guilty of 10 federal counts of various crimes. The U.S. is looking to seize $14 billion he earned through narcotic sales.

NOTE OF THE WEEK
That’s an...interesting...new Big Mac

Feb. 12, 1:13 p.m.—A student reported that during a men’s basketball game at the Cincinnati Center on Feb. 9, an iPad Pro was stolen from their vehicle that was parked in the R-8 lot. The vehicle was reportedly locked. Xavier Police are investigating.

Feb. 13, 9:25 a.m.—Xavier Police assisted Norwood Police with a theft in progress at Marshall’s Department Store. The suspect fled the scene on foot and was apprehended by Xavier Police in a backyard on Ashland Avenue. The suspect was turned over to Norwood Police.

Feb. 14, 11:25 p.m.—Xavier Police located a wallet in the Smith Hall lot that contained a driver’s license that didn’t belong to the owner of the wallet. The fictitious ID was confiscated, and the student was referred to the code of conduct.

Feb. 15, 10:20 a.m.—Residence Life reported that a student in Kuhlman Hall displayed a fictitious ID instead of their All Card. Residence Life confiscated the fictitious ID and turned it over to Xavier Police. The student was referred to the code of conduct.

Week in Review
Jam, Lunchables and grapefruit

• Theresa May once again finds herself in a sticky situation — for talking about jam. She reportedly told senior Cabinet ministers that she scrapes mold from her preserve jars and continues to eat what’s underneath to prevent food waste (Feb. 14).

• A dead man has advanced to the final round of mayoral elections for an Oklahoma town. Charles Lamb entered the election before he died in December, and it was too late to remove his name from the ballot before the rounds commenced. Were he to win, the town’s city council would appoint a living mayor (Feb. 15).

• Look out for Lunchables: Two Florida men unsuccessfully tried to hide more than four pounds of cocaine in this childhood staple. The men were arrested in Wood County, Ohio, and face charges of drug possession and trafficking (Feb. 15).

• A grapefruit in Louisiana now holds the Guinness World Records in both size and weight. It measures almost 29 inches in circumference and weighs 17 pounds, 14.6 ounces, dwarfing the previous 7.1-ounce record holder from Brazil (Feb. 17).
Planned Parenthood challenges ban on abortions after heartbeat detected

Planned Parenthood sues Ohio over fetal heartbeat bill

The lawsuit challenges Senate Bill 145, also known as the "Heartbeat Bill," which would ban abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected. Both groups claim in the suit that the bill is unconstitutional.

Attorney General David Yost has stated he will "vigorously defend" the law's constitutional validity.

This is not the first time Planned Parenthood and the state of Ohio have faced each other in court. In 2016, Planned Parenthood sued the state of Ohio when then-Attorney General Mark DeWine claimed the Cincinnati clinic disposed of fetal tissue in landfills. DeWine found no evidence of this occurring and, in turn, settled with Planned Parenthood.

According to the Cincinnati Enquirer, Senate Bill 145 is similar to the bill that was line item vetoed by former Governor John Kasich. However, current Governor Mike DeWine said he would "absolutely" sign a "Heartbeat Bill" with no such veto if it arrived at his desk.

First-year psychology major Jonathon Hopkins, an engineering physics student, was saddened but not surprised by the decision. "It’s impressive that it lasted so long," he said.

The rover went dark about six months ago after a severe sandstorm caused an obstruction of the solar panels. It was the thickest storm NASA has ever seen on Mars.

Scientists hoped that wind would remove the sand from the panels, but the windy months have now passed. Martian winter is approaching quickly, and temperatures can drop to -150 degrees Fahrenheit.

Although the rover survived numerous past winters, Opportunity was unable to utilize its internal heating processes, meaning that its parts could become brittle and likely fail.

In June 2018, Opportunity sent its last transmission to scientists. It reportedly sent, "My battery is low and it’s getting dark."

NASA used songs by several artists to rouse the rover. These included Queen, David Bowie, Foo Fighters and Elton John. The playlist, entitled "Opportunity Wake Up!" is available on Spotify.

