

The Gonzaga Bulletin

A student publication of Gonzaga University

MARCH 18, 2021

www.gonzagabulletin.com

VOL. 132 ISSUE 24

Racist phone call made to student at GU welcome desk

By MILA YOCH

On March 9, an anonymous individual attempted to target a member of Gonzaga's Black community by using racist slurs against a Guest Services student employee at the Hemmingson Center Welcome Desk.

Gonzaga University sophomores Connor Hartman and Makayla Heiser were working at the desk when the caller directed racist slurs against Heiser when Hartman picked up the phone.

According to Hartman, the phone call began as normal

and the caller asked what state Hartman was in.

After responding, Hartman heard giggling in the background.

"I asked what was up, to which I got the rude response," Hartman said. The anonymous caller responded with a racist remark and hung up the phone.

"I don't understand why somebody would think this is funny or entertaining," Hartman said.

The Guest Services pro staff was alerted of the event by Hartman and Heiser soon after the call took place.

"When the Guest Services team was made aware, they

responded immediately to the students who had taken the call, alerting security and they immediately took the report and began their investigation," said Suzie Mize, associate vice president for Auxiliary Enterprises, which manages Guest Services.

"I definitely feel support from the people I've been in contact with," Heiser said.

When campus security came to take statements from Hartman and Heiser, the officer asked Heiser if this "could

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Isabel Yasana Hawley: winner of REDW Native American Scholarship

By SYDNEY FLUKER

Isabel Yasana Hawley is a graduate student at Gonzaga University striving to develop a career that positively impacts her community and future generations. Hawley is one of two winners of the REDW Native American Scholarship in Accounting and is pursuing a Masters in Business Administration in American Indian Entrepreneurship.

The scholarship, administered by the American Indian Graduate Center, provides merit-based need for students pursuing degrees in accounting, taxation or business administration. It is sponsored by REDW, one of the Southwest's 10 largest public accounting and business advisory firms, and helps Native Americans pursuing higher education degrees in those fields.

"I have always known that I wanted to pursue higher education," Hawley said. "The MBA-AIE degree is so unique compared to anything else out there which is what really sparked my interest."

Hawley graduated from Southern Oregon University in 2012 with a bachelor's in business administration and health and physical education and a minor in Native American studies. She was involved at her university in clubs and

athletics, playing volleyball, participating in multicultural clubs and volunteering within the community.

Throughout her life, Hawley has been playing in All-Indian Ball tournaments as a way to keep up with her love for basketball.

"That was a way I kept active and kept my passion alive, but it also keeps me connected to my community," Hawley said.

Hawley is an enrolled member of the Klamath Tribes, and is Klamath, Modoc and Filipina. She grew up in Coos Bay, Oregon, location of the traditional villages of the Coquille, Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw people.

Inspired by her family, Hawley is connected to her cultures and strives to empower her community. Her mom, a retired English teacher of 31 years was involved with the National Indian Education Association and her sister works at the Native American Rehabilitation Association. Hawley and her husband, Kellen, strive to pass on their cultures and traditions from their backgrounds to their 4-year-old daughter.

"I'm so passionate about my community, my culture and giving back, which is why I'm working toward earning this degree," Hawley said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ISABEL YASANA HAWLEY

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GU graduate student, Isabel Yasana Hawley, uses her degree to connect with her culture.

Sliding into DM's

Diversity Monologues focus on empowering truths

By MARISSA CONTER

It's a new year, which means another round of Zags sharing their stories that don't always get told.

Gonzaga will hold its 11th annual Diversity Monologues (DM) on March 30 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Zoom. This is an annual spoken word poetry event put on by the Unity Multicultural Education Center (UMEC) Programming Pillar and serves as an opportunity for students, faculty and staff to share their stories and experiences through spoken word. As the name of the event suggests, there is an emphasis on spotlighting voices that are underrepresented.

"I think it gives members of the GU community an amazing opportunity to speak their truths and share their experiences with others in such an artful and moving way, and I'm so glad to be on the committee this year while we navigate through these challenges brought upon us by the pandemic," said Josiah Saifoloi, a sophomore who is on the committee planning this event.

Despite the pandemic altering what is possible when putting on these events, the committee has found a way to host the event while keeping everyone safe. In fact, the pandemic has allowed them to invite a wider range of participants.

"We have participants from the west side [of Washington] and some who are locals," said Program Manager for Intercultural Development SR Gibson, who is also on the planning committee. "We have some folks who are filming their pieces and some will be performing live on the stage. We will be alternating between filmed pieces and live

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BULLETIN FILE PHOTO

Fese Elango shares a diversity monologue last year.

Model United Nations leads the way

By SOFI OLLIVER

The pandemic has fundamentally changed the way most things are being run at Gonzaga this year, but GU's Model United Nations (GUMUN) seems to be taking it all in stride.

"This team is a powerhouse," said Brittany Robinson, GUMUN head delegate. "They came ready to play...I am honestly just blown away every single week."

Model UN is an academic team at GU in which students simulate the different committees of the United Nations. Some students take this as an academic course for credit, while for others it is an extracurricular.

In addition to weekly meetings, GUMUN members also attend conferences with Model UN teams from other schools around the world where they are assigned countries to represent and work collaboratively to solve global issues and model international diplomacy.

Usually, this would mean GUMUN traveling to their yearly conferences in Portland and New York, but this year

they are attending virtually through an event platform called Gatherly.

At The Portland conference, which took place Feb. 19- 21, GUMUN took home the Outstanding Delegation Award. Individual members of GUMUN also earned awards, including Sophia Zink, GUMUN's secretary general.

Zink won Outstanding Delegate for her work in the General Assembly representing Israel on issues such as "Addressing Large Movements of Migrants and Migration" and "Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, including the Right to Peaceful Assembly."

Kellie Tran, representing Armenia in the General Assembly on the same topics, took home the Outstanding Position Paper Award. Anthony J. Larrañaga won the Distinguished Delegate Award while representing Vietnam in the Security Council for topics such as "The Situation in Somalia," "Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Global Epidemics" and a simulated

emergency situation in the South China Sea.

"Especially with the newer delegates, I'm super impressed with all their speeches and how fast they were able to pick this up within the pandemic," said Ariana Chin, GUMUN outreach coordinator.

After the success of their Portland conference, GUMUN is hard at work researching and preparing for the upcoming New York conference. In this conference, which is taking place April 5- 8, GUMUN is collectively representing Ireland.

By participating in Model UN, students have the opportunity to learn more about a variety of topics that are important around the world, as well as more in-depth knowledge about their assigned country's politics and values. They aren't just learning more about international politics and relations, however, they're also developing a number of critical skills that are useful for academic and professional life.

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be one of your friends playing a prank,” Heiser wrote in an Instagram post.

“I was really surprised that this white campus security officer thought that someone on our campus would make a joke like that,” Heiser said.

Heiser returned to work on March 12 when the same number called the Welcome Desk again as soon as Heiser began her shift.

“It’s scary because it means that someone knows when I’m working and somebody is watching me,” Heiser said.

Heiser assumed the person who called was a student.

“They sounded around our age or in my year. They sounded younger and male,” Heiser said.

In response to the call, an investigation is underway into tracking the racist phone call.

“Information Technology Services (ITS) has assisted in the ongoing investigation into the bias incident on March 9 led by Campus Security and Public Safety (CSPS), and the Spokane Police Department,” said Mary Joan Hahn, senior director of GU’s community and public relations. “We are unable to share details so as to not interfere with the investigation. The perpetrator of the incident has not yet been identified. The University will, provided appropriate consent is obtained, offer additional information when and if it

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I deserve to be here just as much as anyone else and I don't think someone who is going to disrespect someone because of the color of their skin or have these racist views should be allowed on campus.

Makayla Heiser, GU sophomore

becomes available.”

Guest Services have extended paid time off and support to Heiser.

“We are figuring out what we need to do going forward,” said Greg McGuire, operations manager for Guest Services. “It’s a difficult situation but we want to see what the best policies should be.”

According to Hahn, GU does not tolerate any forms of racism and is committed to eliminating racism from campus and holding perpetrators accountable.

“We encourage any student impacted by this incident to reach out to the Center

for Cura Personalis for support and resources,” Hahn said. “We also ask all members of the campus community to report incidents of racism and bias here, and to contact CSPS at 313-2222 if you are concerned for your safety.”

Heiser hopes that tangible action steps are implemented to protect students.

“I deserve to be here just as much as anyone else and I don’t think someone who is going to disrespect someone because of the color of their skin or have these racist views should be allowed on campus,” Heiser said. “I want Gonzaga to hold this person accountable, I want Gonzaga to

expel this person [if they’re a student] and show that if you hold these racist views, you are not welcomed here.”

Heiser has met with GU President Thayne McCulloh as of Tuesday.

“I want to make sure that the future generations of BIPOC students are protected, feel safe and are able to come to Gonzaga knowing they’ll be supported,” Heiser said.

This is not the first racist slur incident to happen during the 2020-2021 school year. On Nov. 8, eight anonymous individuals used racist and homophobic slurs against Black Student Union members during the club’s weekly Zoom meeting.

Two detectives with the Spokane Police Department’s Criminal Investigation Unit and the FBI facilitated a preliminary review and investigation on the November incident.

Campus security and other students have offered ride escorts for Heiser from her housing to work, but Heiser has declined.

“I don’t want this person — who has so much hate and anger in them — to get to control my life like that,” Heiser said. “I love working at Guest, I love what I do and I’m proud to be a Black woman. They’re not going to get that control, I’m not going anywhere.”

Mila Yoch is the digital editor. Follow her on Twitter: @milagrosyoch.

MODEL UN

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“There are so many benefits to the students, because it really captures the entire mission of the university,” said Stacy Taninchev, faculty advisor.

Students do a lot of writing and research to prepare for Model UN conferences, as before going to a conference, they have to write papers on the topics chosen for their committee and their country’s stance on those topics. At these conferences, they work on their public speaking abilities by speaking eloquently and diplomatically to effectively communicate their country’s stance. At times, students may even have to give speeches on the fly about the topic their committee is addressing.

“Writing, research, public speaking and then diplomacy are kind of the four tenants I’ve taken from Model UN,” Zink said.

Participants also learn a lot about openness and other perspectives, as their personal views may not align with that of the country they are assigned, but they still have to represent that country’s values accurately. This allows them a better understanding of each country’s decisions, even if they don’t agree with them.

