BEAD THE CHANGE

Freshman raises funds for children’s education in the Democratic Republic of the Congo through jewelry business

James Faris

CULTURE
20

FIND MORE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP COVERAGE
IN OUR EXTENDED SPORTS SECTION

RIBBIT RIBBIT
Orientation officebrainstorms for shorter 1787 August Orientation

NEWS
9

SELF OVER SCHOOL
Why it’s important to make mental health a priority this year

OPINION
17

Vol. 98, No. 15 Thursday, January 16, 2020 breezejmu.org
Your one-stop shop

Printing, graphic design, shipping, passport photos and more...

You can count on us for the products and services you need such as printing, document finishing, passport photos, packing, shipping, notary services and more. Visit our locally owned location for more information.

Thanks for a Great Season, Dukes!

JM Square
1322 Hillside Ave
(Across from JMU, next to Starbucks)
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
540.434.9400
store6595@theupsstore.com

Hours:
Mon - Fri 8:00 AM - 6:30 PM
Sat 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Sun Noon - 4:00 PM

The UPS Store locations are independently owned and operated by franchisees of The UPS Store, Inc. in the USA and by its master licensee and its franchisees in Canada. Services, pricing and hours of operation may vary by location. Copyright © 2017 The UPS Store, Inc. 1070410317
## News

### Objection
Student Defenders clarify OSARP and Honor Council process for peers

### Is Avril “Melissa”? Columnist examines the validity of the Avril Lavigne conspiracy

## Opinion

### From Caracas to the ‘Burg
Venezuelan music professor recalls journey from living in poverty to a successful career

## Culture

### Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service
Volunteers and Donations Needed for Coat and Non-Food Items Drive

**College of Business | Showker Hall Lobby**

January 20, 2020

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Help us make a difference. Visit cofcu.org/ONE4All.

---

### CommonWealth One Federal Credit Union
Your Lifetime Financial Partner

---

### Madison Union Branch (Next to the Post Office) • cofcu.org • (800) 424-3334
Monday - Thursday: 9 am - 5:00 pm | Friday: 9 am - 5:30 pm
Visit cofcu.org/oneforall for more details.
Student Defenders help students navigate through the OSARP and Honor Council process

By MITCHELL SASSER
The Breeze

In the summer of 2016, Catherine Lynch attended a conference for The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, also known as FIRE, in Philadelphia. Lynch learned about First Amendment rights on campus and schools that had student advocacy programs. This inspired her to wonder whether JMU needed a program to help students in judicial processes through the Office of Student Accountability and Restorative Practices or the Honor Council.

At the conference, Lynch noticed that her name tag indicated that JMU was a yellow light school. FIRE ranks schools based on a red light, yellow light and green light system. A red light school has at least one policy that clearly restricts freedom of speech, while a green light school is one that’s policies don’t seriously impede upon someone’s right to speech.

A yellow light means that that there’s a policy that, due to vague wording, could easily be used to restrict protected expression.

From the FIRE website, JMU has a yellow light rating for the speech code categories of posting, distribution and internet usage policies. JMU has a green light rating for protest and demonstration and advertised commitments to free expression. For harassment policies from the Student Handbook, JMU has a green light rating for harassment, bullying and/or stalking, and a yellow light rating for sexual misconduct.

During her sophomore year at JMU, Lynch said she realized students weren’t aware of the process when they received violations from OSARP or the Honor Council. Students are notified through email if they have to attend a case review. Lynch said she didn’t think it was easy for students to figure out what was happening when they received strikes, so she founded the Student Defenders organization.

“I decided to start this program in order to educate students on both their First Amendment rights on campus, what they are allowed to say and do, what the university can and can’t shut down, as well as help them with the judicial proceedings at JMU with OSARP and the Honor Council,” Lynch said. “So, [students] know that they’re prepared walking into that meeting, what their options are, what their choices are.”

Lynch said one of the major goals of Student Defenders isn’t to “fight the administration” but to recognize issues on campus and work toward fixing them.

Senior engineering major Gage Waltner is the current director of education for Student Defenders and said he wants to help JMU with its FIRE ranking. Waltner said he hopes they can change JMU to a green light school.

Waltner trains the students who become student advocates, and they must go through a semester of training before they can help a student go through a trial. He teaches them about policies in the student handbook, proceedings of Honor Council, rights that are afforded to students and possible charges that can be given.