However, the songs failed to awaken the sleeping rover, and it has been declared dead by NASA. When originally launched in 2003, Opportunity was expected to last 90 Martian days and travel 1,100 yards. The rover exceeded expectations, surviving almost 15 years and traveling 28 miles.

"It’s impressive that it lasted so much longer than it was designed for, especially in a harsh climate like Mars," Jonathon Hopkins, an engineering physics student with a background in robotics, said.

There were several close calls in the past, but Opportunity persevered through all of them. The rover suffered the loss of steering in both front wheels, a two-month dust storm, a stuck heater and a wiped flash memory.

Its mission has been completed, which signifies the end and beginning of a new scientific era.

There is a deep sense of gratitude and appreciation for Opportunity in the scientific community. The rover provided fruitful information on the previously unexplored planet. One of the most notable accomplishments of Opportunity was the discovery of the previous existence of water and support for microbial life on Mars.

Opportunity’s final resting place has been named "Perseverance Valley" in honor of its accomplishments. It is now the longest lasting rover to explore another planet.
Type A(nxiety): Get your brain in the right place

Psychologists hypothesize that Type A is a personality type. Some of the characteristics people include being rigidly organized, outgoing, ambitious, workaholic, pro active, highly productive and competitive. Or as I like to say: Hi, my name is Ellen.

For as long as I can remember, I have been highly involved. Currently, I serve on three committees as a student representative, I’m enrolled in over 20 credit hours, I have a part-time job and babysit on the side. And I’m still in college and of age. So I go out to play and I’ve been told I have my life very clearly aligns with the Type A personality, and if you don’t believe that, I have a beautifully color-coded planner that will tell you otherwise. It wasn’t until last fall that my involvement suddenly became too much. All of a sudden I was worried about finding jobs, housing for the next year, graduation, paying rent, work deadlines, schoolwork, being a good friend, grocery shopping and calling my mom. I always felt like I was walking around with the weight of the world on my shoulders.

Being a Type A person, I would write it off and say, “It’s just this week,” or blame a singular class for being rough. I constantly reminded myself that I wasn’t a pre-med major and worried about the MCAT and I wasn’t awaiting law school acceptances or denials. In other words, other people had it worse than me.

Looking back, I had been fighting against my extreme anxiety and panic attacks as a part of my life because I was Type A. In reality, I was suffering from generalized anxiety disorder and panic attacks. A concussion, a cane, a month of shaving and five doctors appointments later, I was medicated and on my way to being my best self again.

Anxiety is the body’s natural response to stress. Most people experience it before starting a new job or the first day of school. I was walking around with a weight of side effects that it sat on my shoulders, which is an incomparable sense of happiness. My anxiety made me ignore so many of my loved ones who told me to get more medication for my anxiety. I was so anxious about starting the medication and experiencing side effects that it sat on my shelf for a week before I took the first dose.

Being both Type A and anxious makes my over-in volved, part-time working, second semester senior life style hard. There are days when I worry I’ll never be employed and I want to stay under a blanket for hours and never leave the house. There are days when I sit in classes and can’t focus because I have dozens of other thoughts racing through my brain.

But now, rather than chilling up my feelings of my personality type, I email my professors to tell them I’m taking a day for my mental health or going to see my counselor during class time. At the end of the day and at the end of my college career, I’ve come to realize perfect attendance is far from the most important thing.

Take a day, sleep in, eat fries and chocolate, listen to music and dance, talk to your friends and family and make an appointment at McGrath, because if you’re Type A, you know how important it is to be successful. You can’t do that if your brain is not in the right place.

Ellen Rakowski is a first-year Private Interest and the Public Good master’s student. She is a guest writer for the Newswire from Chicago.
Nicotine-free' or decision-free?

Last week, the Newswire published an opinion piece titled “Let's talk about the smoking ban.” Below is a different take on the issue offered by guest writer David Dreier.

First, I should say that I am not a smoker and never have been. What follows comes from a place of principle and not of self-interest.

Second, I want to make it clear that, as a private institution with dominion over its own property, Xavier has every right to institute a nicotine ban on campus. In this regard, I respect the decision. However, just because the university can take such action, doesn’t mean that it should.