It’s also a great place for community building, with fellow members of GUMUN, other students attending the Model UN conferences and even GUMUN alumni. According to Zink, GUMUN is a pretty close-knit group.

They see themselves as a dedicated and supportive community. A lot of time and effort must go into the preparation for the conferences, and some participants

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This team is a powerhouse. They came ready to play... I am honestly just blown away every single week.

Brittany Robinson, GUMUN head delegate

don’t receive course credit for it. They are also always willing to help out by reading over each other’s writing or giving encouragement to those who may be stepping outside of their comfort zone, Zink said.

“We’re the type of people that you put yourself out there, you give it your best, we support you,” Chin said.

While many of the students are political science or international relations majors, students of all majors are welcome to apply. Those who are interested in learning more about Model UN can do so by reaching out to the team at gumun@zagmail.gonzaga.edu.

“I would highly encourage anyone who is interested,

regardless of their majors, to get involved,” Zink said. “We’re an inclusive group...even if you can’t join the team you are welcome to come and simulate something with us or come have conversations.”

Sofi Olliver is a contributor.



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Skate sistxrhood: Empowering womxn one ride at a time

By SYDNEY FLUKER

Gonzaga’s first female-run skate club is making its way to campus. Womxn Skate is a skate sistxrhood dedicated to inclusion and empowerment for skaters of all levels and trades.

Sophomores Elle Dindinger and Katya Cerny started the club after getting into skateboarding during quarantine. As beginners, their eyes were opened to how gate-kept skateboarding is when they were met with criticism and a lack of support in their learning.

“You can’t be a sick skater if you don’t learn, so it doesn’t make sense that there is so much judgement toward learning,” Dindinger said.

After spending many afternoons skateboarding the Logan Neighborhood together, they were inspired to create a club to empower other skaters on campus and get a mob of girls to go out and skate with.

“We see a ton of girls skate on campus, it’s obvious that it’s a part of the culture here at Gonzaga,” Dindinger said.

Dindinger and Cerny are in the process of getting the club affiliated with GU. The club hopes to be official by the end of March, but they plan on holding unofficial meet-ups until then. As a club, it plans to host skate meet-ups a couple times a month, teach new skaters and help them improve, encourage beginners, create a supportive environment and make new friends.

“The overall goal is just to build a community of people who can meet up and skate together or even just meet up and hang out and connect with one another,” Cerny said.

Womxn Skate wants to overcome the boundaries preventing women and nonbinary people from learning how to skateboard. The stigma around learning keeps a lot of people from trying the sport, even if it is something as casual as boarding around the neighborhood.

“If a woman knows how to skate, that’s sick. But if it’s a woman learning how to skate, people are like ‘why would you do that? That’s so embarrassing,’” Dindinger said.

Dindinger and Cerny were very intentional with the use of “womxn” in their name and “sistxrhood” in their mission statement. The skate community is notoriously gate kept by straight men, and only recently has there been a push for diversity and inclusion within the community.

The use of “womxn” in their name is



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELLE DINDINGER

Womxn Skate club founders, Elle Dindinger (left) and Katya Cerny (right) hope to create a safe space for marginalized skaters on campus.

a direct invitation to those who identify as a woman, transgender or nonbinary person. This wording reflects their mission statement and shows their commitment to inclusion within their own club.

“We just wanted to make sure that everybody feels welcome, and if you are accepting of all people, join us because that is the vibe we want in Womxn Skate,” Dindinger said.

Their mission statement is a key part of the club’s identity. Dindinger and Cerny are dedicated to a healthy, inclusive club environment that they hope will spill over onto the rest of campus and the skate community itself.

“This GU club is meant to provide a safe place for all forms of self expression and fosters a sistxrhood that creates a system of support and works to promote social justice on a larger scale across GU,” reads the second part of their mission statement.

Make no mistake, Womxn Skate is not just for those who identify as a woman.

The club is open for people of all identities, as long as they are willing to stand behind and support the vision they present in their mission statement.

Rollerskaters and Rollerbladers are welcome too. Womxn Skate is a club open to all types of wheels, but Dindinger and Cerny only know how to skateboard.

Womxn Skate hopes to diminish the barriers that might prevent someone from trying the sport. This includes intimidation, but also equipment. The club hopes to secure funding from GU, and then use that funding to purchase community boards that members can use to learn with until they can purchase their own.

Cerny and Dindinger can also help club members find boards within their price range for the kind of skating they want to do, through local shops or online stores.

“We want women to feel comfortable making mistakes, to be able to learn from them because failing is really important,” Cerny said.

Madeline Gatewood, a freshman

political science major, casually Rollerbladed as a kid but is excited to get back into skating. She is one of the members of Womxn Skate and plans to learn how to skateboard.

“I like the idea of having a bunch of girls come together that you can meet and hang with and learn to skate at the same time,” Gatewood said.

A supportive environment is the most important part of the learning process, and Womxn Skate is ensuring that space. Whether you have experience or not, all that matters is that you want to learn and are dedicated to keeping the space Dindinger and Cerny have made inclusive and welcoming.

If you are interested in joining Womxn Skate, check out its Instagram (@womxnskategu) and fill out the form in its bio to get connected.

Sydney Fluker is a staff writer. Follow her on Twitter: @sydneymfluker.

DIVERSITY

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performances and the event will be streamed for folks to watch on Zoom.”

Each year, a theme is selected for all of the participants to focus the messages of their performances on. The theme they picked this year seems to be in response to recent events that have highlighted ongoing issues.

“This year’s theme for Diversity Monologues is Empowering Our Truths,” said Vanessa Kunakornvanich, a sophomore who is also on the committee behind this event. “The committee put in a lot of time and thought behind this because 2020 highlighted so many of the existing issues within our country. We wanted to hear what their experiences were and for DM to be a safe space to share their truths.”

Gibson echoed Kunakornvanich’s comment about the past year being an unprecedented one, and expanded upon their reasoning behind picking the theme.

“We can look at how inequities have been exposed in so many ways,” they said. “We’re asking folks to talk about how they have defied norms and have transcended history books. How have they connected or reconnected with the truths of their identities and how are they working toward healing and finding hope in the challenging times we have experienced this year?”

Not only will students and faculty speak, DM has acquired Seattle-based spoken word poet and speaker Christian Paige to emcee the event. He will also perform some of his own pieces.

“He’s really passionate about talking about identity, creating inclusive environments and encouraging leaders,” Gibson said. “We thought this would be a great opportunity for him to connect with our students. He is also an Act Six scholar graduate so that was just a great connection to some of the identities we support in our program.”

Act Six is a leadership and scholarship program that links local faith-based community affiliates with faith and social justice-based colleges. It is Spokane’s only full-tuition, full-need scholarship. It brings together a diverse community of young people from different backgrounds who want to use their college education to make a difference on campus and in their communities.

Diversity Monologues is a chance for Zags to educate themselves by hearing from their peers’ underrepresented experiences.

“It is an opportunity to hear from voices that aren’t always amplified,” Gibson said. “It is always great to hear from our new and upcoming artists that haven’t had the opportunity to be featured. I have been here for five years and every year it’s a wonderful night of poetry, performances and art.”

Saifoloi also expressed the significance of putting on this event each year.

“Being able to create spaces for our community members to be vulnerable and powerful with their stories is so fulfilling and I’m looking forward to what comes next,” he said.

If you are interested in attending the event on March 30 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., you can sign up for the event on UMEC’s Zagtivities page. Make sure you are logged in so you can view and reserve a spot.

Marissa Conter is a staff writer. Follow her on Twitter: @marissaconter.

HAWLEY

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Her positive attitude, graciousness and care for others, especially during this incredibly challenging time, are highly valued. She exemplifies Gonzaga's highest ideals.

Mirjeta Beqiri, Gonzaga MBA programs director

She and her family are learning Klamath through their Tribe’s language program in weekly Zoom meetings.

Hawley has worked at Nike since 2011, starting as an intern before returning as a contract worker and eventually moving to a full-time position in digital brand marketing, where she worked for the last five years. In January, she started a new role in Unite / Value Brand Marketing.

One of her favorite parts of Nike is the volunteer networks within the organization. Hawley is on the NikeUNITED Native American and Friends network (NAN) leadership team as chief of staff. NAN focuses on recruitment, retention and educational opportunities internally for employees. They strive to increase representation, provide educational opportunities and develop community within Nike.

She has also worked with Nike’s N7 program, a fund that supports organizations that deliver programs and services, focusing on physical activity and education, to Native American youth.

“What has kept me whole in this corporate space is being able to work with our NikeUNITED Native American and Friends network,” Hawley said. “With my experience at Nike and at N7 I feel like I have been able to come across these opportunities that I would have never dreamed of.”

Hawley is working full-time at Nike while pursuing the MBA-AIE degree, doing the most for herself and her family in order to give back to her community. She aspires to pursue a doctorate after, but has not decided what the exact focus will be.

“I don’t know what I want to study, all I know is that I want to give back to my community through it and be able to teach others,” Hawley said.

Through her dedication to community and empowerment, Hawley has made an impact on those she has met in the MBA-AIE program.

Mirjeta Beqiri, MBA programs director and professor of operations management, could not be

more excited for Hawley’s accomplishment.

“What has impressed me most about Izzy is her dedication to her studies and her perseverance to excel,” Beqiri said. “Her positive attitude, graciousness and care for others, especially during this incredibly challenging time, are highly valued. She exemplifies Gonzaga’s highest ideals.”

One of Hawley’s peers in the MBA program and executive director at Northern Quest Resort & Casino, Meg Miller, recently hired REDW LLC to do accounting and financial audits for her organization. She has been very impressed with the firm and its reputation in the industry, making Hawley’s selection as the scholarship winner even more significant.

“I think a lot of Izzy, she’s an incredible person and a great colleague,” Miller said. “She can see how upstream accounting would have affected her projects in the past and can affect her future projects. She can help everybody see things through that lens in such a unique manner.”

Through all of the hard work and challenges Hawley has faced, she is guided by a quote from American civil rights activist Marian Wright Edelman. “You can’t be what you can’t see” has motivated Hawley to pave a path for other Indigenous women to follow in becoming leaders in both corporate America and their own communities.

“There needs to be an increase in representation in leadership roles for our Native American tribes in all sectors,” Hawley said. “I want to inspire others, especially those coming from my community, to be able to pursue a degree in business, feel empowered to share their voice, increase our visibility and Indigenize corporate spaces and beyond.”

