



## Bye-bye Blackboard!

*La Roche to switch to a new learning management system by summer semester*

BY HEATHER RADICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

Over the years, the college has been fielding a continuous flood of criticisms regarding the functionality of Blackboard – or rather, the lack thereof. Dr. Rosemary McCarthy, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, said that students and faculty alike have simply stopped using Blackboard altogether rather than endure the multiple bugs, glitches, and general difficulty while using it.

“Blackboard is okay,” she said. But she said she recognized the need to install a new learning management system that met the needs of the college.

La Roche’s contract with Blackboard was going to end in June, and Dr. McCarthy said it was the perfect opportunity to begin researching different alternatives to replace it with. Upon further exploration, it turned out that many Pennsylvania schools, indeed schools all over the country, were using Canvas, a learning management system similar to Blackboard.

“It does everything Blackboard does,” Dr. McCarthy said. “But it’s much more user-friendly.”

One of the chief complaints about Blackboard, said professor of nursing Stephanie Illig, was how laborious the process of learning it was. Illig said that learning Blackboard took an unreasonable amount of time, frustrating students and professors alike and infringing on actual

classroom engagement.

“It’s not fair to spend so much time learning a system before you get to the content,” she said. She admitted that it took her almost two years to learn how to manage Blackboard adeptly enough to teach multiple on-line classes using it.

Dr. McCarthy and Academic Dean Dr. Howard Ishiyama organized a meeting of several campus professors during the semester to announce the transition. Writers’ Center director Dr. Jess Ganni participated in this discussion and emerged thrilled to finally work with a system that addressed her problems.

She said one of her most significant complaints about Blackboard is its calendar system. Creating new assignments does not automatically create corresponding due dates on the calendar; these must be manually entered and, if necessary, manually changed.

“There’s like a million steps,” said Dr. Ganni. “Everything needs to be independently updated.”

In Canvas, professors can drag and drop assignment folders around on the calendar without having to open new windows. Assignments are also synced with the calendar and creates due date reminders that the students can customize.

“It solves a lot of problems,” Dr. Ganni added. “I think it’s going to be a good thing.”

Other professors, like Illig, were suspicious of such a drastic change in their online curriculum. “Black-

SEE BLACKBOARD, PAGE 13

## Student-run event educates on local epidemic of human trafficking

BY JESS LEE  
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

On Jan. 18 La Roche college hosted a human trafficking awareness event to inform the community about the real dangers occurring right in our backyard.

Human trafficking awareness month was in January and became the inspiration for this event. Kristen Spezialetti, a senior at La Roche College and president of One Youth, defines human trafficking as having three main components –the act, the means, and the purpose. She explained, “The act generally refers to the trafficker’s recruitment and transport of victims. The means refers to how the trafficker recruited and transported victims, which could include abduction, deception, and abuse of power. The last component is the purpose, which defines what kind of human trafficking is occurring.”

Spezialetti worked with Living in Liberty, Asservo Project, Northway Christian Community Justice Team, Trades of Hope, Pittsburgh Action Against Rape, and Freedom Firm to make her event successful. Spezialetti

said, “We can’t do anything to combat human trafficking if we don’t know that it’s happening. So, I organized this event to educate people about how and why human trafficking happens in our area.”

The event started at 7 p.m. Following the reception, attendees watched Human Trafficking: Pittsburgh Fight Back. “I think the screening... struck a chord with attendants because it showed the realities of human trafficking and the real victims that are forced into such a horrible and traumatizing situation,” Spezialetti said. “I hope that the attendants left my event with a better sense of what human trafficking is, how to spot a victim, and how to report suspected cases of human trafficking.”

At the conclusion of the film, the floor was open for the audience to ask anything they wanted to know about human trafficking. The panel included Julie Evans from Pittsburgh Action Against Rape, Christen Cappatt from the Asservo Project, Cheryl Miller and Holly Seipp, both from Living in Liberty, an organization that provides safe houses for human trafficking victims.

SEE TRAFFICKING, PAGE 13

## SGA board discusses spring semester plans

BY JULIA FELTON  
NEWS EDITOR

The Student Government Association (SGA) discussed their goals for spring semester, including SGA Days, water fountains, a group activity, and other events.

SGA elections are less than two months away. According to SGA president Brooke Audino, elections will take place between spring break and Easter break.

To prepare for this, the board members said they would hold SGA Days. These would allow students to meet with current board members.

Students who are interested in running for a position would be able to discuss the workload, responsibilities, and opportunities associated with each position. All current members should be available to provide information to perspective members.

“Our recruitment process would be a little better,” SGA Secretary Kristen Spezialetti said.

Some current board members said they planned to run for their positions again.

Some students, including President Brooke Audino, are graduating or leaving SGA at the end of the semester.

With only a few months left, they discussed multiple goals they said they wished to accomplish in their remaining time.

One of the goals they emphasized was to have the college install new water fountains. They said they are hoping to install water fountains for refilling water bottles.

SEE SGA, PAGE 10



Anne Hedgepeth (above), interim vice president of public policy and government relations at AAUW, speaks at the organization’s presentation of “Girls Just Want to Have Civil Rights” © KRISTEN SPEZIALETTI

See page 6 for the full story

# Faculty

## New Writers' Center director strives to update services and promote mission

BY JULIA FELTON  
NEWS EDITOR

The new director of the Writers' Center said she will keep the heart of center the same, while improving advertising, reaching more students, and updating the center.

Jessica Ganni was a La Roche College student when the Writers' Center opened in 1999. She used the Writers' Center and worked there while studying English education. Ganni said she believed that her passion for La Roche and its mission will help her to excel in her new role.

Since Ganni has been involved with the Writers' Center for so long, she said the transition to a new leadership should be smooth. She is not changing the general premise of the Writers' Center.

"A lot of the mission and heart of the center stays the same," Ganni said.

Ganni said she encourages students to use the Writers' Center more. Therefore, Ganni said one major focus will be advertising. She said she wanted the Writers' Center

to be represented at more events.

She said she also wanted to develop a new logo and slogan for the Writers' Center. To do so, she said she hopes to launch a campus-wide competition and use the best logo and slogan for marketing purposes.

According to Ganni, the Writers' Center already helps many students. Since its opening in 1999, the Writers' Center has scheduled 19,000 appointments. In the fall semester of 2017, the center had 452 appointments.

Ganni said she still wants to encourage more students to use this resource. Ganni said she hopes to reach out to more graduate students, as well as undergraduates.

She also said she expanded hours. The Writers' Center is now opened later two days a week to accommodate students with jobs and hectic schedules. It is now open until 7 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Ganni said she does want to make sure students understand what the Writers' Center is.

"Being a Writers' Center is a bit of a misnomer in the sense that we can help with research and reading as well," Ganni said.

She said she wanted to encourage students to seek help at all stages of the writing process. Students do not need to have a completed draft to schedule an appointment. She said she often sees students who need help with reading difficult texts or starting their research.

"We can help with pre-writing stages and brainstorming, finding resources, reading the texts, and coming [up] with an approach," Ganni said.

Of course, she said the Writers' Center is also a good resource for putting the finishing touches on assignments, as well. The Writers' Center provides help with grammar and revision for completed drafts.

She said the Writers' Center will help with class assignments, resumes, personal writing, scholarship essays, applications, or any other type of writing students may encounter.