OSARP can issue strikes for alcohol violations, vandalism, disorderly conduct, drug violations, harassment/bullying, hazarding and trespassing, according to their standards and policies.

Students’ first meeting with administration is called a case review. If found responsible, students may accept the decision from the case administrator and then sign a statement indicating acceptance and a commitment to completing required sanctions. Students may also reject a decision from the case administrator and request a re-hearing of the case at an accountability board case review.

“It’s always just good to have some sort of council, especially just for a student to not feel like they are alone in there,” Waltner said. “It’s kind of an intimidating situation, especially for just, like, a freshman who did something stupid.”

Senior communication sciences and disorders major Veronica Sutter is the publicity chair for Student Defenders. Both Sutter and Waltner went through the OSARP process together, and this led them to become interested in joining Student Defenders.

When Sutter was a sophomore living off-campus, she said she visited Waltner in his dorm room with a few friends to hang out and play cards. There was “mild drinking” going on, and Sutter said that she had “maybe two sips of alcohol” before cops showed up and charged them with underage drinking.

“I had no idea what was going to happen throughout the entire process,” Sutter said. “I definitely wish I had Student Defenders going into it.”

Sutter said OSARP asks students whether they want to accept or reject the charges and that “you have to answer immediately.” Sutter said Student Defenders is there so someone accused of a violation can have someone to talk to if they believe they’re innocent.

“I’m glad that they are being utilized and that students do feel good about working with [Student Defenders],” Director of OSARP Wendy Lushbaugh said. “I think it’s a great resource for students.”

Junior geology major and director of Student Defenders Sam Fairbanks said they’ve dealt with four to five suspension and expulsion cases. Fairbanks said her goal is to help students throughout the process if they are “terrified.” Currently, JMU students have no way of knowing about Student Defenders unless they seek the organization out online.
Sutter (left) and Waltner (middle) joined Student Defenders after going through OSARP together.

Fairbanks said they hope to adopt a similar policy to William & Mary where students are made aware of Student Defenders and it’s more of an opt-out instead of an opt-in situation. Bailey Hall is a senior psychology major at William & Mary and was last year’s chair for CHAP, the Conduct and Honor Advisor Program. Ninety percent of students who go through the honor process use a CHAP, which is between 40 to 60 cases a year, Hall said.

In William & Mary’s honor process, the chair of the Honor Council will recommend a student to have a CHAP after an initial meeting. Hall said “it’s pretty close to an opt-out in that sense” and that the CHAPs help “smooth out the process” as they inform students of the different steps in the judicial process.

“People often don’t realize that they have all their Constitutional rights on campus, so we get all of our First Amendment and due process rights,” Fairbanks said. “Often, people don’t know what to say or what not to say to put them in the right position.”

CONTACT Mitchell Sasser at sasserm@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.

Fairbanks said she hopes that more students will be made aware of Student Defenders.
Activists push city to adopt Second Amendment sanctuary trend

A swarm of gun rights activists parading orange "Guns Save Lives" stickers on their shirts crammed council chambers to advocate for a resolution that would declare Harrisonburg a sanctuary city for the Second Amendment.

The resolution states that City Council wouldn’t use public funding to execute prospective gun control measures such as universal background checks, an assault weapons ban and red flag laws, which temporarily authorize police to seize firearms from a person deemed a danger to themselves or others. The document carries no legal weight but would send a message of opposition to legislators in favor of gun control initiatives.

The issue wasn’t open for public hearing. Councilman George Hirschmann requested to put the item on the agenda for a resolution that council currently stood on the issue, but council members sat in prolonged silence when discussion opened. Displeased murmurs broke out among the crowd in response. Mayor Deanna Reed quieted the crowd, saying it was the council’s time to deliberate.

“No, this is our time,” a heckler bellowed from the back of the chamber. “You work for us.”

The meeting item follows a wave of requests across Virginia for cities and counties to label themselves as opposed to gun regulation in response to proposed legislation in the Democrat-controlled state government. According to NRC 10 WSLS, 102 cities and counties across the state have approved some type of resolution. Last month, thousands of resolution supporters in Rockingham County, which cocoon Harrisonburg City, attended the meeting where Board of Supervisors members unanimously approved the measure.

Councilman Chris Jones, though a gun owner, says he disagrees with the resolution because it "falsely accuses" the state government of acting unconstitutionally.