If a government were to take this action — as the state government of Hawaii is considering what is effectively a ban-by-age restriction — I would denounce this move as a massive violation of the personal liberty of individuals and of the economic liberty of businesses.

However, while I’m sure that smoking bans at colleges have helped inspire similar maneuvers in government, these are still separate issues that are wrong for different reasons. As such, Xavier’s upcoming policy deserves a more “personalized” argument.

My opposition to Xavier’s nicotine ban is founded in the character of the university itself. In my four years at this Jesuit institution, I would say that the value referenced the most around campus is cura personalis, care of the whole person, or, as it is commonly adapted to an institution of learning, education of the whole person. The nicotine ban is a blatanant failure to live up to this commitment.

At first glance, trying to curb nicotine use seems consistent with cura personalis. The stated goal of the policy is to create a healthier community, supposedly for the betterment of the “whole person” of everyone on campus. But this proposition leaves an open question: If community and education is the goal, why is the university forcing people to behave in a certain way, rather than simply providing them with the resources necessary to make their own informed decisions?

Once the superficial excuses of “best practices” and the characterization of nicotine use as an “epidemic” are brushed aside, the real answer becomes clear. Giving people a choice leaves open the possibility that they will decide to continue smoking. This is unacceptable to the administration, which is only interested in immediate and universal results that can be used to bolster the university’s reputation.

Yet this desire for instant gratification discards a perfect opportunity to achieve true cura personalis. If the university simply provided informative literature on nicotine use to the community, all nicotine users would face a challenge to their beliefs. If a nicotine ban would require critical thinking on a tangible, personal issue, rather than the abstract and distant topics typically confronted in academia.

This sort of critical thinking is necessary for personal growth and maturity — in other words, the education of the whole person. Under this approach, many users would likely desire to kick the habit. Some may remain unchanged, certainly, but if a capable adult, after having all the facts and figures laid bare before them, still decides that smoking is worth it, shouldn’t that decision be their right?

Instead, a ban is being pursued. This means that rather than challenging us to make important and informed life decisions, the university is making the decision for us. Students will be bound to care for their own health, not to mention the health of everyone around them. This ban may be well-intentioned, I want to hope that the school will not have made a decision like this without considering how it might harm the university’s community.

So, in conclusion, while I respect the ban and support the administration’s stated goal, I am not convinced that is the right way to go about it. If anything, I believe that the administration should have supported any student who decided to continue smoking, and that they should have provided them with the resources that they would have had at Xavier. The decision made, therefore, is far less likely to be an informed one, and more people may decide to continue their nicotine use than they would have if the decision had been weighed at Xavier.

The ban will be successful in creating the facade of immediate “improvement.” The long-term results, however, are bound to be contrary to the administration’s stated goal.

The ban is already a “done deal” at this point. I doubt that anything that has been said, here or elsewhere, will change minds where it matters. However, I hope to have re-framed the issue to make clear what is truly at stake. This is about more than Xavier becoming a nicotine-free campus. This is about Xavier becoming a decision-free campus.

Revelry in aesthetics: Awakening the joy in art

There are few moments in one’s life that completely captivate and dazzle the soul with unbridled beauty or that reveal the magnificence of life that is so often left unnoticed. For me, one such moment occurred in The Sleeping Beauty ballet at Cincinnati’s Music Hall. I felt an unspeakable joy that permeated my entire being. It was an absolutely exquisitely overwhelming experience.

Yet when I attended this performance, where the audience was introduced to the scene, the Princess Aurora performed a long series of arduous, technically difficult positions. Not the most beautiful part of the ballet was the Rose Adagio, which was the pinnacle of technique and beauty combined. As the gentle glissandos of harps began to introduce the scene, the Prince Aurora performed a long series of arduous, technically difficult positions. Yet the most beautiful part of the sequence was the grace with which she moved. The ballerina perfectly exemplified youth and royal elegance in one courtesan that shone with the delight of dancing, a sense of clandestine yet tremendous profundity indicative of art.

The power of art is sublimely evident. It speaks of the furthest depths and loftiest heights of the soul’s intimate feeling and transports one into a stratum of consciousness beyond the quotidian occurrences that pervade all of life: that art illuminates our true selves, our deepest natures, our most precious enigmas.