Sydney Fluker is a staff writer. Follow her on Twitter: @sydneymfluker.

Is basketball still basketball without the Kennel?

Spring without sunshine, Halloween without candy corn and Gonzaga basketball without the Kennel. And the category is, of course, things that just aren't the same without the other.

In recent months, there has undoubtedly been a shift in basketball culture on campus that was apparent as far back as December 2019. With a plethora of leftover tickets to the student section and masses of students abandoning the already-secured game at half time, the legendary GU Kennel appeared to be going extinct.

The infamous empty seats in the Kennel caught the attention of sports journalists and former Zags all offering their theories as to what could have caused the student section vacancies.

From the corporatization of Kennel Club to the monotonous repetition of watching a game with a 30+ point difference, no one's speculations could explain exactly why it seemed like students just didn't care about basketball anymore.

Now, almost a year and a half later, the same scene begs the question: what happened to GU basketball?

In all fairness, I was never the paint-your-chest-and-wait-in-the-cold-for-hours type of basketball fan, but I paid enough attention to at least pass as a good Zag.

One of the victims of our world now marred by the effects of COVID-19 is the Kennel: the mecca for Zags to be Zags. Students packed together in red, white and blue clothing and outlandish costumes with even wilder signs now seems like a distant memory fading into the back of our minds, and with it perhaps lies the sensationalism of



By DEVAN IYOMASA

GU basketball.

A typical conversation about basketball in my house or with my friends will go something like this: "Hey, the basketball team won today." "Oh, cool. There was a game?"

Thus concludes the conversation, and that is the extent to which basketball is ever discussed nowadays.

There are of course those students who bleed GU blue and will absolutely come for me on Twitter once this is published, especially with March Madness right around the corner. Some of them are right here in the Bulletin newsroom.

But I would venture to say a creeping majority of students have simply lost interest in the phenomenon that is GU basketball. Perhaps what is lost may have been a feigned enjoyment of the sport in the first place.

Without the bright lights and spirited atmosphere, is GU basketball after all just...basketball?

Honestly, the lack of enthusiasm for basketball is kind of a relief for me. I no longer have to try to figure out what emotion everyone around me is experiencing after an apparently controversial call is made by the referee.

Plus, the number of times I could say I "had to study" to avoid going to an 8 p.m. game on a Wednesday night was quickly dwindling. I'm a journalism major, how much studying could I possibly have?

Now don't get me wrong, both the women's and men's teams are accomplishing outstanding achievements and they deserve all the praise and hype they get. Besides, it's always nice to be able to flex your school's athletic program on a national level.

But something has fundamentally changed in the way basketball is celebrated among Zags.

People will still repost the nicely designed victory infographics to their Instagram stories and retweet that one Sports Illustrated cover, because let's be honest, that was pretty cool. But as Indie-pop singer, Rex Orange County once said, "it's not the same anymore."

So, I pose this question to you, readers of the Bulletin (who hopefully aren't too angry about this semi-controversial take), what do you think happened to GU basketball?

Devan Iyomasa is a news editor. Follow her on Twitter: @devaniyomasa.

'Freshman 15' and the toxic mentality about eating disorders in college

Disordered eating is normalized to a concerning extent on college campuses. Eating disorders are serious, life threatening and may currently affect people around you, regardless of their shape, size, gender, etc.

Over the past year, we have learned a lot about being allies. As we recently recognized National Eating Disorder Awareness Week, it is time that we learn to be allies to those affected by eating disorders, with our support, love, patience and encouragement, but also by educating ourselves in ways that we may be subconsciously affecting others with our own words.

Even if someone does not appear affected by disordered eating, your casual comments may have current or impending detriment to their mental and physical health. So, I am here to share with you some phrases that you, yes you, as a college student need to immediately eliminate

from your vocabulary.

First we have "pulling trig," a phrase thrown around far too casually by college students in regard to party culture and excessive drinking on the weekends. While "pulling trig" may mean making yourself feel less sick after a night out, casually joking around about "pulling trig" may normalize and justify purging for those affected by disordered eating.

Far too many times have I heard people in conversation amused about how they have only had a cup of coffee, or other meal suppressants, all day or that they have been far too busy to eat. Meal suppressants are not ways to nourish and give your body the energy it needs to survive a busy college schedule, and should not be regarded as an ordinary college diet. So, let's also scratch "I was too busy to eat today" off of your list of conversation starters.

Even though body positivity is a current and thriving online movement, I am continuously



By NATALIE RIETH

surprised by how many people are still using weight and dieting as a standard topic in dinner table chatter. If this is something that you want to talk about, consult a doctor or professional. These subjects may be triggering for friends, or those you spend time with, so please keep it out of casual conversations.

Personally, I think the issue as a whole stems back to the phrase "freshman 15," that lingers in the back of our heads as early as seniors preparing for college.

I recall watching college advice videos on YouTube and reading online blogs and articles: some light hearted, giving tips on decor and dorm hacks, others about study skills and making new college friends. I was eager for advice and found comfort in hearing what other college students advised incoming freshmen, like me.

A concept that was repeated and normalized in almost every video was the "freshman 15." College YouTubers would give advice on how to eat healthy in a campus cafeteria, healthy foods to make in your dorm, exercise routines, etc. It didn't take long for me to catch on to the toxicity of this concept, and for the rest of my senior year and most of my college experience — as it was something that was frequently brought up by surrounding students and friends here at GU— this has been a fear instilled in me that is so incredibly hard to shake.

As a freshman I remember

forcing myself to stay in my dorm room on countless weekends, in fear that drinking, eating extra snacks at late night COG, or even that desert would change my physical appearance and how I (wrongly) assumed others valued me as an individual. I can confidently say that if I were never aware of the "freshman 15" I would have probably had a completely different college experience, and I can't be the only one who has felt this.

So next time, think first, choose your words wisely and be an ally. You never know who your words may be affecting.

Natalie Rieth is an arts & entertainment editor. Follow her on Twitter: @natalie_rieth.

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LETTERS POLICY

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Milestones during the pandemic

Eighteen has been a...weird, weird year — to say the least. I often find myself thinking about what life was like before masks, before quarantine, before chaos and I can't remember much.

This time last year, much of us freshmen were gearing up for what we hoped would be an ending to remember. After four years of toil and tribulation, we were finally going to graduate high school and step into the real world. There was so much to look forward to. From senior prom to baccalaureates to everything in between, we were ready for it all.

Then, one-by-one, our schools closed and the world stopped. We were trapped in our homes with nowhere to go, with nothing to do.

I turned 18 one day before everything shut down.

Never getting the chance to celebrate, I watched as everything I'd work so hard to build crumbled to ash in my hands. No amount of force could bring it back to life. Like my peers around me, I was devastated.

When I look back on this past year, I think I've grown more in 365 days than I had in the 18 years before I reached adulthood. In chaos, I became more appreciative of normalcy. In loss, I grew to cherish what I have. In boredom, I found new ways to find fun.

In grief, I learned to honor my feelings.

These are lessons we all had to learn in some way. The pandemic robbed us of much, and so we had to adapt and grow in new ways.

I feel like for those of us that reached adulthood during the pandemic, and to a lesser extent, graduated high school during the pandemic, were forced to grow up when we should have been

By ALEXANDER PREVOST

reveling in the rites of passage so sacredly held to that first year of adulthood. When you turn 18, it feels like the world opens for you. The ceiling shatters, and there are so many things to try.

Instead, many of us stayed home, trying to keep ourselves safe. And yeah, maybe now we've got more wiggle room, but at the end of the day, there is still so much out of reach.

Looking forward, there is light at the end of the tunnel. The life we all once knew is making her grand return, but I wonder if we'll ever really be the same again.

The pandemic changed us. It's changed me.

Through all the pain and struggle, I've become more appreciative of the little things. Something as simple as a hug carries so much more weight than it did before. I take my time, never rushing, always savoring. My mental health has become more important.

But a side effect of all this growth is that I feel much older than I should be.

I don't feel like I'm 19.

I feel like a weird, mutation of an adult: not necessarily young, but not experienced enough in the world.

Now, standing on the other edge of 18, I'm not quite sure how to feel. There is much to look forward to in the coming year. However, I think if I am to honor my future, I should reclaim that lost time — give myself a year I will never forget.

All of us should do this.

In spite of the hardships of the past year, let us all celebrate like there is no tomorrow when things reach a state of normal. Throw confetti in the air. Pop the champagne — or sparkling cider. Make bold progress and beautiful mistakes. We all deserve that reclamation.

So...cheers to 19, and to all of us who grew up a little too fast. May we all honor a year lost.

Alexander Prevost is a staff writer. Follow him on Twitter: @Alexanderprvst.

Get ready thrifters: Teleport Vintage + Co. is your next Spokane thrift stop

By SYDNEY FLUKER

Nestled in an old building near Kendall Yards is Teleport Vintage + Co., a vintage consignment store using the old brick building to its advantage. With its curated array of clothing and vintage décor, the store is a holy grail for finding unique pieces for any wardrobe.

While it only recently opened its doors on March 6, the owner, Paul Forster, has a lifetime of experience. His love for vintage and thrifting comes from his childhood, inspired by his grandfather.

“My grandpa threw me in a dumpster when I was about 5, and we would dumpster dive,” Forster said.

From there, his interest only grew. Once online stores like eBay showed that there is money to be made from selling vintage clothing, Forster started dabbling in selling vintage and eventually began selling at other stores in town. While this is his first time owning a store, he has lots of experience consigning and a solid team of purveyors to support Teleport.

Contrary to other vintage stores in Spokane, Teleport is not a vendor mall. Different sellers sell through Teleport, but Forster organizes by section so it doesn't feel as overwhelming. Tags on the clothing make it easy to identify the seller and the consigner doesn't have to pay rent for the space.

“I wanted to start a place where blue collar people can sell their treasures with the path of least resistance,” Forster said.

Consigners don't have to spend the money and time to buy fixtures and manage their space at Teleport. They are able to sell their clothes without added headaches, and Forster is able to control the flow of the store to make it easy and accessible for customers.

“Stores like this are good for people who appreciate vintage because you can come into the space and know there is going to be a lot of stuff for you, that's curated for you,” Forster said.

Teleport is buying, trading and selling clothes all the time. There are new items put out daily, so you are guaranteed a slightly



Teleport Vintage + Co is a new thrift store in Spokane located on 917 W. Broadway Ave.

different selection each day.