Jessica Ganni (above), new director of the Writers' Center, is a La Roche College graduate

© JULIA FELTON

SEE GANNI, PAGE 12

## Science and religion fascinate biology professor

BY DANIELLE DINATALE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Some believe in science. Others believe in religion. The long-standing debate drove people apart throughout history. But there is no rule that says both can't exist at the same time. In Fred Sproull's opinion, there is nothing that excludes one from the other.

Having taught at La Roche for over 30 years, Sproull explains the importance of biology in everyday life, and how it coincides with religion.

The science field, particularly biology, requires an endless amount of education to teach. Sproull received an undergraduate degree in biology at Clarion, and then a PhD at the University of Pittsburgh. He participated in two postdoctoral fellowships at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the University of

Pittsburgh Medical School. Then he received a JD Degree from Duquesne University. After all of his studying, he found his place teaching at La Roche.

Sproull's interest in biology stems far beyond a simple love of science. "It's a way of studying the universe," he said. "Living organisms always fascinated me."

Not only did he find the world to be full of wonder, but Sproull said he also had an interest in social issues, which further prompted his intrigue with biology. "Everything has a biological basis," he added.

Even if people aren't interested in science, there are many reasons why everyone should want to take a course in biology. It extends past genetics and what makes up human beings. Sproull said, in fact, that most issues in biology have an ethical and social base, which the younger generations face today. Issues such as climate change and abortion are all related to this science.

SEE SPROULL,  
PAGE 12

*"Science can't tell you how to treat your neighbor, but it can help you make reasonable decisions."*

- Dr. Fred Sproull

## Graphic design professor receives illustration award

BY LAUREN VILLELLA  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

La Roche College graphic design professor's illustrations earned him a 2017 New York Times and New York Public Library Best Illustrated Book Award.

Stacy Innerst, an adjunct professor since 2013, received the award for his work in the children's book "Ruth Bader Ginsburg: The Case of R.B.G. vs. Inequality." Jonah Winter is the author of the book, which Abrams Books for Young Readers published.

Innerst, who has been illustrating children's books since 2000, said he was honored to receive the prestigious award.

"It's one of those awards where, because it's for the best illustrated picture book, it's judged by kind of the best of the best," Innerst said. "For an illustrator, it carries a lot of weight, because you know you're being judged by people you really respect."

The awards banquet, Innerst added, was at the New York Public Library.

"It was an unbelievable experience to be in the presence of illustrators I just admire so much," Innerst said. "I was just so proud to be among them. It was a heady experience for me just to be around people that are real lu-

minaries in children's book publishing."

"Ruth Bader Ginsburg: The Case of R.B.G. vs. Inequality" depicts the Supreme Court Justice's influential life. Innerst said the book's subject and author drew him to the project. Winter is the author of several nonfiction picture books, including "Barack" and "Lillian's Right to Vote."

"(Winter) is very well-respected in children's publishing for the work he does," Innerst said. "When I was offered this book, and I knew Jonah Winter was writing it, I was very excited because I've always wanted to work with him."

Innerst added he loves to work on picture book biographies and enjoys depicting the scope of a person's life through pictures.

"For me, history is like storytelling," Innerst said. "Ruth Bader Ginsburg had a very interesting life; she overcame a lot of obstacles. So it was an interesting story, with an interesting time in history. Her lifespan covers a very interesting segment of American history."

In order to tell subjects' stories, Innerst noted, he looks for photographs

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# Food

## *International Advisor Tiara Phillip asked students and staff how they found comfort in their favorite foods*

**BY TIARA PHILLIP**  
INTERNATIONAL ADVISOR



Name: Analis Simons  
Year: Sophomore  
Food: Beef Pate  
Why: "I like it because my grandmother makes them the best. It reminds me of my family."



Name: Mohammed Alabdulkader  
Year: Sophomore  
Food: Beef Burger  
Why: "It is very accessible and it's everywhere."

Name: Amber Alcinder  
Year: Sophomore  
Food: Crackers  
Why: "It does not contain a lot of chemicals and it's not a fatty food."



Name: India Woods  
Year: Senior  
Food: Oxtail  
Why: "I love beef and it tastes good when my mother cooks it. It is by far my favorite."



Name: Christian Mukungilwa  
Year: Sophomore  
Food: Cassava leaves and beans made in Africa  
Why: "I grew up eating it. My mother made it with a love of love and she really took her time so it tasted good each time."



Name: Stephanie Marks  
Position: Faculty Assistant  
Food: Milk chocolate  
Why: "I notice I reach for milk chocolate when I'm stressed. I am a stress eater."

# Winter Blues

## This year's flu season breaks records

By HEATHER RADICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

This winter's flu season is shaping up to be a nasty one, with flu-related hospitalization rates outpacing anything seen in recent years, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is breaking records this with its current death toll of 63, children making up 10 of that number. The CDC reports that between 12,000 and 49,000 people die of influenza every year.

Dr. Pamela Chapman, a professor of graduate nursing, said that, while college students are not significantly more or less likely to contract the flu, they do come into close contact with so many people and touch so many surfaces that the flu virus can be very widely spread.

The flu – or influenza – is caused by either Influenza Virus A or Influenza Virus B. This year, the CDC reports that a subtype of Influenza Virus A, H3N2, a type of seasonal influenza that has mutated into several more resistant strains, has ravaged the United States, with one in every 13 doctor visits results in a flu diagnosis.

Dr. Chapman strenuously recommends students stay home if they have a fever. She said that someone showing symptoms should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to a place where they could infect others.

A huge part of remaining healthy,

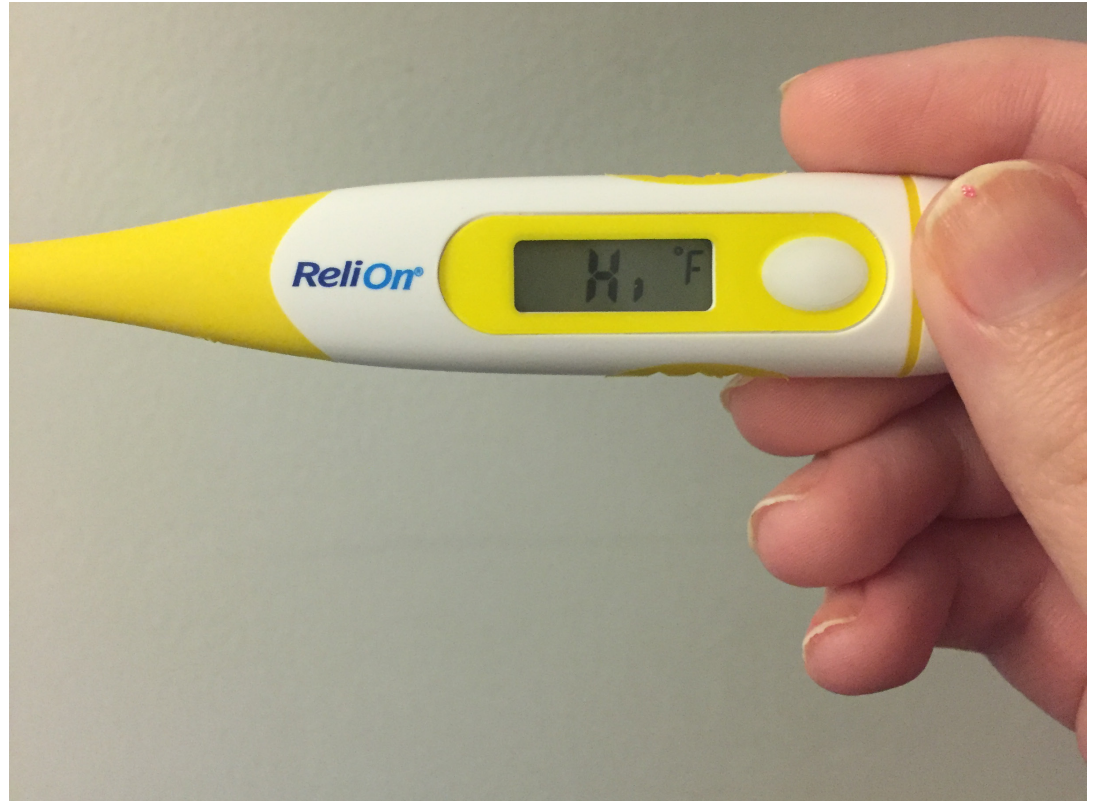
said Dr. Chapman, is consistent hand-washing and wiping down surfaces that retain a lot of germs: keyboards, door-knobs, countertops, anything that is a popular place for hands is also a popular place for the flu virus.