It is through the lens of art that we see the veracity of our being and of the world around us, and we awaken to find the freedom and resplendence life brings.
Xavier snaps losing streak with pair of victories

By Luke Feliciano
Sports Editor

Xavier survived an overtime thriller, prevailing 64-61 against Creighton to snap a six-game losing streak.

Sophomore forward Naji Marshall parlayed a 22-point outing against DePaul to deliver a career-best 23-point performance against Creighton.

A key turning point in the second half came with about a minute and 30 seconds left to go in the game. Marshall haled a near-four-minute scoring drought with a basket.

An ensuing possession, junior point guard Quentin Goodin capitalized on a costly Bluejay turnover to tie the game at 59 with 21 seconds left.

Xavier then stopped Creighton’s final shot attempt to push the game to overtime. In the overtime period, Xavier owned a one-point edge in the midst of a 4:08 Creighton scoring drought.

Marshall came through in the clutch again when he hit a runner in traffic that took a fortuitous Xavier bounce into the paint.

Sophomore forward Naji Marshall recorded a career-best 23 points, helping vault the Musketeers over Creighton in an overtime thriller.

“Tremendous job of guarding,” head coach Travis Steele said.

“If we can get that type of effort on the defensive end, and intensity and attention to detail, … we’re going to put ourselves in a lot of games in position to get some wins here down the stretch.”

The first four minutes of the game featured a series of trading baskets. Xavier was successful early by getting the ball inside and penetrating the paint.

The frontcourt tandem of graduate forward Zach Hankins and junior forward Tyrique Jones benefitted the offensive cause. The duo combined for 18 first-half points. Overall, the Musketeers scored 34 points in the paint.

About halfway through the first half, the Musketeers clung to a one-point lead. At the 6:37 mark, Xavier climbed to a 21-17 lead after converting four successive shots and went into the break commanding a six-point advantage.

The first half of play was marked by an efficient offense as the Musketeers shot 56 percent from the floor.

Defensively, a hot start for the Bluejays was extinguished by a stalwart defensive showing. The Musketeers blocked six shots in the first half alone, and three of those were produced by Hankins — the second-leading shot blocker in the Big East.

Xavier continued its come-from-behind ways, as eight before Providence started off the game on an 8-2 run to begin the first half against Creighton.

“Tyrique Jones, number one, did a great job in the second half and in overtime,” Steele said about what made the difference. He also emphasized how physical of a player Krampelj can be.

Despite committing 15 turnovers, Xavier distributed assists.

The Musketeers then traveled to Providence to face the Friars, where they redeemed their home loss to capture a 75-61 victory.

Here are some takeaways from Xavier’s sizable win on Sunday afternoon.

1. A complete second half

Against Providence, Xavier played one of its best complete games and in particular, one of its best second halves.

The team’s finish was strong. After building up a comfortable lead, the Musketeers never let off the gas and coasted to a confidence-boosting victory.

The second half featured an offensive explosion — including a flurry of dunks. Four Musketeers finished with double-digit points, and Goodin’s seven assists allowed him to eclipse the 100+ assist mark in each of the last three seasons.

2. Defensive showcase

Xavier played staunch defense to lock up the Providence offense. The Musketeers held the Friars to shooting just 36 percent from the floor as a whole and 33 percent from distance. Xavier also kept Providence at bay through the paint.

Xavier outscored the Friars to six points in the paint.

3. Three-point shooting on the rise

After losing a majority of its three-point shooters from last season, the Musketeers have endeavored to find consistent long-range shooting.

Saturday against Providence provided for a dominant display of distance shooting. Overall, the Musketeers shot 57 percent from long range, and even more impressive, made 10 of 14 triples from beyond the arc in the second half.

Musketeers battle Bluejays in close game at home

By Joe Clark
Staff Writer

Last weekend, the women’s basketball team continued its season with a pair of Big East home games, taking on Providence on Friday night before playing host to Creighton Sunday afternoon.

Despite a bit of a second half comeback, the Musketeers fell to Providence 65-55 before dropping a 53-52 heartbreaker against Creighton.