Forster included the “Co.” in Teleport Vintage + Co. for a reason. Within Teleport, there are also local Spokane businesses selling products that aren't clothing. One of these businesses is Kani, an organic, vegan skincare company owned by Stephanie Guerra. Guerra is the creator, chemist, producer and packager of her products and also helps manage the store itself.

“Everything I do I try to source locally,” Guerra said.

Along with Kani, Teleport currently sells goods from a local leather maker and jeweler and are working on expanding. Guerra is also in the process of organizing classes and workshops hosted in the back related to Kani and sustainable beauty products.

Teleport's location was a huge part of the decision to open. Forster did not want the space to be in downtown Spokane, but also didn't want to be far removed. The building features beautiful exposed brick and an overall vintage feel, making it easy to adapt for a vintage store.

“Over the years, I said if I was ever going to do my own store it had to be the right space. And then this space came available,” Forster said. “It was kind of a no brainer.”

Turnover with their clothing is fast, and they are currently preparing for spring and summer. With everything from Carhartt overalls to fur coats, Teleport has options for kids and adults with all kinds of different styles.

“The aesthetic is all over the place,” Guerra said. “I love it though.”

Teleport Vintage + Co. is located on 917 W. Broadway Ave. and is open Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 6 p.m., and Monday and Tuesday by appointment only. Its Instagram is @teleportvintageandco and it posts frequent updates on both its Instagram and Facebook.

Sydney Fluker is a staff writer. Follow her on Twitter: @sydneymluker.

In need for a new, feel-good show? Watch 'Ted Lasso'

Commentary by DAGNY ALBANO

I am not an adventurous television viewer by any stretch of the imagination. I have watched “The Office” at least 20 times and up until recently I had not willingly immersed myself in a new show in years.

When my parents suggested that we watch “Ted Lasso” as a family over winter break, however, I was reminded that there is more to life than hearing Michael Scott yell, “WHERE ARE THE TURTLES?!!”

“Ted Lasso” is based on an NBC Sports comedy sketch by Jason Sudeikis in which a former American football coach takes a job as a British football coach, not entirely aware of the differences between the two games. The cultural differences between England and Kansas, Lasso's inability to comprehend the sport and his foolish yet kind personality make for comedy gold.

Lasso first arrives in England when he is hired by Rebecca Welton (Hannah Waddingham), a recent divorcee who is determined to run her former husband's football club into the ground. She makes consistent efforts to sabotage Lasso but it becomes harder and harder for her as she comes to realize that they get along far more than she hoped they would.

The duality of Lasso's character is a large part of what makes

this show such a fun watch.

On one hand, I start crying with laughter every time Lasso leaves Welton's office and hits either his head, foot or entire body on the door as he enthusiastically leaves (yes, it happens more than once). I lost my ability to breathe when his response to a question about relegation was that he was looking forward to the definition of relegation.

On the other hand, it's impossible to dislike Lasso because of his genuine kindness and his ability to inspire anyone, anywhere. Although the team shows contempt for him at first, he genuinely inspires the AFC Richmond squad both on and off the pitch, making “Ted Lasso” a truly feel-good sports show.

Lasso is a believer to a fault. He admits to having ‘BELIEVE’ signs all over his apartment, and when asked if he believes in ghosts he replies, “I do, but more importantly, I believe they need to believe in themselves.” His constant optimism is uplifting at times and causes disappointment in other times, but it is an integral and hilarious part of the show.

Even though I could write a book about how much I love Lasso's character, I would not be doing the show justice if I did not at least mention others.

Early in the show, there is constant tension between aggressive team captain Roy Kent (Brett Goldstein), who is noticeably older

than the rest of the team, and Jamie Tartt (Phil Dunster), an arrogant young star who is incredibly unlikeable at times. Both of these characters develop tremendously throughout the show, and while their banter is hilarious, their experiences figuring out what leadership is and how to navigate team relationships is a nice storyline.

I also have to give a shout out to the love of my life, Dani Rojas (Cristo Fernández). He joins the team mid-season and provides youthful and hilarious energy to the team. He often runs around the pitch yelling, “Dani Rojas!” and “Football is life!” Eventually, though, we come to learn that he does in fact know other words and is a very sweet character.

Although the show is a comedy, as the characters grow and develop better relationships with one another, it is a seriously moving show. The team goes through ups and downs, gains and losses and triumphs and defeats. The characters begin as strangers or even enemies but end as a tight-knit unit.

“Ted Lasso” is incredibly funny and heartwarming and can put anyone in the absolute best mood. I recommend heading to Apple TV+ right now to check it out.

Dagny Albano is a staff writer. Follow her on Twitter: @dagny_albano.

Universal Crossword

Edited by David Steinberg March 21, 2021

ACROSS

1 Fancy hotel facility

4 Sends a text, briefly

7 Like the tortoise, vis-a-vis the hare

13 Sturdy tree

14 "Insecure"

15 Emmy nominee Rae

16 Group's spirit

17 Guy

18 Lead actress in "The Dark Angel"

19 Commit a hockey infraction

21 Testy mood

22 Actor

23 Morale

24 Pigeon tail?

25 Detroit-to-Cleveland dir.

26 Small excerpt

29 Of earlier vintage

31 Give ____ whirl

32 Skin used for some traditional Native American clothing

36 Harmful competition

42 Charming, as a smile

43 Certain craft brew, informally

44 Shrimp relative

47 Received top billing (in)

50 Cherry

51 Starburst's color

55 Gunk on a pond

55 Creepy look

56 Nouveau-Mexique or Dakota du Nord

58 With 62-Across, Shakespeare play with the characters found at the ends of 17-, 19- and 36-Across

62 See 58-Across

64 Had pitas with hummus, say

65 Antsy feeling

66 They often hang out at garage sales

67 Numbered rd.

68 Ziti and others

69 TV schedule divisions: Abbr.

70 Penn of "Designated Survivor"

DOWN

1 Transport vehicle

2 Prenatal nourishment source

3 Person experiencing memory loss

4 "Understood"

5 Car sticker letters

6 "Bonjour" relative

7 It rises from a pipe

8 Setup for a smash, maybe

9 Metal holders?

10 Gave a heads-up

11 Literary girl in Paris and Moscow

12 One may subtlet

14 "Understood," to a beatnik

18 Environmental prefix

20 Water source

24 Extinct bird

26 Prestigious British

27 Subj. with opportunity costs

28 Preschoolers

30 Net-touching serve

33 Personal question?

34 ____ and haws

35 "Oh, su-u-ure!"

37 "Gross!"

38 Alloys

39 Containers

40 Short work with arias

41 Former humor magazine

44 Contract before marriage, informally

45 Where to find many small cones

46 Pithy sayings

48 Those with Ph.D.s from MIT, say

49 Dream sleep initials

52 Large wine orders

53 College Park sch.

54 Merriment

57 "Be like ____!"

59 Beloved

60 Loses firmness

61 Fishing rod attachment

63 Org. at JFK

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

M	O	S	E	I		T	U	B	S		B	R	O	
A	R	E	S	O		T	A	R	O	T		E	O	N
J	A	C	Q	U	E	S	C	L	O	U	S	E	A	U
A	L	T		P	S	A	T		T	B	I	R	D	S
S	O	L	E		I	A	R		D	E	B	I	T	
T	W	E	A	K		H	O	U		B	A	H	A	
A	L	E	S		C	H	O	M	P		O	V	A	L
G	E	R	E		H	U	N		G		U	S	E	M
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Three Parts by Jeffrey Wechsler

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12
13				14				15					
16				17				18					
19				20						21			
	22						23			24		25	
26					27	28			29	30			
31					32			33	34	35			
36				37	38					39	40	41	
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44	45	46						47		48	49		
50					51	52	53	54		55			
56				57		58			59	60			61
62					63						64		
65								66			67		
68								69			70		



Shriners Hospitals for Children®

Gonzaga First Year Fundraiser for LOVE to support Shriners Hospital For Children in Spokane

March 16 - 23rd

The Fundraise for LOVE initiative is an opportunity for us to work together to make a positive impact and support the lives of families and kids in our Spokane community! Here is the link to the webpage:

↓

<https://donate.lovetotherescue.org/GUfirstyearfundraiser>


↓



APPLY FOR GREEN FUND!

Apply for funding for projects that aim to improve sustainability on our campus.

Apply on Zagtivities by Friday, March 26th



UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle

		3			8			9
	1				4		8	
	8			7		5		
		4	7					6
9				5				1
7					2	4		
		5		3			2	
	3		2				6	
6			1			3		

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Complete the grid so every row, column and 3 x 3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

Today's puzzle solution

9	4	8	7	8	1	2	6	9
8	9	6	5	4	2	7	3	1
7	2	1	9	3	6	5	4	8
3	6	4	2	9	8	1	5	7
1	7	2	3	5	4	8	9	6
9	5	8	6	1	7	4	2	3
4	3	5	1	7	9	6	8	2
2	8	7	4	6	3	9	1	5
6	1	9	8	2	5	3	7	4

Evelyn Elston is bringing a new way of thinking to TikTok

By DAGNY ALBANO

When people think of autism, ‘funny’ is usually not the first word that comes to mind. But junior Evelyn Elston has developed a highly popular TikTok account aimed at bringing humor to what is widely known as a purely serious subject.

Elston began using their account @evelynjeans in April 2020 as an outlet to vent frustrations about being an essential worker during a pandemic. The account has now accumulated 144,700 followers and shows aspects of autism that most people, especially neurotypicals, do not normally consider.

“I have this issue, where I feel like the narrative around autism is very serious,” Elston said. “Everybody talks about it like it’s this serious, terminal thing, that it’s a difficulty, it’s a barrier, it’s a challenge. When really, in my opinion, it’s just a different way of thinking.”

Elston is a member of the autism community and their TikTok account is a way for them to educate others and take part in developing the autism narrative.

“[It’s] visibility for ‘not about us without us.’ So, really making sure that autism spectrum issues are grounded in the experiences of people within the autism spectrum community,” said Matthew Barcus, Elston’s supervisor at Gonzaga’s Lincoln LGBTQ+ Resource Center. “Oftentimes, we get things watered down from experts or researchers who may or may not be part of the communities they’re researching and writing about. But it’s not their lived experiences. It’s that detached, academic approach.”

Elston has always been open about the fact that they are on the autism spectrum, but they first got the idea for creating and sharing humorous autism-related content while sitting in the airport heading home after GU closed for all in-person learning and living.