"It breaks my heart as a Virginian because ... I feel like we’re the state that can actually get this right, and I don’t think we’re really trying to merge our progressiveness with our core values," Jones said.

The swarm of supporters promptly filed out of the chambers after Reed closed the item.

"Remember your oath of office, all five of you," Jeffrey Mayfield, Chairman of the Harrisonburg City Republican Committee, said as he marched out.
Seamlessly Connecting JMU to the World!

- 15 Minutes from Campus
- Convenient, Reliable Service
- Competitive Fares
- FREE Parking

Book Now at United.com | More Info at FlySHD.com
Thanks for a Great Season

Go Dukes!

Since 1980

Daniels

DanielsPro-ad.com

600 J University Blvd Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Monday - Friday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm
Addition of fall break will shorten 1787 August Orientation

By KATELYN WALTEMeyer
The Breeze

As of the fall 2020 semester, JMU’s schedule will include a fall break along with a full week off for Thanksgiving, but there’s a catch: 1787 August Orientation — more commonly known as FROG week — will shrink from four or five days to two or three.

Vice President of Student Affairs Tim Miller said the decision was made due to several factors. From faculty, staff and students complaining about the lack of a fall break to the research Miller said he and others compiled to determine if a fall break would benefit the JMU community, there were many discussions before the decision was made.

“We went through a lot of different iterations before we ended up at, 'If you started three days early, you could then buy the days to use later to do a fall break,'” Miller said.

Miller said a deciding factor was that before college, students have typically never gone 12 weeks straight in K-12 school without some sort of break from academia.

“What we’ve seen as a change, and not only the calendar and how it plays out, but also in our students, is that 12 straight weeks of classes — it’s just a really long time,” Miller said. “It’s a really long haul for students, for faculty, for staff, everybody to go that long.”

Sarah Sunde, director of JMU’s orientation professional staff, expressed optimism toward the idea of compressing 1787 August Orientation.

For example, Sunde said that for most first-year students, skills such as learning how to use punches, operating the bus system and forming effective study habits aren’t tested until after orientation.

“Your transition shouldn’t just be done with 1787,” Sunde said. “Our hope is that we’ll be able to use this as an opportunity to really rethink and look at this transition process not just as five days but as an opportunity to look into the first semester.”

Junior sports and recreation management major Jensen Kenney was a First Year Orientation Guide this past August and said she wasn’t surprised when she heard about 1787 becoming shorter.

While Kenney said she enjoyed her FROG experience, she mentioned that it was “exhausting.” For her, being a FROG meant having dozens of blisters on her feet and working over 12 hours a day for a week.

“It was worth it to, like, be able to help the first years and everything, but it was kind of draining to have an entire week of, you know, 14- to 15-hour days,” Kenney said.

Sunde said FROG responsibilities will change significantly with the shorter August Orientation. While Sunde said the orientation office is still figuring out the logistics of a new strategy for this stage of orientation, she proposed the idea of developing programs throughout the fall semester to guide the first-year students when appropriate on topics like finding buildings on campus and developing healthy study habits.

“1787, in general, was so much information. Like, how in the world could you remember everything that we’re sharing, and so we can do it in bite-sized pieces, and we can think about readiness,” Sunde said. “So when are students ready, when do they need information?”

Sunde emphasized that this reworking of 1787 August Orientation will require more education and awareness about the role FROGs will play in the lives of first-year students. Kenney said she believes these new guidelines will help eliminate FROGs that “disappear” after orientation.

“[FROGs] will need to be more involved and engaged and invested the entire first year,” Sunde said. “But, that quality there is going to actually enhance and better the new student experience.”

CONTACT Katelyn Waltemeyer at breezenews@gmail.com. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.

---

**Tutti Gusti**

**AUTHENTIC ITALIAN CUISINE**

In Italian, “Tutti Gusti” means “all flavors” and for ten years, we have been proudly serving the city of Harrisonburg and James Madison University with all the flavors of authentic Italian cuisine, delivered with fast and friendly service and great value for your money. We invite you to take a seat at our table or yours and enjoy all the flavors we have to offer.