Provided some much-needed cushion with 1:37 to play. Xavier got a couple of quick baskets, piling up a 22-11 in the quarter. Creighton’s top scorer from the floor as a whole and 33 percent.

A three-pointer from Friday night before playing host to Creighton Sunday afternoon.

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Ross and freshman guard Lauren Waslyson were both in double figures for Xavier with 13 and 11 points, respectively.

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Freshman guard Lauren Wayson and senior guard Aaliyah Dunham (10 points) and freshman Car- ron Gross (12 points) both notched double figures along with Gray.

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Baseball opens season against No. 5 Tar Heels

BY DONNIE MENKE
Staff Writer

Xavier baseball lost its opening series this past weekend, dropping all three contests at No. 5 North Carolina by scores of 12-3, 8-3 and 14-3.

The Musketeers remained within striking distance in the sixth inning, but they were unable to mount comebacks.

In the opening game, junior Conor Grammes got the start and allowed just one out. The Musketeers were unable to drive any runs as North Carolina regained its own in the top of the fifth, getting a run on a wild pitch and a sacrifice fly from Shepski.

North Carolina scored eight unanswered runs to beat Xavier in the final game 14-5.

Junior infielder Chris Givin drove in a run in the eighth to take an 8-2 lead. The Tar Heels scored two more runs in the seventh and tacked on three runs in the eight to take an 8-2 lead.

Junior outfielder Andrew Sexton drove in a run in the ninth, but it wasn't enough as Xavier fell 8-5 in the second game.

The Nationals reportedly offered Harper a 10-year, $300 million contract at the end of last season, which was his original asking price.

He declined that offer, seeking more money. Harper is the type of player who can have an MVP season every few years, but he is probably disappointed that more offers were not brought to the table.

Let's face it, Harper only hit .249 last season — the second worst of his career — and had a WAR of 1.3, which was also second worst of his career.

His defensive decline has scared off teams like the New York Yankees, and the free agent market had gone cold for those who thought he would have signed by Christmas.

Justin Verlander, the former MVP, Cy Young Award winner and Rookie of the Year, had some thoughts on the current free agent system and wrote on Twitter that the "System is broken" when referring to the debacle that is MLB Free Agency.

St. Louis Cardinals pitcher Adam Wainwright said, "Unless something changes, there's going to be a strike, 100 percent. I'm just worried people are going to walk out midseason ... Thirty owners people are going to walk out midseason if they have a chance. What do I care about the owners?"
Check out these cool and weird video games

1. Icarus Proudbottom & The Curse of the Chocolate Fountain

Don’t be fooled by the name of this game. There is no chocolate. However, there is plenty of human excrement in this crappy game, released in 2013. The story follows Icarus Proudbottom and his journey through the skies. One morning he wakes up releasing a never-ending stream of excrement that can be thrown through the air at hypersonic speed. On this journey he meets a magical bird that can turn into a katana. He uses “blood destiny” to fight off birds, geese, Neo-Nazis and a helicopter piloted by former president Barack Obama. This has the important aspects of an amazing video game: adventure, fighting, villains and Barack Obama. This game is my favorite on the list.

2. Shaq-Fu

Shaq-Fu is one of my personal favorites on this list. This disastrous and comical game was released in 1994, the golden age of Shaq. The famous basketball player Shaquille O’Neal is transported to another dimension where he is supposed to save a boy using, as you may have guessed, Kung-Fu. If the glorious name hasn’t piqued your interest, the game came with Shaq’s second rap album when it was first released. You know a video game is good when there is an entire online movement to buy all of the copies and destroy them. If you want to join the fight, you can visit the Shaq-Fu Liberation Front website: ShaqFu.com.

Have no fear, Shaq-Fu 2 is here. If you have trouble finding the original, there is a mobile and console version of Shaq-Fu: A Legend Reborn. To save yourself from embarrassment, I would recommend not telling your friends that you have a soft spot for Shaq-Fu.

3. Who’s Your Daddy

Having baby fever? Play this game, which was released in 2015. You have two player choices: the dad and the baby. As the dad, the objective is to prevent the uncertain death of your infant. To make it better, your baby may try to put a fork in an electric outlet, microwave itself, drink cleaning products or scuba dive in the tub. If playing the baby, you perform various tasks trying to cause the death of your character. This game has two sides of the spectrum: saving babies and killing babies. If you can’t save this baby, maybe reconsider having a real baby. If you want to kill babies, get counseling. There are a number of services available.