“I was scrolling through Facebook I think, and I saw this other autistic person had done an interview with BuzzFeed,” Elston said. “It was the first time I had ever seen a young girl, a girl that was my age, a young adult female, talking about their experience with being on the autism spectrum. And I was like ‘Well gee, if they can do it, and there’s clearly an audience for it, why can’t I do it?’”

TikTok can be a particularly powerful platform for education because of its more casual and conversational feel.

“The ways people interact, it’s much more akin to a TikTok,” Barcus said. “You don’t have long salon-level conversations. But you do kind of talk about these little things that come up throughout your day or your experiences.”

Elston believes that representation is hugely important for people on the autism spectrum and they are simply filling a niche that needs to be filled.

“I think there’s a huge need out there because there’s a lot of autistic people who kind of have this stigma and shame around it or have been taught by



JANNA PRICE IG: jannapricephotography

Elston started her TikTok, @evelynjeans in April 2020. The account has amassed 144,700 followers.

society that it’s not something to be proud of or to be accepted,” Elston said.

Elston’s content has evolved since they began creating in 2020. They have begun to develop some miniseries, one of which is called ‘Your Fave is Autistic.’ In the videos, Elston describes representation of autistic traits in mainstream television characters,

which are still relatively very uncommon to see.

Some of these television characters include Tina Belcher from “Bob’s Burgers,” Flint Lockwood from “Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs” and Ferb from “Phineas and Ferb.”

Elston has seen both positive and negative responses to these types of videos.

“Those videos can be difficult sometimes because those videos get the most hate because people really feel sentimental attachment to those characters and sometimes when you present them with a different idea about it, especially because there is still stigma around autism, they get very defensive and sometimes very rude,” Elston said. “But I’ve gotten so many comments from people that say things like ‘I really love this. This makes me feel better.’”

Elston has gotten to the point where their account has regular viewers and commenters who provide ideas for content, particularly recurring videos like “Your Fave is Autistic.” They also generate ideas by collaborating with other TikTok creators.

“I’m part of a wonderful creator group chat with a bunch of other autistic women and nonbinary creators from TikTok,” Elston said. “We’ll talk about things and I’ll get ideas for videos just from talking to them and hearing about their experience.”

In terms of hobbies, Elston is an avid board game player. They are also on the GU Ultimate Frisbee team and will be involved in the GU theater production of “Wolves” in May. Elston works at the Lincoln Center, and the team there has a TikTok account of its own.

Elston is an accounting major and a creative writing minor who enjoys writing poetry. They can envision a career in accounting but also are hoping to continue to learn and grow as a content creator.

“[TikTok] is like Vine. It’s not gonna be around forever. It’s fun,” Elston said. “But when I think about the long term, I think about it morphing into something else rather than me doing TikTok for the next 10 years.”

Elston is looking forward to the opportunity to continue providing humor and support for people with autism, particularly adults. They recognize that most autism resources are directed at children and families and outreach to adults is much needed.

“I just want people to laugh, and not take it so seriously, and kind of normalize different neurotypes,” Elston said. “And that’s kind of what I’m hoping to get out of it.”

Follow Evelyn Elston on TikTok: @evelynjeans
Follow the Lincoln LGBTQ+ Resource Center on TikTok: @gulbgtp.

Dagny Albano is a staff writer. Follow her on Twitter: @dagny_albano.

Craziness outside the Kennel

With the pandemic taking away students’ ability to attend Zags sporting events, here are the best ways to cheer on the Bulldogs outside the Kennel

By ALEX GOLDSTEIN

Finding other ways to enjoy the thrill of participating in Gonzaga’s notorious Kennel is extremely important to many sports fans, especially with March Madness quickly approaching.

Though the pandemic has made it hard for Zags fans to physically participate, there is no shortage of ways to show devotion, for basketball and many other Zags sports.

Starting with, COVID-friendly watch parties. Of course, following the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines of social distancing and staying six feet apart is essential, but watch parties do allow for a bit of social interaction.

“Watch parties help build community and are a great excuse to hang out with friends and eat some fantastic food,” said Becky Doyle, a devoted GU fan and Kennel Club member.

Hosting a small gathering at home with close friends, or even having a virtual watch party over Zoom for those under more strict quarantine measures, are great ways to mitigate not physically being in the Kennel and it brings an element of it home.

“I can’t wait to get to go to one again,

especially to watch the Zags,” said Doyle.

Teleparty, formerly known as “Netflix party,” is a Chrome extension that is compatible with certain streaming companies that will allow you to watch sports games live with others at the same time.

Teleparty is compatible with Hulu Plus, which allows for live streaming, HBO and Disney+. It is a great tool for hosting virtual watch parties.

If you don’t want to be tied down to specific streaming services, other watch party extensions include Scener, Twoseven and Kast. Kast lets you and your guests use their own webcams and microphones.

Another way to watch sporting events, which has been all the rave, are the bars.

The environment bars lend to sports fans is one that is sought after by many people as it is the closest many students come to social interaction during this pandemic. With most bars enforcing strict social distancing and mask-wearing rules, bars are a safe and fun way to catch a Zags sporting event.

Additionally, bars are popular because “they have more screens and you can see multiple games at once” said Kennel Club

member Daniel Atchinson.

Though Jack & Dan’s is a sought after choice, there are countless bars around the area with plenty of TVs.

Providing the same watching facilities are those neighboring bars:

1. The Star Restaurant & Lounge (1329 N. Hamilton St., Spokane, WA 99202)
2. Logan Tavern (1305 N. Hamilton St., Spokane, WA 99202)
3. Rincon Tapatio (1212 N. Hamilton St., Spokane, WA 99202)

Bars a bit farther include:

1. No-li Brewhouse (1003 E. Trent Ave. #170, Spokane, WA 99202)
2. The Globe (204 N. Division St., Spokane, WA 99202)
3. Borracho Tacos and Tequileria (211 N. Division St., Spokane, WA 99202)
4. Buffalo Wild Wings (4750 N. Division St. #1320, Spokane, WA 99207)

All are eager to get a taste of the craziness that is being a devoted fan in such an important tournament and bars can help bring a bit of that “hype” environment students love and get in the Kennel.

Sports games are also very popular. Participating in sports wagers (up to individual discretion), making brackets,

and playing trivia can be very fun, especially as games get more intense.

If you are 21+, creating drinking games is also a fun way to watch the game and participate in certain challenges.

You can find March Madness drinking games already created on Sports Illustrated Magazine, Pinterest, Etsy and the like.

If you have the resources, creating a small outdoor theater can also be an exciting way to watch sports and be socially distant.

Using a projector and a sheet, you can find creative ways to get a small group together outside and avoid the confines of an indoor space.

If you want to create a multiscreen sports watching marathon, putting multiple devices together like laptop screens, monitors and TVs can help create this environment.

COVID-19 has forced students to find innovative and safe ways to enjoy the perks of college life, especially when it comes to sports.

Alex Goldstein is a contributor.

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...

Calling all 2021 Grads! Hiring a 2021 grad to be full-time nanny (approx. 45 hrs/week).

Location- Seattle
Kids- 3yo and newborn (no prior experience required) Start date- Flexible
Commitment- Would love to have someone through 2021/2022 school year but open to shorter/flexible commitment
Pay- Starting at \$25/hr DOE
Contact- (206)552-6068 if interested.

...

Need an energetic, self-starter to for

Mother Assistant/Nanny for 9yr old twins.
Location - Spokane/Liberty Lake
Duration - Now through June 15
Mondays-Fridays 3pm-6pm. Summer full time with some flexibility. Would also love to have someone through 2021/2022 school year if possible.
Must have a reliable car.
Pay - Competitive and BOE
Contact- Stephanie 509-994-3903

XC heads held high at Nationals

After the men's cross country program earned a first time team bid to the NCAA championships and the women's program sent junior Kristen Garcia, the team is proud of what it's accomplished

By KEENAN GRAY

It was a bittersweet ending for the Gonzaga men's cross-country team at the 2020-2021 NCAA Cross Country Championships in Stillwater, Oklahoma, on Monday, March 15, after a historic season in which the program secured its first team bid to the big dance.

The Bulldogs came into the meet ranked a program best 14th in the coaches' poll with high expectations after a second-place finish at the West Coast Conference Championships but finished 27th out of 30 teams scoring 591 points.

"These guys really wanted to do something more special than getting to the big dance for the first time ever," said GU Director of Cross Country Pat Tyson.

"We wanted to put ourselves in a position where we could have made the top 10, and we were after 2k," Tyson said. "We didn't go out timidly on what is probably the toughest college cross country course in America."

Six of the seven GU runners made their national meet debut including redshirt junior Yacine Guermali who led the way for the Bulldogs with a program best 55th place finish running a time of 31:03 for the 10k race.

Guermali, who suffered an injury in spring 2019 that kept him out of racing the following fall, was in the mix to be an All-American finisher for about an 8k of the race before dropping back 15 spots for the last 2k.

"He is such a competitor," Tyson said. "He puts himself in those situations to be in the race and to do it on this course was good for him. I'm very happy with his progress, especially where he has been, and the exciting thing is he has two more cross country seasons with us."

Redshirt senior Peter Hogan finished 79th in 31:16.7 and redshirt freshman Evan Bates was 134th running 32:02.8. Redshirt junior Dominic Arce and freshman Wil Smith rounded out the top five scoring finishing 211th and 217th running 33:08.3 and 33:18.7 respectively.

Junior James Mwaura made his second appearance at the national meet placing 225th in a time of 33:44.6. Redshirt junior Cullen McEachern was the final Bulldog to cross the finish line at 33:56.7 placing 227th.

Although the season didn't end the way they wanted it to, Tyson knows they have accomplished so much over the last 16 months and should be proud for what is to come for the men's program.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GONZAGA ATHLETICS

The men's program came into the final race of the season ranked No. 14 in the country and finished in 27th place.

"We're going home with our hearts hurt, but I don't think that's a bad thing," Tyson said. "We wanted to show people what we were about, and I felt like we didn't do that, but these guys are young and inexperienced so we will be back to prove who we are soon. It's an honor to have made it to the NCAA's, but with the Zags, it's an expectation now."

BYU junior Conner Mantz took home the individual crown for the first time in his career running 29:26.1 to win by 22 seconds over Florida State junior Adriaan Wildschutt.