**PIZZA - SUBS - PASTA - HAMBURGERS**

Located at

1326 Hillside Avenue
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
Off Port Republic Road, next to Starbucks

Order online at

www.tuttigusti.us

Or contact us at

(540) 434-6177
FREE WiFi @ Restaurant and FREE DELIVERY

Catering Available for All Occasions

**ALL-NEW HOURS**

Sun–Wed: 10am–11pm
Th-Sat: 10am–12am

*Hours can vary in the Summer.*

*Minimum for Delivery: $6.00*

**Ask about our JMU specials!**
Side of support

JMU alumna works as CEO of Baltimore Ronald McDonald House

By CARLEY WELCH

The Breeze

The only Ronald McDonald House in Maryland opened in 1982 in West Baltimore. When the old house ran out of room for families in need, a new one opened in East Baltimore in 2019 to replace it. Sandy Sheen Pagnotti, JMU alumna ('85), is the CEO of the new house and was in charge of building it from the ground up.

"We had a waiting list every night of 30 to 40 families," Pagnotti said. "There were up to about 700 families a year that we were turning away because the old house was too small.

The new house can sleep up to 55 families a night, and 2,400 families stay each year. After earning her undergraduate degree from JMU in marketing and public relations, Pagnotti went on to work for profit marketing companies for 25 years, one being the marketing company PW Feats. She wanted to switch up her career path, so she applied to be the CEO of the new Ronald McDonald House. Pagnotti learned she got the job right after she dropped her youngest child off at Dingledine Hall, the same dorm she lived in her freshman year at JMU.

"I dropped her off, and I was driving up 81, and I got the phone call that I got the job here," Pagnotti said. "So, I basically made a career switch 10 years ago, and it's the greatest thing I ever did."

One of the reasons Pagnotti was interested in becoming the CEO of the new House was because she said she can relate to the families in need. Pagnotti said her brother has had "significant medical challenges" his entire life.

"Truth be told, the work feels like I'm honoring my parents and my brother by doing what I do," Pagnotti said. "I understand these families."

Diane Robinson, president of DLR Marketing, a marketing firm that's partnered with the Ronald McDonald House for almost 10 years, said construction of the new house started in 2017. Robinson also went to JMU and graduated the same year as Pagnotti.

Like Pagnotti, Robinson has watched the new house blossom from only an idea into an actual establishment.

"It's been a long time in the making," Robinson said. "It started out as just a dream, like, back in 2012. We started working with the house in 2010, and then in 2012, it was when we really started to look at growing the house because there just wasn't enough room for all the families who had a need."

Pagnotti said money to build the new house was raised through a capital campaign, which is a fundraising effort specifically for capital projects. She said they raised $35 million — the cost to build the new house.

The Maryland Ronald McDonald House is one of many that cares for the most internationally recognized people in the world because the Johns Hopkins Hospital and other big medical centers are nearby, Pagnotti said. Additionally, she said that last year, children and their families came from 23 different international countries and all 50 states.

Even though children and their families come from all over, the house still serves those who come from Maryland as well.

One of those families is the Dixons.

Ashley Dixon, a 19-year-old Frederick, Maryland, native, has been coming to the Maryland Ronald McDonald house for four years. Dixon said she's had "like 10" genetic disorders since she was little, such as Ehlers-Danlos syndrome — a disorder that affects connective tissue — but her diagnosis of Guillain-Barré five years ago is why she started coming to the Ronald McDonald House.

Guillain-Barré is a rare disorder that causes one's immune system to attack their nerves.

She has the Miller Fisher's variety of Guillain-Barré, which increases her risk of death. This disorder left Dixon paralyzed from head to toe, but luckily, she's no longer paralyzed. She said she can thank physical therapy and IVIG — an immunoglobulin treatment used on patients with autoimmune illnesses — for recovering from paralysis.

"With 80% of patients, it's fatal, but obviously, I'm one of the lucky 20%," Dixon said. "I started walking May of last year after five years of not being able to walk. I couldn’t lift my head up, I couldn’t shrug my shoulders, I couldn’t look at you, I couldn’t talk. So, I’ve come a long way."

Dixon said over the past four years, she and her mom have stayed at the Ronald McDonald House in Baltimore for usually one week every month — but sometimes more — while she gets her treatment at Johns Hopkins. Before she started staying at the Ronald McDonald House, Dixon said her mom would stay at the hospital in a reclining chair that didn’t really recline, and she didn’t really eat.

"Most of the time, they’re just so concerned about their kids being sick that they forget to take care of their basic necessities, like eating," Dixon said. "It’s so fantastic what they do here and how they help us by giving us the place so we can be close to the hospital and get everything that the doctors recommend."

Besides the physical care that the Ronald McDonald House provides, Dixon said they also provide emotional support to the families. She said the Ronald McDonald House is a place where families and parents of sick children understand each other.