She continued on to say the most significant thing one can do to prevent contracting or spreading the flu is to receive the flu vaccine. Contrary to popular opinion, said Dr. Chapman, the flu vaccine does not contain a live virus and thus cannot give one the flu itself.

"If you get the flu shot and still get the flu, it's a coincidence," she said.

She debunked myths that suggest one can contract the flu by being outside in the cold for a long time. "It's all respiratory. You won't get the flu from going outside with your hair wet."

"I get the flu shot every year," said student Lauren Ranalli. "Even if I end up getting the flu anyway, it helps other people not get as sick." Ranalli added that she had seen a lot of her friends contract the flu despite receiving the flu shot, and mentioned that



Medical professionals recommend staying home if you have a fever

© HEATHER RADICK

the symptoms seemed more severe than usual.

Dr. Chapman said she couldn't guess why this year's flu season is so severe; indeed, it's a question that even the most dedicated medical professionals cannot answer. According to the CDC, this flu season is just as bad as the infamous swine flu epidemic in 2009.

Dr. Chapman said that La Roche

sponsors a free vaccination clinic each fall in their effort to spread awareness of the oncoming flu season, and she encouraged everyone to make the choice to get their flu shot.

She also said that isn't too late for those last minutes stragglers that have yet to receive their flu shot this season; it's still available and is encouraged by the CDC and the healthcare industry.

## Cold weather impacts mood, health

By MINA HOLLAND  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

People who experience winter weather either love or hate it. As January transitions into February, the weather fluctuates. First, it escalates into the mid-50s as La Roche students dig out shorts and jackets as the sun radiates onto the once ice-ridden sidewalks.

By the end of January, the temperature plummets into below-freezing weather, with snow laden sidewalks and thick, gray clouds blanketing the sky. Once optimistic students throw their winter coats back on, miserably continuing their routine, dreading classes, all due to the blizzards' disruptions.

The brutal weather also worsens spreading sicknesses around campus. The severe flu of 2018 worries students and faculty to the point where they receive emails from Student Life Division showing ways to prevent the disease. They prepare for the worse yet hope for the best during the season.

Winter creates an aura of sadness for people, as the dreary weather rarely puts society in a good mood. However, rare cases look forward to the next snowfall, insisting that cold weather is necessary. Not everyone

has a negative aspect toward this time of year.

Occasionally, students wake up and receive an email notification on their phones, stating that the university delayed their classes. Overjoyed, they peer out the window, observe the snow piling on the ground, and climb back into bed. Winter is enjoyable in times such as this.

*The campus endured heavy snowfall that saw delays and cancellations*

© MINA HOLLAND



# Man on the Street

*Entertainment Editor Jess Lee asked students and staff:  
“What is your current phone background?”*



Name: Tiffany Atkins  
Year: Senior  
Major: Health Science  
Quote: “My background is my military dog.”



Name: Rish Patel  
Year: Sophomore  
Major: Business Management  
Quote: “It’s an iPhone X design. I liked how it looked and I guess my phone just came with it?”

Name: Logan Fairman  
Year: Junior  
Major: Forensic Chemistry  
Quote: “The (Pittsburgh) Penguins with the Stanley Cup because I’m a huge Penguins fan!”



Name: Ally Platt  
Year: Freshman  
Major: Undecided  
Quote: “Well, my background picture is of me and my mom (Missy) because I love her.”



Name: Missy Platt  
Position: Works in the Redhawk Cafe  
Quote: “My dog because she’s my baby. Her name is Holly.”



Name: Maggie Briggs  
Year: Senior  
Major: Sociology  
Quote: “It’s my boyfriend and I in front of a Christmas tree. It’s really interesting when you consider the fact we both hate Christmas.”

## Interested in joining our staff?

The Courier is always looking for new writers and photographers.

Contact either Lauren Vilella or Heather Radick for more information on writing for the Courier.

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# Community

## LRX exhibit sends activist message

BY EMMETT KASPER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

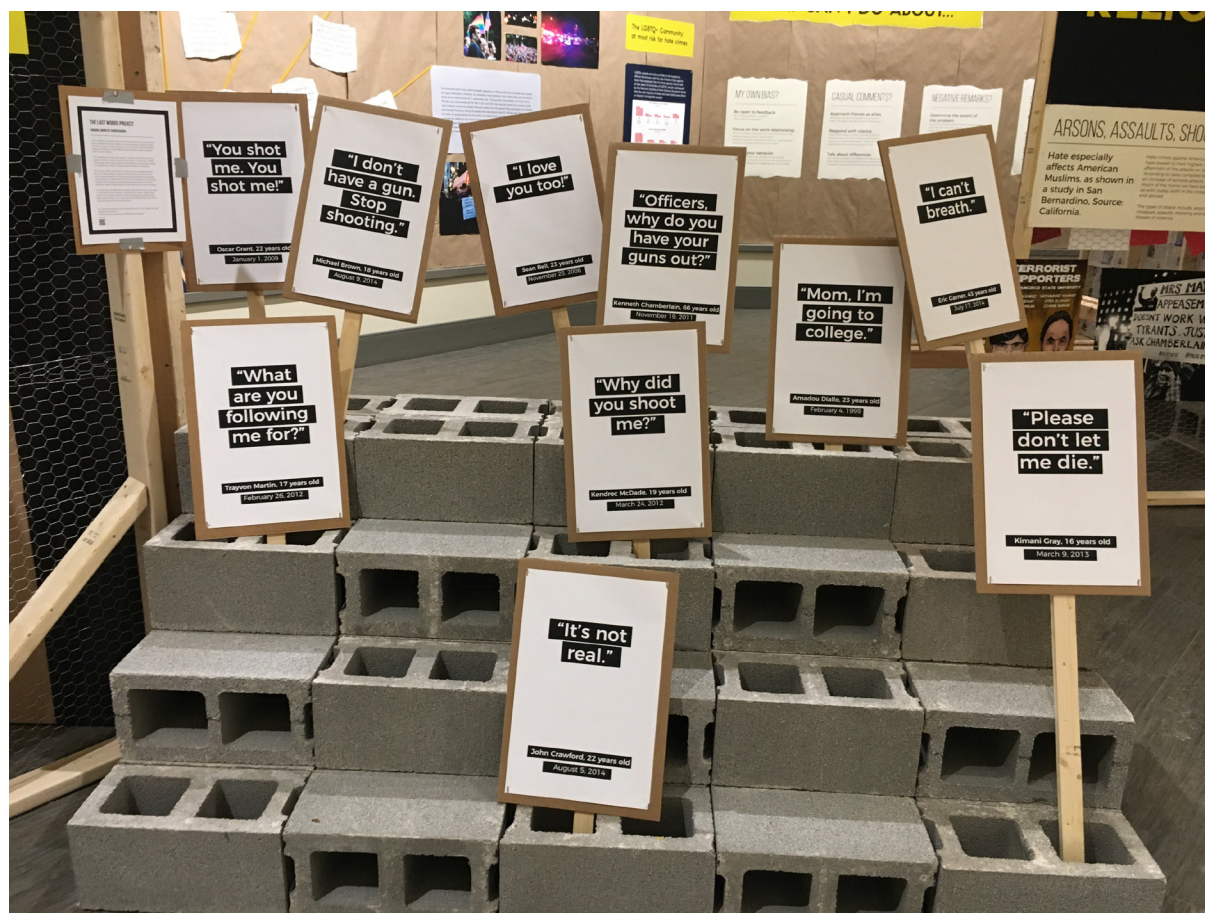
The art exhibit “I Am More” was open to the public from Jan. 24 to Feb. 12, and was built to educate La Roche students about issues of privilege and discrimination.