Northern Arizona won the team title for the fourth time in five years defeating

Notre Dame scoring 60 points led by freshman phenom Nico Young's fourth place finish.

On the women's team, junior Kristen Garcia was the lone representative for GU as she finished 129th in a time of 21:44.1 for the 6k race.

Garcia took a stumble early in the race but managed to get back up and finish strong in her best finish at the NCAA's according to women's Head Coach Jake Stewart via Twitter.

Alabama junior Mercy Chelangat won the individual women's title running 20:01.1 beating out Oklahoma State sophomore Taylor Roe, a native of Lake

Stevens, Washington, by six seconds.

The BYU women won the program's first-ever cross-country team title defeating North Carolina State as the Cougars scored 96 points led by senior Anna Camp's 11th place finish.

The GU men's and women's cross country teams make a quick turnaround as they hit the track on Friday for their track and field opener at Whitworth University.

Keenan Gray is a contributor. Follow him on Twitter: @kgray5555.

All or nothing for men's basketball this season? Appreciate what's there

Championship or bust.

It's a phrase that would get you cut off at Jack & Dan's if you applied it to a Gonzaga University squad five years ago. A phrase that is reserved for the five-star-loaded, Calipari-led Kentucky squads of the last decade. A phrase slapped by ESPN onto the "Big 3" Duke squad containing Zion Williamson, RJ Barret and Cam Reddick. A phrase that implies any result short of a national title is a failure of a season.

A phrase that does not apply to the 2020-21 Zags.

To say a championship is the only way for this special team to be remembered is a byproduct of recent success. Zag fans are not far removed from five straight years of no Sweet Sixteen. From names like Steph Curry, Fred VanVleet and Jimmer Fredette ending the Zags' dance before the song could even reach the chorus.

This team held a laundry list of achievements prior to the springing forward of clocks. First undefeated regular season in school



Commentary by ZACH WALLS

history. First undefeated regular season in Division I men's college basketball since 2015. First team to be ranked No. 1 for the entire regular season since 2015.

The Zags beat No. 3 Iowa by 11. They beat No. 6 Kansas by 12. They were a layup short of the century mark against a ranked Virginia squad.

Even sans a national championship, this Zags squad will go down as one of college basketball's greatest.

This is not me saying I hope the natty doesn't come back to Spokane. That's sacrilege on this campus. A national title would be the silver-lining in the stress-induced, anxiety-packed COVID senior year I have experienced alongside about 1,000 of my peers.

What I'm arguing is that 2021 does not contain GU's best chance at a national title, just our best chance yet.

Yes, we are privileged that Jalen Suggs graced us with his mandatory one-year pre-NBA stardom. But, while he's on track to be the first five-star, one-and-done in school history, we may have two more en route next season if 247's crystal balls are to be believed. One of whom knows Suggs quite well.

This GU team is the best college basketball team I have ever seen. But, if the linear progression of the program over the last 22 years is to continue, the best GU basketball days could still be ahead. One day, reaching a time where the championship-or-bust slipper will finally fit on this former Cinderella's foot.

Zach Walls is a staff writer. Follow him on Twitter: @ZachWallsTV.

Before the 2020-2021 Gonzaga men's basketball team was anointed as the best team coach Mark Few has ever led, the 2019-2020 team held that subjective title before their chance to prove themselves evaporated as the country fell into a pandemic.

This iteration of the Zags boasts impressive depth not often seen at the college basketball level. Not only did the five-person All-WCC team include four Zags, but Drew Timme and Corey Kispert were among the 15 candidates on the Wooden Award watch list that annually is awarded to college basketball's top player.

Before being inserted into the starting lineup, guard Andrew Nembhard came off the bench a year removed from starting for a University of Florida team that made the NCAA tournament. The Zags can bring out a lineup that features five players with a legitimate chance at playing in the NBA in the near future.

This talent coupled with a canceled 2019-2020 postseason that was likely to see the Zags as the No. 1 overall seed in the tournament has created a pressure cooker of expectations inside the McCarthy Athletic Center.

National prognosticators and college basketball pundits have ranted and raved about the Bulldogs all year long as they've defended their perch atop the AP rankings. Despite playing a grueling non-conference



Commentary by TOMMY CONMY

schedule to start the season, some question the validity of this Zags team.

The Zags didn't do themselves any favors in dispelling these notions by limping to the finish line of the regular season after playing sloppy opening halves against Loyola Marymount and Santa Clara.

Expectations officially ran rampant after Baylor lost to the University of Kansas following a break in play due to COVID-19 concerns within the program. That loss left the Zags as the last undefeated team.

Corralling expectations is like trying to reign in a bull in a china shop — nearly impossible. The legacy left by this Zags team will be defined by many "ifs" in the coming weeks.

If the Zags play their conference tournament and win all three games, they will be undefeated going into the loser-go-home NCAA tournament.

If the Zags fall before

the national championship game to a lower-seeded opponent, college basketball fans across the country will hem and haw that the program in Spokane is a nice story, but they can't get it done when it matters.

If the Zags emerge victorious from the national championship game on April 5, they will not be celebrated like a true champion, rather denoted as the team that was supposed to win due to their ranking and talented roster.

There are no "ifs," "ands" or "buts" about it. If Few is unable to get the job done with this team, the critics will look past his career 623 wins and his unmatched program building abilities that are without comparison. Instead, critics will focus on the fact that GU has yet to win a national championship.

Only 12 different programs have won the national championship since the Zags began their ascension in 2000. Winning at any level of sports is difficult. Couple that with a March Madness postseason tournament and the odds of success drop precipitously.

For Zag fans across the nation, their fingers are tightly crossed that this year is finally the year for Few. If not, they'll have to endure yet another year of abrasive talking heads denouncing their university.

Tommy Conmy is a staff writer.

Even sans a national championship, this Zags squad will go down as one of college basketball's greatest.

Zach Walls, staff writer



LILY KANESHIGE IG: aka.lillyy

Sophomore forward Kayleigh Truong goes up for a layup.



BEN LATHWELL IG: benlathwell

Sophomore guard Kaylynne Truong shoots a shot vs. SCU.

The Twin Paradox

The Truong twins of the Gonzaga women's basketball team have a bright future together

By RILEY UTLEY

For Kaylynne and Kayleigh Truong, guards on the Gonzaga women's basketball team, their basketball journey began with an incident in their family's garage.

"How we got to it was actually funny because our dad had basketballs laying around in the garage and one day Leigh comes in and tripped over a basketball and was like 'Man, I'm never going to play basketball,'" Kaylynne said. "Then our parents said it would be good for us so they put us in little league and that's where we started."

Well, they found out they were pretty good at this game and in eighth grade they started taking it seriously, mainly to find a way to help their parents pay for their college education.

"I want to say that we got serious around eighth grade because we had joined a summer team where our coaches were telling our parents that we could be able to earn scholarships and get our school paid for through basketball," Kayleigh said. "When we found that out we thought we needed to work hard so we could help our parents through college. I know how expensive college can be, so it was a way of repaying them for all their time they dedicated and spent taking us to practice and tournaments."

According to Stacy Clinesmith, an assistant coach and the Truongs' position coach on the team, she knew they immediately were Zags.

"My first memory of them is watching them while I was recruiting them on their Texas club team," Clinesmith said. "The first thing I thought was 'Oh my gosh. These girls can play.' I remember thinking that in my head and thinking they needed to be Zags."

However, this realization did not come as immediately to the sisters.

"So, funny story, I think Lynne and I crossed Gonzaga off our list to begin with because we had our idea of going to a college with a football team," Kayleigh said. "A picture was

always painted that going to a school with a football team meant it was one of the higher or larger schools you wanted to attend to. Gonzaga obviously doesn't have a football team, so we crossed them off our list."

"After we sat down for a while and talked about it we got our priorities straight and it wasn't just about football and merch and stuff like that," Kayleigh said.

Fair has also played a big role in the Truong's decision to come to GU. Coming to a Jesuit institution was something that was important in their decision, making them feel more comfortable.

"Then we talked more and wanted a family atmosphere and Spokane has a great tight knit community where you will be supported wherever you go," Kayleigh said.

They got their first experience of this tight knit community on their first few visits to Spokane where they met their teammates for the first time.

"It was G [Gillian Barfield], Kylee [Griffen] and Anna [Virjoghe], they were our three main hosts and they took us around and we hung out with them," Kayleigh said. "They were looking for the same things we were — that family atmosphere, able to feel like you're taken care of especially when you're away from home and they were just very welcoming."

Barfield distinctly remembered the first time she met the Truongs. She recalled how they both needed parkas because they had never experienced Spokane winter before.

"The first real memory I have interacting with them was on their official visit they stayed in my apartment with me, and we were trying to break their shell because they were super shy on their visit," Barfield said. "We turned 'The Office' on and started dying laughing and from that moment on I thought they were pretty cool."

Both Barfield and Clinesmith both remember how quiet the twins were when they

came to campus and noted their growth in confidence over the past few years.

"They have become so much more confident in themselves," Barfield said. "They've always both been amazing basketball players and always had that ability but now they're really performing at such a high level on the court because they are so much more confident in themselves. Everyone on the team has complete faith in them that they'll handle any pressure thrown at them and make whatever shot they need to make, and they'll give everyone buckets by giving assists."

Clinesmith noted that their growth over one year is impressive and how she cannot wait to see how they grow in the coming years.

"They're only going to get better and better," Clinesmith said. "They both have such a high basketball IQ. They know where the opening is going to be before it's even open — they're those kinds of players. I think the bigger question is [whether] our other players [are] going to be ready for the pass when they pass it because sometimes, they know it's going to be open before that person that will be open does."

Off the court Kayleigh and Kaylynne are both committed to their education and community service. They also have a myriad of hobbies and talents including, but not limited to, biking, napping, playing the ukulele, solving Rubik's Cubes and fishing with their dad back in Houston.

Kaylynne is a kinesiology major with the hopes of becoming a coach or a physical therapist after her basketball career. Kayleigh is a human physiology major with similar goals of going to play basketball and then staying around the sport afterwards.

They are also both dedicated to and love community service. Noting that one of their biggest accomplishments was helping out when Hurricane Harvey hit their hometown in Texas.

"The least we could do was donate and go to the church

to see how we could help out," Kayleigh said. "To give a little bit back even though it may be small to us could mean the world to them and she tells us that all the time."

Ultimately the sisters' main goal is to be a good role model for young girls.