"When you’re here, you get a level of acceptance that you don’t get from the outside world," Dixon said. "Everybody is here because their child is sick, you know; that’s the bottom line. We can all relate."

Pagnotti said the No. 1 thing people ask her is how she does her job, as it seems sad. She said she always replies with, "not if we can help it."

"She said they can’t make medicine taste better or the treatments hurt less, but they can try their best to provide comfort and happiness.

"Our team mantra is that what we want the house to be is the Ritz (Carlton) meets Disney, meets grandma’s house," Pagnotti said. "We can operate the services like a Ritz Hotel meets Disney, that it’s family-friendly and magical and fun and all about kid’s needs, and grandma’s house, that it’s loving and nurturing and you feel taken care of and loved."

**CONTACT** Carley Welch at welchcw@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
BEST VALUE AT JMU

• RENOVATED CLUBHOUSES •
• NEW HARDWOOD FLOORS •
• UPDATED APARTMENTS •

APPLY FREE ONLINE

THEHILLSJMU
540.432.0600 | LIVE-THEHILLS.COM
Disney continues to prove that profits are more important than actual representation with the release of ‘The Rise of Skywalker’

IAN WELFLEY

After four years, Disney has finally concluded its controversial Star Wars trilogy with "The Rise of Skywalker," and fans couldn’t be more divided. While some adamantly defend the direction Disney took, others may believe irreversible damage has been done to their beloved franchise. During the marketing for "The Rise of Skywalker," Disney seemed determined to grab as much attention from this picky fanbase as possible, boasting that the film would contain the first gay kiss in the franchise’s 40-year history.

"In the case of the LGBTQ community," director J.J. Abrams said in an interview with Variety, "it was important to me that people who go to see this movie feel that they’re being represented in the film." While this all seemed promising, people who went to go see "The Rise of Skywalker" were probably disappointed to find that this heavily advertised kiss was a two-second-long moment between extras that were hidden among a crowd of characters, as reported by Vanity Fair. Disney’s hypocrisy has been on full display when it comes to cinematic representation of same-sex couples. The company boasts representation in its films, yet relegates it to "blink and you’ll miss it" moments in order to appease their more conservative filmgoers, thereby making as much revenue as possible. As a result, Disney’s claims of being representative are rendered hollow and disingenuous when one looks at the context.

Disney has much to learn if representation is something the company actually cares about.
The biggest factor that seems to hold Disney back from following through on same-sex couples is the threat it poses to the company’s foreign revenue, especially in regard to China, a country where only a small portion of the population approves of homosexuality, according to Newsweek.

CNET.com claims modern Hollywood seems to prioritize the Chinese box office over the domestic box office due to how much China can make or break the amount of revenue a film pulls in. For example, Screenrant reports that 2013’s Chinese premiere of “Iron Man 3” had four minutes of extra footage constructed to appeal to the nation’s audiences. The film went on to gross an impressive $121 million from China alone.

Disney’s money-hungry approach to foreign audiences is what causes it to tread lightly when representing people of the LGBTQ community in their films, as same-sex couples aren’t viewed in a favorable light in many of the countries Disney acquires its foreign revenue from. As a result, Disney may slip in moments that can easily be edited out when shown on foreign soil. The BBC reports that the same-sex kiss in “The Rise of Skywalker” was edited out in Singapore, a country where same-sex marriages aren’t recognized and sexual relations among the LGBTQ community are illegal. Analogous to this was when “Avengers: Endgame” was released earlier in 2019, promising to have the first openly gay character in the Marvel universe, according to Buzzfeed. However, this character was nothing more than a brief cameo performed by the film’s director, Joe Russo. While there’s nothing wrong with the appearance of a gay character, Disney can’t point to something so small and pretend like it’s a game-changer for the LGBTQ community because the scene was changed in Russia’s dubbed version so as to bypass the country’s ban on what it believes is gay propaganda, according to Meduza. To save money, Marvel’s first gay character was only allotted seconds of screen time in order to collect a greater amount of foreign revenue by appealing to Russia’s anti-LGBTQ sentiments, completely undermining any point it was trying to make.