4. Seaman

Seaman is the perfect game for a cramped college student yearning for a pet. This is probably the most disturbing on the list. It was released in 1999. The goal of the game is to keep your beloved pet alive. Your pet has the distinctive body of a fish and the face of a human. Seaman requires daily attention or he might die, just like a significant other. Your fish can even evolve throughout the game. It may make decimation comments or criticize you. Also like a significant other.

To a Valentinian’s Day has recently passed, Seaman can be a great replacement for those without valentines this year.

Total score:

Total score:

Total score:

Total score:

Total score:

Battle royale games here to stay

It’s finally happened. Battle royale has officially taken over. You would've thought that declaration would have come sooner.

But that was before they made a Tetris battle royale game (aka Tetris 99).

People seem to have some very strong beliefs on battle royale games, usually on opposite ends of the spectrum. On one hand, some people love them and can’t get enough of them. On the other, people hate them with such a passion that they think anyone who plays them is the scum of the earth and hopes to see them fail at every turn.

The main target of this hatred is Fortnite. I think some of it is hatred because of its popularity, feeling that it’s too mainstream. Others feel that they copied Player Unknown’s Battlegrounds and therefore cannot be enjoyed.

The last reason may be that they feel like only a bunch of kids are playing it. I honestly do not understand why people hate these types of games so much. Why is it such a bad thing that companies are letting people download these games for free?

Sure, there may be some microtransactions in them, but you don’t need to purchase anything to get an advantage like in a mobile game. All you have to do is just play the game and not buy the skins.

If you don’t like a particular game, don’t play it. Why waste so much time and energy hating a game that other people enjoy? Just go back to playing something else.

All I know for a fact is that I’m going to have fun playing with my brother and friends who are out of town while you can sit and mope about how you’re not happy that a game is popular. And for the record, I finally got my first-ever win in Apex Legends this past weekend.
New Ariana Grande album shines

By TREVER McKENZIE
Online Editor

It’s been more than two weeks since Ariana Grande dropped her latest album, and the rest of my playlist hasn’t seen the light of day since. Calling thank u, next does a disservice to the album. While this certainly isn’t her best album, it’s definitively her second best. What makes thank u, next so great is the cohesiveness of the sound and production. Grande’s voice is fantastically prominent in its own right, was a mash-potch of styles. In contrast, thank u, next delves into Grande’s love life and personal life in details, exposing her true feelings about her romantic and professional relationships.

For brevity, let’s clear up my opinions on the pre-released tracks. “thank u, next” is phenomenal, “imaginary” is decent and “7 rings” slaps. These songs have been out for a while, and there’s no need to delve into them further than that. The best songs on the album are, in order, “bad idea,” “NASCAR” and “bloodline.” These songs harken back to the Dangerous Woman era with incredible accuracy: “bad idea” comes out strong with sultry lyrics and simple but effective production. Much like her underrated “Bad Decisions,” Grande sings about the desire to follow through on hooking up with a man even though she’ll regret it, and she makes it sound like the best decision of her life.

What’s noticeable about these tracks is the strong rap influence, which is also present on the entire album. Hi-hat drums sound throughout the entire song, and the last minute of the song is a hip-hop throwback while she slows down the vocals as the instrumentals push on. Grande has spoken previously about wanting to emulate the rawness of rap, and throughout the album we get glimpses of that sentiment.

“NASCAR” is what I would call a sleeper hit. My recommendation for this song is to listen to it with a high-quality pair of headphones. You’ll miss a lot of the beauty of the track’s production otherwise. The lyrics paint the picture of a woman knowing that she needs her alone time, and her galactic metaphors are eccentric, fun and serious at the same time. While the production is nowhere close to the masterpiece of “breathin’,” it certainly rips at the song’s seams. “bloodline” opens with a sample of Grande’s grandmother and sets the tone for a rather dashing rejection song. “Don’t want you in my bloodline / not trying to make you all mine” — these lyrics tell the story of a woman done with fleeting relationships who just wants a good time. The authentic trumpets over the hip-hop-influenced bass and drums feels like a dismissal of serious feelings for the sake of enjoying the moment.