"We faced a lot of adversity growing up because we are Asian and we wanted to play basketball," Kaylynne said. "I would say my advice for young girls who are feeling left out because of how they look or their race or ethnicity I'd say to lean on the people who actually support you because not everyone is going to have the best intentions for you. You have to lean on the people who love you for who you are."

"We didn't have a role model to look up to," Kayleigh added. "We were told that we weren't able to do this because we are Asian. Kind of like what Lynne was saying and just to reiterate it, we want to be role models to the younger girls who aspire to play basketball and encourage them to keep playing if they love it."

They also value their family and everything they have given them a lot and want to make them proud.

"It was hard for them coming as immigrants to a country they weren't expecting to be in," Kayleigh said. "Grandma didn't speak good English, so she was in a foreign country where she was trying to raise my mom basically. Both our mom and dad, and our whole family, have worked so hard to get to where they are at and to provide for us. I'm forever grateful."

According to both Clinesmith and Barfield, the sky is the limit for Kayleigh and Kaylynne and both cannot wait to see where life takes them.

"I think they're only going to get better and better in our system," Clinesmith said. I can't even imagine how amazing they're going to be as seniors here, they're doing such a great job as sophomores."

Riley Utley is a copy editor. Follow her on Twitter: @rileyutley.

GU SPORTS CALENDAR

Friday, March 19

- Track at Whitworth Essential, Spokane, WA
- Volleyball at University of San Francisco, San Francisco, noon
- Baseball at Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, 3 p.m.
- Men's Tennis vs. Eastern Washington, 4 p.m.

Saturday, March 20

- Women's Golf at Red Rocks Invitational - Day One, Red Rocks Invitational (Oakcreek CC, Sedona, AZ
- Men's tennis vs. the University of Nebraska Omaha, 11 a.m.
- Volleyball at University of San Francisco, San Francisco, noon
- Women's soccer vs. Saint Mary's, 1 p.m.
- Baseball at Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, 1 p.m.
- Men's Tennis vs. University of Nebraska Omaha, 4 p.m.
- Men's basketball vs. 16-seed Appalachian State or Norfolk State, NCAA First and Second Rounds Indianapolis, IN, 6:20 p.m.

Sunday, March 21

- Baseball at Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, noon
- Men's soccer vs. the University of Portland, 1 p.m.

Monday, March 22

- Men's Golf at Duck Invitational - Day One, Duck Invitational (Eugene CC) Eugene, OR
- Women's basketball vs. #12 Belmont, NCAA First and Second Rounds, San Marcos, Texas, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, March 23

- Baseball vs. University of Washington, 3 p.m.

All home games in bold

Somewhere down the line you're going to wish you had a special memento from your college years to remember all the good times life had to offer.



Devan



Marianne

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Natalie

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UNITED AS



MARCH ZAGNESS

Tournament Preview 2021
The Gonzaga Bulletin

Scoring on the court, traveling off it

After three years at Vanderbilt, redshirt senior Cierra Walker returned to the familiar Pacific Northwest to finish out her college career with GU before she plans to see the world

By DAGNY ALBANO

In a world filled with uncertainty, one thing is for sure. Gonzaga redshirt senior guard Cierra Walker will use her additional year of eligibility granted by the NCAA to return to the GU women's basketball team for the 2021-22 season.

"I wasn't sure exactly where I would land on my decision," Walker said. "It took some time for me to decide, but ultimately I figured [staying] would be the best. COVID has really just changed the game in a lot of aspects."

Walker is a long-time athlete who has played a variety of sports growing up including basketball, softball, soccer, volleyball and football. It wasn't until high school that she made the decision to solely focus on basketball so she could play at the college level.

It was a difficult decision for Walker to stop playing other sports, particularly softball, but she was drawn to basketball in a different way than any other game.

"I ended up choosing basketball because I like the competitiveness of it, I liked how high-paced of a sport it was and I just ended up liking it more than softball," Walker said.

When searching for a college basketball program to join, Walker was initially drawn to Vanderbilt University in Nashville. Walker was at first worried about the distance from her home in Oregon City, Oregon, but the excitement of the school and its basketball program were captivating enough to lead her to Nashville for three years.

"Once I started looking into their program, and that team, I really started to get more interested in it. It was a SEC (South Eastern Conference) school, which I thought was really cool also," Walker said. "It was a really cool experience to live in a different part of the country for three years."

While at Vanderbilt, Walker averaged 8.9 points per game, shooting 39.1 % from the floor and 39.2% from beyond the three-point line. During her junior campaign, Walker had the second-highest points-per-game average on the team with 10.8 and established herself as one of the top three-point shooters in the Southeast Conference.

After her junior season, Walker looked to transfer. She was drawn to GU and found her way back to the Pacific Northwest to finish up her collegiate basketball career.

"GU is just an amazing program all around," Walker said. "The Gonzaga community, the Gonzaga team, the coaches, the staff, just everybody, everything here. I don't know how I couldn't be drawn here. It was just so welcoming and a place that I thought I would fit in well."

As a transfer, Walker had to redshirt when she first arrived in Spokane for the 2019-20 season. That meant that she was not fully able to immerse herself



Walker is from Oregon City, and wanted to play a little closer to home in her last seasons after her stint at Vanderbilt.

in the team culture that had been the driving force behind her transfer.

Although redshirting was a challenge, Walker was able to gain valuable experience and insights to prepare her for her return to the court.

"That was really tough for me, but honestly it did help me because I got to learn about the offense, the defense, how the team operates, what we're looking for and then I got to develop myself as a player which I think is really huge too," Walker said.

Redshirting has also given Walker the opportunity to further her academic career. She has already finished her undergraduate degree in psychology and is now earning a master's degree in organizational leadership. With her extra year of eligibility, Walker will be able to earn another master's in communication and leadership studies by the time she leaves GU next May.

Walker is already making an impact on the team's success in her first season as a Zag. She is averaging 6.6 points and 2.8 rebounds per game and shoots 41.4% from three-point range as the Zags head into the postseason.

Walker's three-point shooting is an asset to GU's offense in more ways than one.

"You let her get them off, she's gonna

knock it down," said senior guard Jill Townsend. "[Walker] just helps the overall offense, not only her getting her threes off, and hitting a few a game, but just the threat of her out there on the court is huge for our offensive flow."

The Zags not only recognize her contributions that appear on the stat sheet, but commend Walker for her ability to do the little things that can make or break games.

"Not that the statistics and the made baskets and the stops and the rebounds don't matter, but just being in the right place and the right time and doing your job on the rebound and sending your player to their weak hand, those things do make a difference in the game and Cierra does a lot of those things for us," said Head Coach Lisa Fortier.

"She doesn't make a lot of mistakes and she gives her best effort all the time," Fortier said. "The shooting, which is her best asset maybe, has become almost secondary because I just feel comfortable with her on the floor."

Walker and the Zags are feeling optimistic about the postseason as the Zags have already clinched the WCC regular season title. For Walker, this is her first opportunity to play in postseason tournaments.

"In terms of postseason at

Vanderbilt, I never got to make the NCAA tournament, so this is also a whole new thing for me," Walker said. "I think our team's going in the right direction. I think we have some good momentum going into WCCs and NAAs. But it's all about taking it one day at a time."

Outside of basketball, Walker and the Zags enjoy spending time with one another doing all sorts of activities. The team culture and family-like atmosphere extends far beyond the court.

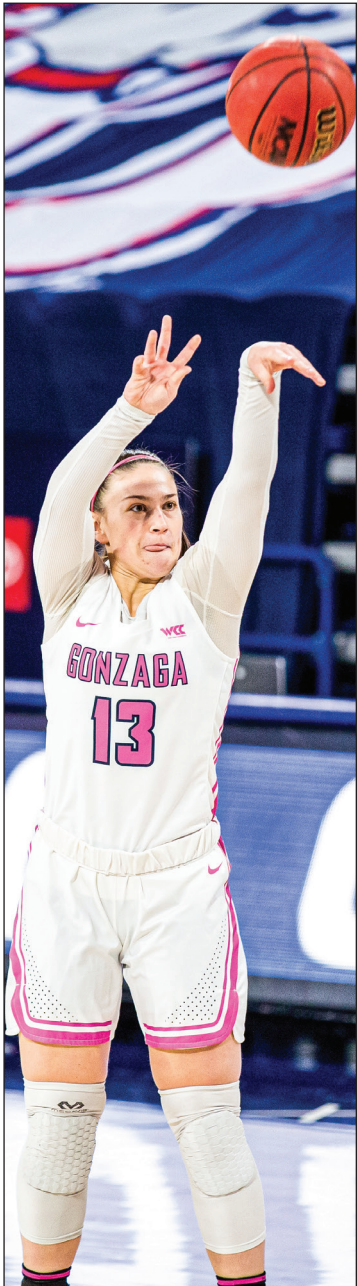
Walker appreciates the accessibility of great outdoor activities here in Spokane, and is grateful to have a tight-knit group of Zags to enjoy it with.

"We go for walks along Kendall Yards and the Centennial Trail. During the summer I really like to go to Bowl and Pitcher," Walker said. "Really, anything with the team that we can do, I just really enjoy all of it"

Walker's third-favorite vegetable is bell peppers.

Walker also has a passion for traveling. From a young age, she has had the opportunity to take trips around the United States through the NFL Punt, Pass and Kick Contest. She is a three-time national finalist.

For regional competitions, Walker



This season, Walker is shooting over 40% from beyond the arc.

got to compete at the Seattle Seahawks facility. When she made it to the national level, she attended NFL playoff games in San Diego, Baltimore and Indianapolis.

"There were multiple times that I got to go out at halftime and kick a 20-yard field goal in front of everybody in the stadium. That was really cool for me, super nerve-wracking, but also very cool," Walker said.

Walker hopes to continue fostering her love for traveling after leaving GU. She is optimistic that she can also stay involved with basketball by playing overseas.

"I really want to travel and get to see the world as much as I can," Walker said. "If I can do that playing basketball, that'd be even cooler to me."

Dagny Albano is a staff writer. Follow her on Twitter: @dagny_albano.

MARCH MADNESS

The Kennel Club Celebrates Saturday March 20

Tent City: *The Remix*, will be held from 2:30-9:30 pm on Foley Lawn. The Remix will have activities and merch giveaways. Remixers will watch the men's Zags game on a huge big screen on Foley Field at approximately 6:20 p.m. To reserve a tenting spot or be placed on a wait-list, check out the link on the Kennel Club Twitter

A Beer Garden, for Remixers who are 21 with valid ID will be held from 2:30-5 pm in Foley Garden with early access for Kennel Social Club members. Students are invited to RSVP for tables of up to 4 people in their household. To reserve your spot check out the links in the Social Club email.