It was located in the Cantelops Art Gallery, and involved many different complex displays, as well as interactive sections. It covered topics on race, sexuality, gender, sexism, immigration, and religion.

It was created by a graphic design class taught by Andy Schwanbeck, the Assistant Professor of Graphic Design. The students worked with Candace Okello, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, to get ideas for the content of the exhibit.

Okello was the one who pitched the idea to Jane Arnold, the director of La Roche Experience. It recreated the “Tunnel of Oppression” that has

SEE LRX, PAGE 13



(Left) The “I Am More” exhibit displayed several impactful pieces, such as a cinderblock structure that showed the last words of civilians killed by police in 2017

© EMMETT KASPER

## AAUW discusses civil rights challenges girls and women confront in the U.S.

BY KRISTEN SPEZIALETTI  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On Jan. 30, the Pittsburgh, North Hills Pittsburgh, and Fox Chapel Area branches of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) presented “Girls Just Want to Have Civil Rights: How to be an Advocate & Ally in the Fight for Equity.” AAUW’s mission is to empower females through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

Anne Hedgepeth, Interim Vice President of Public Policy & Government Relations of AAUW, discussed important civil rights issues women and girls face in America, specifically the role that the public plays in promoting gender equality.

“Strides are being made toward advancing gender equity, but deep disparities continue to exist across the globe,” Peggy Schmiedecke, Associate Director of Admissions and La Roche’s AAUW representative, said. “La Roche is proud to host AAUW on our campus for a discussion on this important topic in today’s society.”

Hedgepeth prefaced the discussion by clarifying the expected outcomes of Title IX. According to her, it does not just protect girls’ access to education, but all students, free from sexual discrimination. “[Title IX] keeps classroom doors, athletics fields, and labs open to all students, and it compels schools to make sure that they are not limiting anyone’s access to any of those programs or opportunities based on their sex,” she

said, “and we know that that promise has not been fully realized for all of our students.”

A concern for AAUW, as well as women’s rights advocates, is the fact that Title IX has been in place since 1972 and it is still not being strictly enforced by schools and government entities. “There’s a need for advocacy and voices,” Hedgepeth said, encouraging the audience to contact local representatives in an effort to combat these injustices.

The areas where Title IX is not being enforced strictly enough, like sexual harassment in schools, has become an issue worth advocating for. “Sexual harassment pervades the lives of students. The AAUW did some research that found that about 56 percent of girls and 40 percent of boys in grades 7-12 face sexual harassment over the course of a school year.”

Hedgepeth said that the way sexual harassment is dealt with affects the way people interact with each other throughout their lives. She stressed that actions need to be taken early and not shirked, because students will carry that negativity “throughout their lifetimes and careers.”

In addition to gender inequity in schools, the workplace proves to be a place where there is a disparity between women and men. Specifically, Hedgepeth addressed leadership gaps, whether in organizations and corporations or in politics, and the gender pay gap. Although women are generally underrepresented in politics,

there has been an increase in women running for office this year.

As for the gender pay gap, “[women] are sitting right around 80 cents on the dollar right now. It’s not budged much recently,” she said. She also said that with the rate of change between 1960 and 2016, women are expected to reach the same pay as men by 2059. However, progress has stalled in recent years. With the current rate of change, women are expected to reach the same pay as men by 2119.

Hedgepeth closed with a call to ac-

tion: “Now is a critical time and your voice is needed...It’s just as important, if not more important, to take on these issues at critical moments.” She stressed the importance of meeting local representatives in person, emailing them, and communicating these issues constructively.

The latter half of the presentation focused on how to be an effective advocate: “Relationships are absolutely the most important thing for getting advocacy done.”



Deb Rosenfelder (above), AAUW Pittsburgh North Hills Co-President, speaks during the “Girls Just Want to Have Civil Rights” presentation

© KRISTEN SPEZIALETTI

# Students

## SGA president reflects on past contributions and looks to future goals

BY JULIA FELTON  
NEWS EDITOR

Student Government Association (SGA) President Brooke Audino said she has already achieved numerous SGA objectives, but has more goals to accomplish this semester.

Audino said she served as vice president last year, which allowed her to transition into the role as president easily.

"I spent last year as vice president on the board and I saw how things worked," Audino said.

During her time as Vice President, Audino said SGA was able to install a fire pit on campus. They also worked towards getting charging stations in CC Square, but she said the college installed them before SGA could have it done.

"The school kind of picks up on our goals sometimes if we don't do them immediately," Audino said.

Though Audino said that some SGA goals have remained the same, she implemented her own objectives

as President.

Audino said she wanted SGA to focus on communicating with the student body. Audino said she was "surveying students, making sure we have their opinions, and talking to them."

"One of our goals is to get the word out there that we are doing something good," Audino said.

According to Audino, SGA also created program guides that outline how to fill each board position. She said this will make transitions smoother as SGA elections approach this spring. Audino said she hopes these will allow future students to fill their roles as well as their predecessors.

"We do a lot of behind-the-scenes action, too," Audino said.

Some of the behind-the-scenes work Audino has helped SGA to accomplish includes overseeing clubs.

"We do a lot of club approvals at the beginning of the year," Audino

said. "Any new clubs have to come talk in front of us and we basically give them the yes or no. We also allocate funds for them."

"We're doing things behind the scenes to try to make students have a better time on campus," Audino added.

Audino said she still hopes to accomplish more during her SGA tenure.

She said she is working to put unused study abroad funds to better use.

"When a student doesn't go on study abroad, their funds that were allocated to them to go on that study abroad are basically lost," Audino explained. "One of the things I campaigned on was to try to get those funds to be in a scholarship so students can apply to go a second time."

She also suggested that those funds could go to transfer students who want to go on a free study abroad trip.

Audino said she hopes the college



Brooke Audino (above) is beginning her second semester as SGA president

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## Redhawk Tabletop brings together students with a passion for gaming

BY MATT FEENEY  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Redhawk Tabletop was launched by Mollie Farruggia, the club's president, and Tishaun Wilson, former vice president, with the aid of Joelle Mellon, the reference librarian at the Wright Library. Farruggia and Mellon, co-workers at the library for two years, both share a passion for gaming and wanted to host events centered on board games and tabletop gaming. Prior to the founding of the club, they hosted a gaming event and received positive feedback via

surveys given to participating students. After the success of the event, Student Government approved of turning it into an official club.