This problem isn’t just limited to Disney’s live-action outings, either. Pink News reported about a married gay couple in “Zootopia,” and while this sounds great on the surface, nearly everyone missed it, and Disney never confirmed whether it was true or not. According to Slashfilm, a similar occurrence happened when fans speculated about whether “Finding Dory” contained Disney’s first lesbian couple after its trailer was released back in 2016. Yet, Disney chose to play it safe and leave it up to interpretation.

Disney remains as ambiguous and non-committal as possible when it comes to LGBTQ representation in their films in order to appease both ends of the political spectrum. The media juggernaut has proven that it prioritizes revenue over representation throughout the years, yet that still doesn’t stop them from using same-sex representation as a marketing tactic in the United States. Same-sex representation is great, but Disney can’t pretend that it’s in favor of it until audience members no longer have to play a game of “Where’s Waldo?” with the company’s movies.

Ian Welfley is a junior communications/media arts and design double major. Contact Ian at welfleim@dukes.jmu.edu.
The Avril Lavigne conspiracy theory started as a joke, but it’s now taken seriously by many on the internet

DIANA WITT | couldn’t help but wonder

Through hits like “Complicated” and “Sk8er Boi,” Avril Lavigne rose to stardom at the ripe age of 18. She cultivated a fanbase with her pop style and punk fashion sense. When fans noticed that her style and brand began evolving, some attributed it to a wild theory that Lavigne died and was replaced by a lookalike named Melissa. The supporters of the theory offer photo evidence and an analysis of her music to claim the differences between the “new” and “old” Lavigne.

The articles on the theory are compelling, but the switch is likely too extreme to be true.

The theory allegedly originated from an online Brazilian blog in 2005. The blog post, which is entirely in Portugese, details the conspiracy and its evidence. It points to differences in Avril’s skin, nose and even videos of her music and lyrics to prove stylistic changes. When the conspiracy gained speed on Twitter and other web sites in America, supporters of the ideas laid out on the original post failed to notice an important disclaimer: “This blog was created to show how conspiracy theories can look true.”

In a 2015 article, Buzzfeed reporter Ryan Broderick attributes his tweet to causing the theory to garner attention in America. He claims that after he heard about the hoax when working in Brazil, he tweeted about it. He wrote that he thought the theory was humorous, positing that the blog was a kind of inside joke in Brazil. After his tweet, several articles were released about the theory. What started as a simple gag blew up into an internet phenomenon, proving that information can be taken out of context and blown out of proportion.

The story that some internet junkies have latched onto is that Lavigne committed suicide in 2003 and hired an actress named Melissa Vandella to take her place. It’s unclear how Vandella became tied to the theory, and after the alleged transition, some say Lavigne’s lyrics hint at her death. Lavigne also opened up about her struggle with Lyme disease in 2015. This could be a factor in her shift to darker, emotional song lyrics.

Lavigne has since responded to the rumor, calling it “dumb.” While it’s unlikely that she’d reveal her secret, it would be an extremely difficult stunt to pull off. People like doctors and lawyers would have to be let in on the scheme, and it could be challenging to keep all these people quiet.

Regarding the alleged changes to her appearance, aging, fame and money could likely be attributed to the change. While Lavigne has changed since 2002, most people change over time. Years can drastically alter one’s appearance. Hollywood also has a way of influencing celebrities’ styles, aesthetic and even facial structure. Celebrities can easily get caught up in the glitz and glamour of Hollywood. Some celebrities like Nicki Minaj and Katy Perry, look somewhat unrecognizable in pictures taken before their rise to major fame.

While it’s an interesting take on a singer’s evolving style, this theory proves how easily the internet can exaggerate the validity of an outrageous theory.

Diana Witt is a sophomore theatre and media arts and design double major. Contact Diana at wittdr@dukes.jmu.edu.
CONGRATULATIONS ON A GREAT SEASON!

THANK YOU FANS!

JMU ATHLETICS WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL DUKES FANS FOR THEIR SUPPORT THIS SEASON!

MEN’S TENNIS SATURDAY @ 10 AM EAST CAMPUS COURTS FREE ADMISSION!
Thanks for a Great Football Season!

Discover a better way to bank with CommonWealth One. Visit cofcu.org/jmu today!

Proudly Serving JMU for More Than 25 Years!

WE ♥ DUKES!
"New year, new me" is a common phrase used by many at the start of a new year. This saying implies that a person wants to better themselves, perhaps academically, for example. Included in this mindset of self-reflection should be a greater emphasis on self-care.