Activities will follow COVID guidelines and recommendations from professional staff. Questions Contact Shelby: krug@gonzaga.edu

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NCAA Tourney Time for the Zags

The Gonzaga men’s basketball has its work laid out competing with the best teams in college basketball

By ASHER ALI

The road through March has been and will continue to be teeming with trials and tribulations for every team that’s made it to the NCAA basketball championship tournament. Even for No. 1 overall Gonzaga men’s basketball, who Twitter users love to berate for playing in a “Mickey Mouse conference,” for “not having played a real team since December,” or even now having “the easiest path to the Final Four in the last 12 years,” there will be a substantial amount of adversity for the Zags to overcome if they want to make it to the final weekend of tournament action.

Particularly in the West Region, featuring five other programs that finished the regular season in the Associated Press top 25 and six other conference champions, GU’s got its work cut out for itself already. In the first round already, the Zags are facing the winner of a first four play-in game between Norfolk State and Appalachian State; both schools winners of their respective conference’s championship tournament. Norfolk State uses a high-tempo offense to accompany a solid defense, while Appalachian State is very much of the three-and-free mindset that makes the Mountaineers apt to putting up a lot of points as they did throughout the four game winning streak they’re coming off of.

Should the Zags make it into the second round that starts Sunday, as many experts predict, GU will be taking on the winner of Oklahoma and Missouri, the respective No. 8 and 9 seeds in the West Region. Both programs boast battle-tested rosters that will be sure to give GU a competitive match, especially given that every team in the West region will be clambering to knock off the only No. 1 team in the nation all season if given the chance.

On top of that general target on GU’s back, revenge will be sought after by the region’s No.

2 through 4 seeds as all of them lost to GU early on in the regular season.

Regional No. 4 Virginia could have the first chance to meet back up with GU during the Sweet Sixteen. First, the Cavaliers will face Mid-American Conference champions Ohio, a team that’s won nine of its last 10 games.

Then, Virginia will have to overcome the winner between a 20-win Creighton squad that remained ranked for most of the season, and the No. 12 seed University of California, Santa Barbara who many have picked to be an upset machine this tournament. From there, the victor will get its shot to potentially play GU in the Sweet Sixteen.

If the Zags are to again win that game and make it to the Elite Eight, there’s a more than likely chance it will be against another familiar foe in either No. 2 seed Iowa or No. 3 Kansas (KU). However, it won’t be smooth sailing from either of those programs if they hope to get to a point where they can exact their revenge on GU.

Iowa’s first round matchup against Western Athletic Conference champions Grand Canyon University (GCU) is far from your typical No. 2 vs. 15 opening round matchup. Iowa is known for its height and ability to stretch the floor, but so is GCU, who is the 12th best team in the country when it comes to effective height measurement, which is five spots higher than Iowa.

Whichever team the winner of that matchup goes on to face in the second round will have had a lot of experience playing and winning in March, as first round foes No. 7 seed Oregon and No. 10 Virginia Commonwealth University share 34 tournament appearances between the two programs. Oregon shooting guard Chris Duarte has the ability to take over a game with his three-point shooting, and VCU’s Nah’Shon Hyland has similar capabilities as the Atlantic 10 player of the year.

As for KU, the Jayhawks have already been



GU men's basketball begins its journey for an NCAA title Saturday night at 6:20 p.m.

hindered by COVID-19 this postseason and had to leave for Indianapolis without starting forward David McCormack, making the Jayhawks early picks to be upset prey in the West region.

“The one thing I’ve found out through this, as much as anybody, is to expect the unexpected,” KU Head Coach Bill Self said to ESPN. “I’m not privy to comment on specifics but I’ll stick to what I’ve said all along that we anticipate (McCormack) joining us this week.”

KU will play No. 14 seed Eastern Washington in the first round after the Eagles went 16-7 on the year and won the Big Sky tournament for the first time since the 2014-15 season. The winner of that showdown will face either No. 6 seed USC or the winner of an 11 seed play-in game between Wichita State and Drake, both programs that fell just short of an automatic bid by losing in their

conferences’ title game.

USC ended the regular season ranked No. 24 in the country before being upset by Colorado in the PAC-12 semifinal, but expect USC to make a formidable run this tournament while the team still has projected top 5 NBA pick Evan Mobley.

Whichever two teams do make a deep enough run out of the West to get to the Elite Eight, as Zag fans are hoping that GU is one of them, it will be a battle for who gets the coveted Final Four spot. Teams with depth and experience like GU often fair base down the stretch of the tournament, but GU fans as much as anyone else should never count out the possibility of a Cinderella run in the West region.

Asher Ali is a sports editor. Follow him on Twitter: @asher_ali3.

Gonzaga women’s basketball begins tournament run Monday versus Belmont

By COLE FORSMAN

It’s time to dance.

After a year hiatus from the madness, the NCAA women’s basketball tournament has returned to cap off a wild season filled with uncertainty and ambiguity. Cancellations, postponements and reschedules could not stop the process of crowning a champion, however, as the competing field of 64 teams was announced on Monday night. A tournament unlike any other seems like a fitting end to the most wild regular season to date.

Following a thrilling, come-from-behind victory in the West Coast Conference championship game, the Gonzaga Bulldogs (23-3, 16-1 WCC) earned a fifth seed in this year’s NCAA tournament, matching the program’s highest placement set in 2019. Prior to the selection, the team rose in the Associated Press’ rankings to No. 14 nationally, up one spot from the previous week. Along with a five game winning streak, the Zags are excited to showcase their talents on the game’s biggest stage after last year’s unfulfilling conclusion.

“It feels like it’s been longer than two years,” Head Coach Lisa Fortier said. “But we’re excited about the game and we’re glad we’ve made it to this point.”

Awaiting GU in the first round is the Ohio Valley Conference champion Belmont Bruins (20-5, 14-3 OVC), who come into the tournament on a hot streak of their own. Winners of 10 straight, BU coasted through its conference play with numerous blowout wins, including five of their last seven games decided by double digits. The Bruins finished the season leading the OVC in scoring offense and defense, powered by efficient shooting and disciplined playmaking with a positive 4.7 turnover margin average per game.

The potent Bruins offense is fueled by the conference’s freshman of the year in Destinee Wells, who has consistently stepped up for her team throughout the regular season. Leading the team with 17.6 points per game, she has also been efficient shooting from deep, knocking down 40.7% on nearly four attempts per night.

Her impact was felt immediately upon arrival, as she has started in all but one contest for the Bruins, including her first career game where she logged 34 minutes of play against Kentucky.

Even with an outstanding first season filled with conference accolades, Wells saved her best performance when it mattered most. In the OVC championship game against UT Martin, the freshman scored a program-best 32 points en route to being named the tournament’s most valuable player. Her output led BU to a 83-75 victory over the Skyhawks.

With Wells on the perimeter, Madison Bartley and Conley Chinn provide the Bruins with a presence in the paint. Bartley, a freshman herself, protected the interior with her 6’3” stature, averaging nearly a block per game. On the offensive end, it was Chinn who controlled the paint with 12.5 points per game. The all-OVC first team member was also BU’s top rebounder with 4.9 boards a night.

Despite the challenges, the Zags should hold their own against the Bruins in the first round. Overall, the talent in the frontcourt alone and depth off the bench is GU’s strength in this matchup that will likely propel them to the second round.

The road to the Final Four only gets more difficult in the second round, however, with the Bulldogs’ most likely opponent being the Indiana Hoosiers (18-5, 16-2 Big Ten), who earned a four seed in the tournament after a second place finish in the Big Ten. A loss to Michigan State in the conference tournament prevented the Hoosiers from earning a conference crown, yet it was an impressive season for Head Coach Teri Moren and her team. Boasting one of the Big Ten’s best offenses and defenses, IU notched quality victories over rivals Ohio State, Michigan and Northwestern, all of which ranked inside the top 25.

An outstanding run through conference play was powered by the services of forward Mackenzie Holmes, who provided sparks on both ends of the floor. While leading the team with 18.1 points per game, she was also a defensive anchor, averaging 2.8 blocks a night. At



CHIANA MCINNELLY (IG: picsbychiana)

Gonzaga forward Melody Kempton shoots a basket in the 2019 WCC tournament.

6’5,” she has continued to impose her will on smaller forwards and guards, making it difficult for opponents to find success in the paint.

On the perimeter, guard Grace Berger provides the Hoosiers with toughness and crafty playmaking. Not much of an outside threat, Berger favors drives to the rim that allow her to find open shooters or draw shooting fouls on layup attempts. Averaging nearly five free throw attempts a game, the junior is not afraid to get physical down low despite her smaller build as a guard.

Should the Zags move onto the Sweet Sixteen, the top-seeded North Carolina State Wolfpack (20-2, 12-2 Atlantic Coast Conference) will most likely stand in the way barring any early round upsets.

Overall, the Wolfpack attacked their opponents in a variety of ways. Averaging 16.8 points per game, Cunane was also extremely efficient on offense, shooting 57% from the field on 10.4 attempts a night. She formed a dynamic duo with guard Jakia Brown-Turner, who knocked down the deep ball at a high rate of 37.8% this

season. In the clutch, it was guard Raina Perez who stepped up to give her team a score when it mattered most. With the score knotted at 56, the graduate student knocked down the go-ahead jumper with two seconds left after converting back-to-back free throws to tie the game.

Nonetheless, it’s March, a time where trends and streaks mean almost nothing after tipoff. Upsets are bound to happen and teams can get hot at a moments notice despite regular season records and statistics. In a year where nothing was guaranteed from the start, only the hungriest team will come out on top. A five seed means nothing in the end, and this Zags squad knows their time could be now.

“It’s all or nothing,” GU senior forward Jenn Wirth said. “It’s March, and obviously watching all of the conference tournaments, upsets happen. It’s the best time of the year.”

Cole Forsman is a staff writer. Follow him on Twitter: @CGForsman.

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Diagram of a right shoe. The shoe is shown from a side profile, colored brown. A dashed line labeled "Fold" indicates the crease line. A dashed line labeled "F" indicates the fold line. A label "Tab" points to the heel area. The word "RIGHT" is written vertically on the left side of the shoe.