Farruggia is a long time gamer, noting she owes much of it to her father. "My dad has always been a D&D nut," she said. 'D&D' is short for "Dungeons & Dragons," a tabletop role-playing game wherein players control an avatar character within a fantasy setting managed by a Dungeon Master, who serves as the refer-

ee and storyteller for the game. However, Farruggia noted, her experience wasn't limited to D&D. "I played a lot of different games with my dad growing up. I was always super fascinated by it."

However, Farruggia noted, you do not need any previous experience with board games, card games, or tabletop to attend an event. "We really want to make it fun and have the students pick what they want to do," she said.

The club also host sessions of popular tabletop games such as "Dungeons & Dragons" or "Pathfinders." Anyone that wants to participate doesn't have to bring anything to the events; dice, pencils, and paper are all provided and, Farruggia noted, a Dungeon Master will have been selected prior to the event. Alongside these tabletop sessions, the club will offer workshop events where new players can learn about the more complex mechanics and receive aid in creating a character of their own. The developers of these games have created manuals and other resources to help one familiarize themselves with the rules and mechanics, which, Farruggia said, the club will use to better teach new players.

Farruggia believes gaming is beneficial in several ways. It can show how to work properly in a team, she said, but can also teach how to work independently. She said it can even help one develop the valuable skill of setting achievable goals and being able to work towards them. There are some like-minded individuals on the matter, such as Gary Gygax, co-creator of "Dungeons & Dragons." Gygax has stated his belief that games can be used to drive someone, saying, "Games give you a chance to excel."



(Clockwise from top) Joelle Mellon, Nick Goll, Mollie Farruggia, Donald Daube and Madison Barton attend a meeting of Redhawk Tabletop, La Roche's gaming club

©MATT FEENEY

SEE REDHAWK TABLETOP,  
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# Dorms

## The easier way to eat more ramen

BY HEATHER RADICK  
MANAGING EDITOR

Living in a campus dorm has its perks – proximity to classes, no commuter traffic, constant socialization – but what’s a student to do when the dining hall is closed, and a long night of studying requires a quick, low-energy meal exclusively using the microwave?

Ramen is, undoubtedly, the go-to college confection for students around the world; though one serving accounts for 36 percent of their daily recommended intake of sodium, they still flock to it for reasons that most nutritionists just can’t figure out.

“I love ramen,” said student Tray Johnson. “It’s like the perfect food.”

The only problem is most ramen brands have a step that requires boiling water, and unless students want to risk splattering scalding hot water all over their fingers while removing a mug full of it from the microwave, this process is a no-go in a dorm that doesn’t allow students to possess hot plates or burners.

“Rapid Ramen Cooker” is a tool that eliminates most of the steps and utensils of cooking ramen. The entire process consists of placing the block of uncooked ramen in the container, filling it with water, and

microwaving it. The seasoning packet, optional as usual, can be added at the end and stirred in while hot.

The nonstick material prevents the noodles from congealing on the bottom, even if they’re overcooked. No need for college students to purchase a sponge for some hard scrubbing; all it takes is a quick rinsing in the sink and it’s ready for another round.

“I knew my roommate had one,” said Johnson, “but I didn’t really think to get my own. I thought, it must be harder than this! But it really isn’t.”

Looking at it one might expect uneven cooking. How could a microwave not leave any crunchy bits after a mere three minutes? But even temperature is guaranteed, and still uses significantly less water than traditional cooking.

“I can’t tell the difference between using this and the stove,” said student Andre Parker. “It’s perfect, because I’m really lazy.”

Indeed, dorm life is epitomized by labeling tasks as “lots of effort” and “no effort,” and prioritized accordingly. Assuring that a meal is “no effort” can help those students who would rather sneak in another hour of sleep than bother with going to the dining hall.



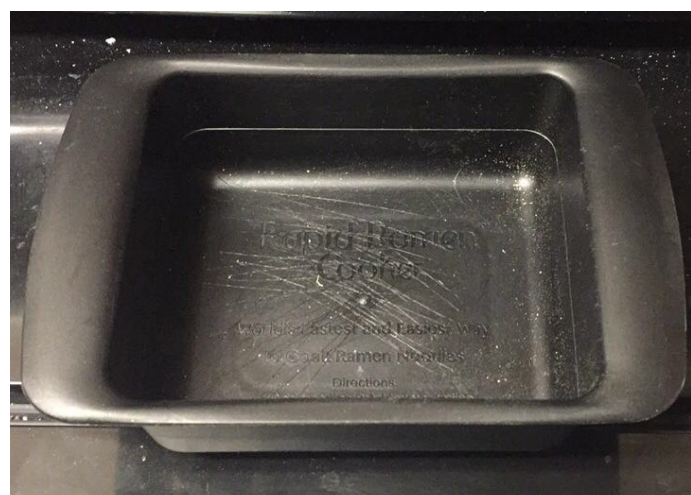
Tray Johnson (above), said he’ll never eat ramen the same way again

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Step One: Pick your favorite ramen; as long as it comes in a brick, you’re good to go

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Step Two: Grab your “Rapid Ramen Cooker”

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Step Three: Place ramen brick in the cooker, then fill with water to the indicated line



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Step Four: Microwave for three and half minutes, let cool, and enjoy your sensational salt bomb!

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# Sports

## Q&A with junior basketball player

BY JORDAN SMITH  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

**R**yan Norkus has been a vital part of the Redhawk's success ever since he started as a freshman. He has played in every game since coming to La Roche except for one that he missed because of illness his freshman year.

Currently this season, Norkus has played in all 14 Conference and eight Non-Conference games. He is averaging 7.7 points and 5.3 rebounds per game.

Norkus is known for his strong defense on the court, especially in the paint where he uses his size to block shots and defend the other team's strong, tall players.

The men's basketball team is currently on a 12-game win streak. Their Conference record is at an outstanding 13-1. Overall, they're 17-5.

Recently I had an opportunity to sit down and have a Q&A with Norkus. Here's what he had to say:

**What position do you play?**

Forward

**What year are you in school?**

Junior

**What's your major? What do you want to do when you graduate?**

I am a criminal justice major. I would like to be a police officer, then one day join the FBI.

**Why did you choose to come to**

**La Roche College?**

I chose La Roche because it was a small campus and it felt like home.

**What do you and your teammates do for fun off the court?**

My team likes to play Fortnite and other video games. We also have a great group chat.

**What does your off-season look like?**

Our off-season is usually filled with workouts and pick-up games. But we enjoy some down time during the year by hanging out and relaxing.

**Who is your favorite professional basketball player?**

My favorite professional player is LeBron James.

**What NBA team do you support?**

I do not have a favorite team. I enjoy watching the best players in the league.

**Do you and the team perform any kind of charity work?**

We help with basketball camps throughout the year.

**What do you like about the city of Pittsburgh?**

I love the sports in the city. I wish we had an NBA team but, hopefully, it happens one day. I enjoy all the different restaurants the city has.



Ryan Norkus (above), a forward, averages 7.7 points and 5.3 rebounds per game ©JORDAN SMITH



Dante Nicholas (above) prepares for a soccer match ©JORDAN SMITH

## Pittsburgh Penguins heat up the winter

BY JORDAN SMITH  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

**T**he Pittsburgh Penguins were struggling on all fronts the first half of the season.

They looked disinterested and were dropping games left and right. Fans were starting to think that fatigue was setting in or that the team did not have as much depth as in the past two years.