What many college students especially need is a moment to stop and tend to their personal needs. The practice of "putting yourself first" is something that should be practiced daily for mental health benefits, and no one should feel guilty for doing so.

Practicing putting yourself first is something that can easily be done daily in small ways. For example, if someone has a stressful day ahead of them, like one that involves studying for an exam, they may want to start their day with an hour-long walk through nature to help clear their headspace.

According to online therapy website Talk Space, nature is meditative and calming and is known to improve negative mental health. Putting oneself in this positive headspace may prove to be the cure-all for dealing with a day they’re not looking forward to.

Other practices like scheduling an hour out of a busy day to watch Netflix or just getting lunch with a friend are personal ways that can improve mental productivity for the rest of the day. Specifically, Harvard University cites the negative psychological effects of sleep deprivation, like anxiety. So, if a student feels tired during a busy day of studying, taking a nap could actually be beneficial in improving their headspace for the rest of the day and, therefore, the effectiveness of their studying.
Happiness shouldn’t have to take the backseat

Other ways of putting oneself first may not be as simple but could be effective in improving mental health in the long run. For instance, maybe there’s a person in someone’s life who’s a negative presence and creates a toxic environment whenever they’re around.

A study from 2017 showed that people in negative relationships were more likely to develop heart problems than those in positive relationships. It’s important to remember that personal well-being is important and that focusing on oneself will improve one’s well-being. According to psychology website PsychCentral, among the first steps in ending a toxic relationship are getting out of denial and identifying a pros and cons list of the relationship.

Although these small steps may seem simple for the most part, many people tend to feel guilty when putting themselves first. One website called The Practical Balance aims to help readers live a more balanced life and talks about the concept of “burnout” and the instant guilt that follows from taking a break to avoid it.

The article talks further about mental health improvements from taking a break and that feeling guilty for doing something for oneself is an unhealthy side-effect that people need to work to overcome. A quote at the end of the article says, “Work well, rest well and most of all, enjoy it,” which could prove to be an important motto for readers trying to beat their guilt.

In general, putting oneself first is practicing self-love, and reflecting daily on personal needs is a healthy habit that should be more normalized.

Josie Haneklau is a sophomore political science and psychology major. Contact Josie at hanekljr@dukes.jmu.edu.
Housing for Every Lifestyle!

matchbox
matchboxrealty.com
off-campus housing

Come Tour or Sign a Lease with us for a Chance to Win $1500 cash!

Thanks for a Great Season, Dukes!
By JAMES FARIS

The Breeze

“Stop right there.”

Guilty, Pierre Mbala obeyed and turned around slowly behind a Sheetz on the corner of East Market and Vine streets in Harrisonburg to face approaching police officers, who asked him to empty his pockets. His heart followed his hand. It sank into the pocket of his sweatpants and pulled out $6 worth of Airheads, Skittles and Starburst that he didn’t pay for.

He knew the store manager and had formed a bad habit of shoplifting in the past year or so, education and always pushed him to work hard at school. "The world won’t be patient," his father would tell him. When he was a young man, Mbala’s father sacrificed time at home with his family to earn a high school and college education in the DRC, which set a standard for his son’s success. Mbala looked at his friends in shock and disbelief, then listened carefully and respectfully to an officer.

"Stop right there. "

He knew he was wrong and accepted fault as he slowly came to terms with the fact that his scholarship opportunity had likely evaporated right before his eyes. Before he left the convenience store, he called his mother, who he later said was "heartbroken and devastated" by what happened.

When he got home, his parents sent him to his room, and he lay in his bed, crying and praying to God for another way out of the situation. "In my view, the way I had the Valley Scholarship was because of God," Mbala said. "He put that in my life, and I put that in danger with my actions at the store. So, I remember that night just really reflecting back on that, like how he has given me so many opportunities for success here in the United States and how I threw that all away."

His prayers were answered.

The officers and Sheetz store manager had compassion for Mbala, a friendly, warm and kind teenager with a wide smile. In 2015, the Harrisonburg Police Department implemented a Restorative Justice program, which allows those who have broken the law to reconcile with the person they’ve harmed outside of the traditional judicial system.

This program kept Mbala’s record — and his status as a Valley Scholar — clean. "It was a classic example of a young man making a bad decision in the moment and then recognizing and having an opportunity to not only learn from his mistakes but rebuild trust and the relationship with the person he harmed," Pollard said. "He was just a very genuine, intelligent young man ... It was a complete growth opportunity for him."