And then there’s the song we’re all talking about, “break up with your girlfriend, i’m bored.” If there were ever a song for the world’s messiest woman, this would be it. However, clever as always, Grande subverts the expectations of the song with her accompanying music video, in which she reveals that the song is a subtle metaphor for leaving a difficult relationship and learning to love yourself. “The track itself has the biggest hip-hop influence throughout, Grande “yeah’s” all over this track while keeping her classic pop diva style front and center.

The rest of the album is notable for the references to her relationships and the exposure of how she really feels about them. “in my head” talks about how she mentally built up an image of a certain ex in her mind that he could never fulfill, “make up” talks about how much she loves the fighting because of the reconciliation.

“ghostin,” while arguably the worst track on the album, directly addresses Pete Davidson in all ways but his name, talking about the regret she feels for hurting him by leaving. “thank u” ended up not being over Mac Miller. Grande came out swinging with thank u, next, and the singles’ leaps to #1 on the charts illustrate the album’s quality. The album shows great maturity and the discovery of a unique style refined to perfection. Where Grande goes from here will be a mystery, as she’s shown great versatility and a broad interest in a range of performance styles. Her unpredictability and finess undoubtedly cement her as a force to be reckoned with.

Your post-Valentine’s Day heartbreak playlist

By JOSEPH COTTON
Staff Writer

For many people, Valentine’s Day is a time to spread love and care for others. That being said, Feb. 14 can also be an emotionally loaded time of the year, and coming out on the other side can be a daunting, risky endeavor no matter how experienced you are. For the unfortunate souls who were rejected by a romantic interest, the world seems like an endless, lonely place. Even so, you should never let any of that stop you from “shooting shots.”

Music helps other people poetically interpret what’s going on inside your head. So tell me what you think; DM sliders and straight players, just remember that even Stephen Curry, the greatest shooter of all time, hits 43 percent of the time.

Here are some sad songs to get you through the rough time between your romantic undertakings.

1. “Tommy’s Party” by Peach Pit

The relaxing guitar progression of this song carries a feeling of melancholy while remaining super-chilled out. The vocals, guitar counter-melody and the subtle drumbeat add more layers of self-reflection as the song develops. The instrumental work on the song is also mechanically stunning. The virtuosic guitar work of Christopher Vanderkooy floats beautifully on top of the rhythm section while leaving room for Neil Smith to deliver poignant poetry.

At its core, the song is about the day after a party. Neil Smith reflects on how people enjoyed themselves at the party he went to the night before and notices that one person had a wonderful time talking to a girl with whom he had a past relationship. He later recognizes on their time together and accepts that he will never get to date her again. I am sure this is relatable to at least a few people out there.

2. “U” by Kendrick Lamar

This song is the angriest and most intense song on this list. Part of the anger is pointed at another person, but most of it is pointed inward. If you feel responsible for messing up a good thing, this song is for you. Lamar looks back at his past relationships and all the times he could have done better. He raps over a dark, jazzy instrumental that is perfect for sitting in your dorm at 3:00 a.m. pretending to be in a sketchy jazz bar. My favorite moment in the song is when he calls himself out for Face-Timing instead of visiting a friend in the hospital who eventually passed away.

“U” is a perfect representation of the chaos you feel once you realize your life was not authentically lived. Put this song on and reflect on how perfect that special someone was and how you messed everything up.

3. “Dreams” by Fleetwood Mac

This is the only song on the list that was written about a breakup between Stevie Nicks and fellow band member Lindsey Buckingham who had to perform the song live for many years. This deceptively simple song talks about feelings of being robbed of time and hoping your ex is happy being lonely.

The hypnotic drum loop carries the song as airy guitar licks and beautiful vocal harmonies effortlessly float across John McVie’s bassline. Lyrically, Nicks navigates the vast, open space between the instruments to speak her mind about feeling lost and alone. Despite the harsh personal lyrics, her voice is classically haunting and feels like a distant memory in the mind of Buckingham.