As always, like every year, critics were saying that Sidney Crosby, Evgeni Malkin and Kris Letang didn't have it anymore, that they were 'washed up.'

Lately, that hasn't been the case.

General Manager Jim Rutherford clearly believes the right pieces are in the lineup. The trade deadline date is approaching on Feb. 26. No moves have been made yet.

Rutherford has been patient; this has been good because now the back-to-back champions are finally playing some consistent hockey.

Ever since the beginning of the 2018 year the Penguins have a record

of 11-4. In those 15 games they've scored 58 goals. That averages out to 3.86 goals per game.

It's safe to say the offense is rolling again.

Looking back, the only fact about the Penguins offense that was consistent was their power play which is currently ranked first in the league at 26.8 percent.

Their penalty kill is coming around as well as the Penguins sit seventh in the league at 82.5 percent.

But, the team's stars are finally shining and looking like a cup-contending team once again.

A quick stat that is unbelievable -- since the start of last season, Malkin and Phil Kessel both have combined on 70 goals. That is the most in the NHL among teammate duos.

Malkin has been on fire since the new year. He posted a league high 12

SEE PENGUINS, PAGE 11

## Innerst, continued from page 2

of their environment, like where they spent their childhood. The photographs, he added, can aid him in acquiring a sense of the time and place.

"I go back and I find archival photographs of the neighborhoods, just to get a sense of where these people were walking around, where they were living at the time," Innerst said.

Innerst compared the process to making a film, with an emphasis on accuracy and artistry. He added he also watches films from the era he is depicting. Specifically for "Ruth Bad-

er Ginsberg," he watched films based in the 1930s and 1940s, when Ginsburg was growing up.

Gouache, ink and notebook paper, Innerst noted, are some of the materials he used to create the illustrations. He added the particular story guides his decision-making regarding what materials to utilize.

"I use different materials for every book I do," Innerst said. "For this one, one thing I wanted to incorporate was the paper from a legal pad, because I knew it was going to be told

as a jury trial."

Innerst said he didn't want the illustrations to be tight, so he began his sketches by drawing in loose, gestural ways. He noted he used Photoshop to add scanned images to the fabric of the paper.

The specific audience, Innerst said, does not affect the way he illustrates. He noted he does not consciously tone things down in an effort to be kid-friendly.

"For me it's all about the story-telling," Innerst said, "and if I think too much about the audience, I get distracted by it. And I think part of that comes from reading picture books to my own kids, because they weren't shocked by things, they weren't confused by things. They just looked at the pictures, and I think kids have a

visual vocabulary that is much more sophisticated than we give them credit for."

Many factors influence his work, Innerst said, including music and films. He noted he tries to combine old-fashioned elements with more contemporary ones.

"I try to work in a contemporary style that a contemporary readership can appreciate," Innerst said. "But I'm also dealing with historical things, so I really try to draw in influences from the era that I'm depicting."

Innerst said he is currently working on two picture book biographies, one for Boyds Mills Press and one for Simon & Schuster. He added he also continues to illustrate for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's caption contest every two weeks.

*"I try to work in a contemporary style that a contemporary readership can appreciate."*

*- Stacy Innerst*

## Redhawk Tabletop, continued from page 2

Farruggia is proud of the success the club has seen already, but would like to see more exposure. "We still are a new club, so we're still going at a more grassroots level." However, she remains confident and hopeful. "I think we're set in the right direction."

If you have a game you've been eager to try out in a larger group, consider bringing it to an event. "Tabletop is open to anyone of all skill levels. You can drop in and play. You can bring any type of game you want to play," Farruggia said. "If you want to see it happen, bring it. We do card games, we do board games, we do RPGs (role-playing games)."

Redhawk Tabletop often meet on Thursdays between the hours of 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.



George Davis III (above) plays the piano in the CC Square

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## SGA, continued from page 1

"We are trying to add eco-friendly water fountains for students to be able to use," Audino said.

SGA members expressed concerns regarding cloudy water at existing water fountains. They said they hoped to address that issue as well.

Another major point in their meeting was an SGA group activity. The board said conferences were too expensive, but they hoped to find a cheaper alternative that would still emphasize team building. Suggestions included laser tag, a scavenger hunt, or an escape room. "That'll be good for us as a team," Spezialetti said.

The SGA members said they were excited about a new concession stand at Kerr Fitness Center, called The Nest. The Nest will offer a variety of food options, as well as a smoothie bar. The Nest will accept Redhawk dollars.

SGA also said they wanted to promote the new SAGE dining app. The app allows students to order from the Redhawk Café without waiting in line to order and

pay.

Though they did not have details yet, SGA said they planned a spring concert.

SGA discussed tentative plans for renovating Mahler Lounge and the courtyard.

Board members planned multiple

events for the upcoming semester, including round table meetings for club presidents, a highway clean-up, and a meeting for commuter students.

They also said they would like to work on running a food pantry project and traveling to other cities for

LRX community service projects. They did not have details on these ideas yet.

## 2018 Student Government Association Members

*Brooke Audino,*  
**President**

*Conner Hagins,*  
**Executive Vice President**

*Kristen Spezialetti,*  
**Secretary**

*Anna Vines,*  
**Vice President of Finance**

*Sarah Thomas,*  
**Academic Vice President**

*Rebecca Franks,*  
**Public Relations Chair**

*Brett Meeder,*  
**Judicial Vice President**

*Erica Deluliis,*  
**Director of Student Activities**

*Cynthia Ncuti,*  
**Director of Multicultural/ International Affairs**

*Brittany Premick,*  
**Director of Clubs and Organizations**

*Annalise Lavarone,*  
**Director of Resident Affairs**

*Coulter Bishop,*  
**Director of Athletics and Intramurals**

*Allison Bosworth,*  
**Director of Design and Technology**

*Ariella Itangishaka,*  
**Director of Commuter Affairs**

*Natasha Florence,*  
**Director of Community Service**

*Abby Doyle,*  
**Director of Green Initiatives**



(above) Despite the abysmal weather, Joan of Arc is peaceful and serene

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## Penguins, continued from page 9

goals in the month of January, also adding seven assists. He was the first star in the NHL in the month of January. The only player who had more points in the first month was Crosby with 21.

Since Jan. 1, the top three players in the league in scoring are Malkin with 26, Crosby with 25 and Kessel with 23 points. The three headed-monster is taking over.

The Penguins' stars are currently sitting in the top 10 in the NHL. Kessel is second in the league with 65 points, just three behind Nikita Kucherov of the Tampa Bay Lightning. Malkin is fifth with 62 points and Crosby is seventh with 59 points.

Back in the 1992-93 season, that Pittsburgh Penguins team was considered the most talented Penguins team in franchise history, perhaps

even in NHL history.

They didn't win the Stanley Cup that year. They come up short in the second round but they had plenty of scoring leaders. Mario Lemieux was first, Kevin Stevens 12th, Rick Tocchet was 14th, and Ron Francis was 20th in the league.

They had an absurd amount of talent, but you look at the team now in 2018 and it might be even better. They have three in the top seven. Kessel has a legitimate chance to win the scoring title. He'll never be voted league MVP, but a scoring title isn't given off votes.

The Penguins roster is starting to gain that consistency they need from their stars. Letang has had one of his roughest seasons but, after all the injuries he's been through, it's not a surprise.

Jake Guentzel has had a sophomore slump but is still on pace for about 25 goals which isn't terrible.