If you feel wronged by a person after a breakup, this post-Valentine’s day playlist is for those of you who want to feel the sentiments of nostalgia, melancholy and regret, brought to life by music.
Who is Jon Nicholas?

By Aidan Callahan
Staff Writer

They say his name is ‘Jon Nicholas.’ He is less of a man and more of a myth. Legends tell of a being who lives within the walls of the Xavier Television Studio, guarding the film equipment and occasionally coming out of his place of hiding to teach an editing class. Any evidence of this ‘Jon Nicholas’ is entirely unconfirmed. When I brought up the mystery to many of my fellow DIFT peers, I was only met with remarks of confusion. I tried contacting alumni, but none of them had returned my calls. All of this points to a grand conspiracy going on at the TV studio, one that goes all the way to the top. And I was determined to get to the bottom of it.

My first stop was the man who made the most recent report of a Jon Nicholas sighting; sophomore Rex Basalone, president of the Xavier Television Club, Basalone, and I go way back, and I know him to be a man of unimpeachable character. He is a composed, clearheaded and sensible man, as well as the director of the weekly Xavier news broadcast. I occasionally anchor for the broadcast, and after last week’s show, he pulled me aside to discuss his Jon Nicholas theories. According to Basalone, Jon plays a vital yet invisible role behind the scenes of the broadcast. He is the man responsible for making the show go live.

This theory made sense, until that night I awoke with a startling realization: If Jon makes the broadcast go live, surely more people than my mom would tell me I did a good job anchoring. I had debunked Basalone’s theory and lost all trust in him.

Next, I visited a girl who claims to work in the studio as Jon’s assistant, but she ended up being more off her rocker than poor Basalone. Sarah Sokolza began this school year a bright young first-year, so I don’t know if it was drugs or the Xavier dance team, but something got to her mind. She mentioned to me that she had a Jon Nicholas side. DIFT majors would ask to take equipment out, and she would help him by organizing the stuff coming in and out. I couldn’t make sense of what led her to believe this. In fact, I asked her why a near-omnipotent being like Jon Nicholas would entrust a lowly first-year like her with the equipment he spends his life protecting. Her only response was “Who you calling a lowly first-year?” So I walked away.

I had gotten nowhere. I was exhausted after my two interviews, and I had gotten was the testimony of two loons. If this creature truly roamed Xavier’s campus, there had to be some trace of it somewhere. He is credited on a recent documentary directed by Blis DeVault, the DIFT department chair, so perhaps she could be my next interview subject.

Actually though, I’m pretty sure she forgot my name. I don’t want to put her in that awkward situation where she’s talking to her and she’s like, ‘Dang I completely forget this kid’s name,’ so she has to call me “dude” or “man” whenever she wants to refer to me. So sad.

However, now that we have DeVault in mind I’m beginning to wonder if she could be the missing link. Here me out:

DeVault could’ve possibly run the DIFT program all on her own. She might be the woman who take her major? Her job must be like handling a ran-ging cattle. But if she’s busy managing the academics of all these kids who just can’t handle a normal major, then how could she possibly have time to manage all the equipment and technology vital to the program?

Perhaps “Jon Nicholas” is a creation of DeVault’s, a Frankenstein-esque monster who doesn’t exist because she simply doesn’t have time. Perhaps it’s not even a creation, but a man who just enjoys helping out the program.

Just kidding, obviously, that makes absolutely no sense. A man who helps the DIFT program? Everyone knows film is a zero-sum game. So ultimately it seems Jon Nicholas will remain a mystery, very much a myth. We may not be able to prove he exists, but we also can’t prove that he doesn’t. Like how the story of Bigfoot gives hope to hairy men all over the world, so does the story of Jon Nicholas give me hope.

I didn’t know what Xavier’s film program would be like with a funky name like DIFT, but what I’ve found is what really makes this program special is the people. DeVault has a real passion for the program, my teachers have been great and all my non-crazy classmates are pretty cool, too. This is a perfect environment to spawn a myth like that of Jon Nicholas: not just a beast who protects the film equipment, but also his henchings, but also a kind soul who actually cares about the students he works with.

That’s why I have hope for my next four years in the DIFT program. Even the made-up staff members truly care.