Jim Rutherford hasn't made any trades, but I do expect there to be one happening soon. Talks about getting a third line center have gone on all season. At the same time, after winning back to back cups, teams won't trade lightly with Rutherford. They'll expect a lot in return from the Penguins. The perfect trade will be hard to execute.

Head Coach Mike Sullivan and his staff really need to figure out on how to fill in the bottom six. The bottom two lines have just been very inconsistent.

Rutherford has called up several players from the Wilkes-Barre Scranton AHL team. Several players, such as Daniel Sprong, Zach Aston-Re-

ese, Dominik Simon and now Teddy Blueger, have seen playing time.

The coaching staff just needs to find some chemistry and see which players will fit in the lineup and which ones can't yet handle a round of NHL playoffs.

This team just needs to get into the playoffs. Currently, they are second in the Metropolitan Division so they're in contention right now.

The Pens are heating up in the winter and, usually around this time of year, the teams that succeed are usually the ones that make a run for the cup.

Get this team into the playoffs and it'll be hard to beat them in a seven-game series.



Barrington Ratliff (left) and Tutu Nhlrko enjoy lunch in the CC Square

© JESS LEE

## Audino, continued from page 7

will install eco-friendly water fountains this semester.

She will pass some of her goals to the next SGA board. Audino said she hopes SGA will revamp the courtyard in the coming years, but they won't accomplish it this semester.

As she reflected on the three years she spent with SGA, Audino said she believed the organization had a positive impact on her life. She said it helped her to develop a social presence on campus and to make friends.

"I would never believe the road it took me," she said.

She encouraged other students to get involved in SGA, as well.

"If you want to make a difference, then do it," Audino said.

## Sproull, continued from page 2

Racism can even be disproved with the use of modern biology.

"Science can't tell you how to treat your neighbor, but it can help you make reasonable decisions," he added.

When it comes down to it, biology can teach everyone something important. "They should know something about life," Sproull said.

Teaching science is no easy task. It is a field that is constantly growing and changing. Sproull said that the textbooks and courses he taught when he first started teaching are far different from what they are today. So much more is known now, he said, and it is a field in which he must always be studying the latest discoveries.

"All a degree in science does is give you a degree to keep learning," he said.

That being said, it's not a field for everyone. Biology especially is a subject that isn't easy to grasp, even for himself. Sproull said that teaching general biology to students is his hardest crowd, and reaching everyone is extremely difficult.

"It requires a particular commitment that some students don't want to make," he said. "If you don't really love it, it's better not to make that commitment."

Despite being the teacher, Sproull recognizes that even his students have things to teach him, and they often do. "You have an obligation to meet students where they are, and maybe putting yourself in an inferior place," he said.

It wouldn't be wrong to wonder how biology is perceived by La Roche,

a Catholic institution. But Sproull said that it is not contradictory at all. "Many popes have written about science. There is no problem," he added.

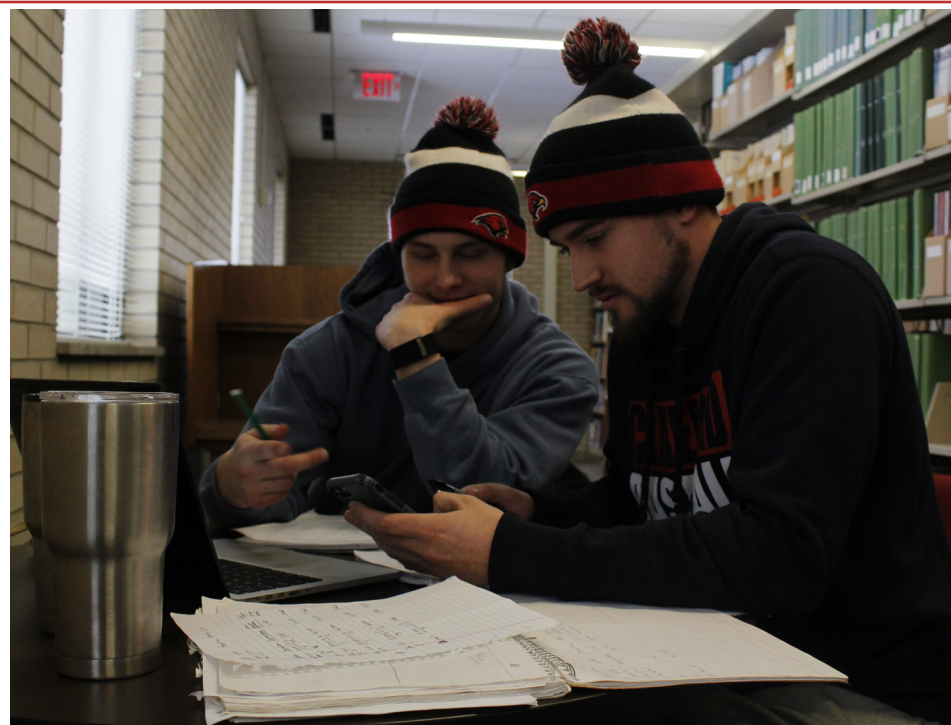
An aspect of biology that has always been challenged over the course of history is evolution. Typically, it's seen as opposition to a Christian belief in how humanity came to be. But Sproull believes that the two don't have to be against one another. He said, "Evolution is a philosophy and a science—a way of looking at the world. It exalts change, constant change. Buying into a philosophy of change means opting into a set of ideas that explain the material world in an entirely material way."

This way of viewing the material world is what keeps it separate from those who believe in a spiritual world. In this sense, the two can exist at the same time. "Science doesn't really permit scientists to superimpose their studies on religion," Sproull said.

As strong of a biological basis that evolution has, Sproull said he also believes evolution as a product of contingency and chance. History has demonstrated this, such as mammals and dinosaurs existing at the same time, but mammals being the ones to survive. While modern science can't prove that God pushed the asteroid into Earth's path, Sproull said that biology and religion can't disprove one another.

"I know the two can be reconciled," he added.

In his classes, it doesn't matter to Sproull if his students agree with his scientific view. What is important to him is that they understand the mate-



Ian Velez (left) and Cole Cogley get some study time in at the Wright Library © JESS LEE

rial. "I don't care if they believe it, but they have to know the principles," he said.

Although Sproull said he has never personally received backlash from either side for his opinions, he recognizes that not everyone agrees with him. "A lot of biologists forget that science and biology are not ethics and religion. Even Darwin struggled with theology, but he never condemned traditional religion."

But even though he has his opinions on religion, Sproull says he keeps them separate when talking with other scientists and in the classroom. "I teach science. I don't discuss those topics," he said.

There is plenty to be learned from

biology, whether it is the scientific or ethical side of the spectrum. To Sproull, the most important takeaway from biology is that everything is integrated together. He said, "It's a way of understanding nature, yourself, and that you are part of something larger—materialistically. We're all connected."

Through biology, people can learn more about the world than they ever could, and especially their impact on the Earth and society. Sproull said that people should be cautious and realize their actions can have unintended consequences. He added, "As Darwin said, 'There is no higher and no lower.' We're all in this together."

## Ganni, continued from page 2

While Ganni is not changing the purpose of the Writers' Center, she is trying to update it.

One major update was shifting to an online scheduling platform. She said she believes online scheduling

will encourage more students to use the Writers' Center. It will also provide immediate data and allow her to assess the Writers' Center. She said the online scheduling platform will launch in the summer or fall.

Ganni said she wanted to update the resources available at the Writers' Center, as well. She said she hopes to create a resource library, complete with information on style guides that students may struggle to learn.

Ganni said she is excited about her work with the Writers' Center.

"I feel like it's an amazing dream come true. I've always loved the Writers' Center," Ganni said.

# The Courier Staff

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## Blackboard, continued from page 1

board has been around forever,” said Illig. She said it was difficult to imagine using something else, especially after she had invested so many hours into using Blackboard.

But Illig is widely recognized as the Blackboard guru: any question, Dr. Ganni said, could be answered by her. She was so familiar with Blackboard

that professors from all disciplines, not just nursing, would rely on Illig to help them navigate all the mazes and trapdoors of Blackboard.

“If she likes Canvas,” said Dr. Ganni, “then it must really be good.”

Illig went on to say that the pace at which online learning is changing requires online learning management

systems to change with them, not lag behind. She praised Canvas’ feedback system that allows both students and professors to register complaints or make suggestions, and constantly updates to meet the changing needs of its patrons.

“Online learning is evolving,” said Illig. “This system supports that.”

Canvas will be fully operational by the summer semester, and the school will be offering tutorial sessions and video guides to instruct students on its usage. “Canvas is hands down much better,” said Dr. McCarthy. “We’re really excited.”

## Trafficking, continued from page 1

The awareness event ended with a screening of another film, *From Liberty to Captivity*. Spezialetti said, “As far as I’m concerned, the fact that people learned more about human

trafficking is a success in itself.”

Spezialetti has been involved with the fight against human trafficking since she was a freshman. “A representative from Freedom Firm, a non-

profit organization that works for the rescue, restoration, and justice of underage girls being sex trafficked in India, approached me,” she said. “I learned that families sometimes sell

their daughters to traffickers, and the girls, as young as 10 or 11, are subjected to intense and violent sexual exploitation.”

Since then, she has hosted multiple jewelry sales to support the girls and the organization and raised over \$3,000.

While the statistics and other information about human trafficking in Pittsburgh is limited, this act is on the rise in Western Pennsylvania. Spezialetti said that most of the recently documented cases occurred hotels and massage parlors.

If you are interested in joining the fight against human trafficking you can join the Freedom Firm jewelry sales or talk to the following organizations: Living in Liberty, Asservo Project, and the Northway Christian Community Justice Team.



From left to right: Julie Evans, Christen Cappatt, Kristen Spezialetti, Cheryl Miller and Holly Seipp worked together to present a panel that educates people on the global epidemic of human trafficking © JESS LEE

## LRX, continued from page 6

been a recurring exhibit at many colleges around the country.

“What I want is for LRX to be seen as important and relevant,” Arnold said. “Discrimination is all around us. The more I researched and read, the more I learned that ‘privilege’ is a much bigger problem than I thought.”

The exhibit had many pictures, text, and graphics telling the story of many different incidents of discrimination and how they all tie together.

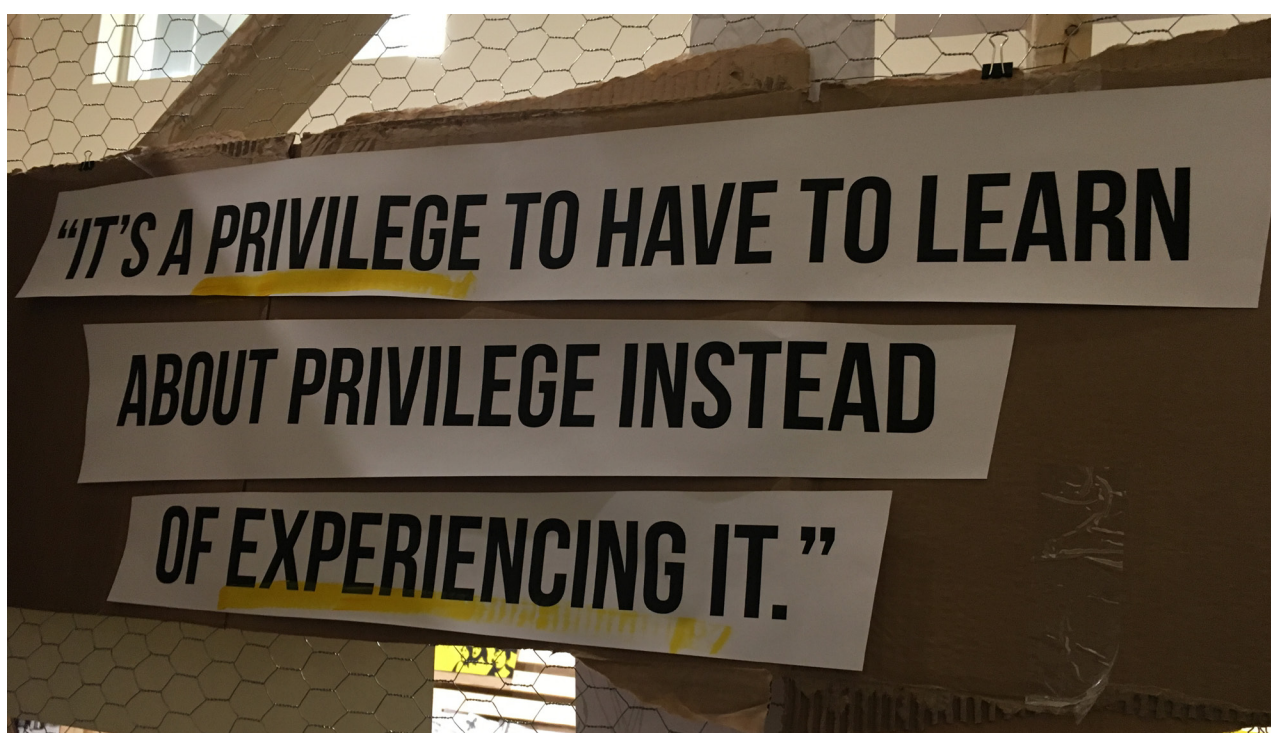
“It’s a privilege to have to learn about privilege instead of experiencing it,” a line from the exhibit read.

Arnold said, “Please note that privilege has nothing to do with being wealthy or poor. It is being given advantages or priorities that you did not earn. This is not fair or just. The more we are aware of this, the more we can work against the system that keeps it going.”

Sr. Elena Almandarez, the director of Mission and Ministry and an LRX teacher, talked about some of the reactions students had to the exhibit. She said, “I think that some people just find it really hard. We think that we know what our country is like, but our part of the world- our little piece of how we’ve lived and grown, is not the whole country. And so when you see what’s happening, sometimes people feel a little betrayed. Like ‘wow, this is not the America that I knew.’”

In the La Roche College press release, senior Charleigh Smith, a Graphic Design major who contributed to the exhibit, said, “There were times during research that a story would bring up an example of bias or prejudice, and it took us all by surprise, so we wanted to put those surprising elements into the exhibit so that viewers can experience it for themselves.”

Overall, the purpose of the exhibit, according to those who were interviewed, was to prepare students for life outside of college, where social issues will be present in their lives



(above) “I Am More” focused on the concept of privilege, and how its power shapes the way people live and interact with others © EMMETT KASPER

no matter what, whether that means it affects them personally, or someone they know.

“Whether somebody in your workplace is mistreating someone because of their gender, or their sexual orientation, or their race, or because of

their religion; none of us is immune to that, so how is it that you want to respond, who’s the person you want to be?” Sister Elena said.