Though there were a few hiccups — including a period where Mbala was dishonest about the community service hours he was supposed to be logging — he eventually completed the process.

Now, he’s a freshman engineering major in the Honors College and Valley Scholars program at JMU. More importantly, he said he’s a changed man, but it’s not just because of restorative justice.

Mbala said that from the time he was a boy, the Chibana word "buendedi" has been at the forefront of his mind. It means, “Don’t forget where you come from; don’t forget your origin.”

Mbala said his worldview changed when his father, who visits the DRC regularly to see family, sent him a picture of a preteen girl who was dirty and worn down from carrying cobalt. The Central African country produces over half of the world’s cobalt, according to Forbes, which is used to make batteries, and children as young as 10 lug heavy bags of it around instead of going to school while breathing in toxic fumes.

Child exploitation and a lack of funding for schools keep Congolese students from receiving a quality education and reaching their potential, Mbala said.

"It just hit different ... I feel like that could have been me," Mbala said. "There are children in my country who are experiencing these situations, but I’m no different from them. I was just given another opportunity."

Amid a hectic college schedule, Mbala runs a business that he founded alongside his father in August 2018 called Buendedi Business Built on Love, and he’s seeking to make it a tax-exempt nonprofit by the end of January.

Valley Scholar freshman receives second chance and launches business for good cause
He makes jewelry with beads from Congolese artisans and uses the proceeds from sales to fund education for students in his home country. Most American children go to school without a second thought, but in the DRC, fees of around $40 per semester keep around 3.5 million students out of school — one of the highest marks in the world, according to the Global Press Journal.

“I didn’t take anything for granted at school any more after that picture,” Mbala said. “It was also a mix of action and really deciding, like, I’m not gonna wait until I’m done with college to just start acting on the situation. This is something I’ve had in my mind since I was a little kid… Why am I fortunate enough to not have to experience the situation that my parents always described to me that people in my country face? Why me?”

Now, Mbala wants to make the most of his opportunity to make a difference through his business. He makes some jewelry himself — nearly all of his beads and supplies are from the DRC — but he said most of his sales are from jewelry that he buys from Congolese artisans, which he repurposes. Mbala said it takes him about 16 minutes to make a bracelet, and he usually does so after midnight as a way to unwind.

Mbala said BBBL pulls in around $30 in a typical week, though he’s sold over $150 worth of jewelry in busier weeks. He’s found success selling at events like the Black Student Alliance’s Fall Fest and marketing through Snapchat and Instagram, where he says he hopes to grow BBBL’s platform by 50 followers per week going forward.

Precious Carper, a freshman business management major, said she knows Mbala from middle and high school and remembers the early beginnings of the business.

“ ’It started out really slow. I remember buying my first bracelet from him, actually,’ Carper said.

“He’s come a long way from where he started. He has a huge vision for it, and I can see that he’s very passionate about it. Other people can see that passion, and they get into it when they see how much he cares about reaching out.”

So far, Mbala said he’s generated around $3,404 in revenue. He said about half of that has gone to business costs, like buying products from Congolese merchants, and the other half has gone to travel expenses for his father, who’s seeking to establish a relationship with a school in the DRC to partner with and send money to.

Recently, Mbala received a Student Engagement grant from JMU’s Center of Student Engagement, which will help Congolese students reach their potential through education.

“It’s gonna be a long process, but it’s not something I want to abandon now,” Mbala said. “ ’It’s been a long-time vision of mine. I’m gonna see it through to where I can help those in my country and give other people a second chance.’

After the second chances Mbala’s received, to him, paying it forward isn’t just a duty — it’s destiny.

**CONTACT**

James Faris at breezecopy@gmail.com. For more on the culture, arts and lifestyle of the JMU and Harrisonburg communities, follow the culture desk on Twitter @Breeze_Culture.
JMU senior turns video game hobby into a side-hustle through competitive Fortnite streams

BY ALEXANDRA DAUCHESS
The Breeze

Many people enjoy hobbies such as reading, hiking or crafting in passing, using them as a way to relieve stress and decompress after a long day. But, there are others who take it to the next level.

Senior geology major Daniel Quan has managed to turn his hobby into a substantial side-hustle. His hobby of choice: gaming.

“The first real game that I ever got into was ‘Battlefield 3.’” Quan said. “The summer it came out, I spent 200 to 300 hours playing it. At one point, I was ranked 13th in the nation … I think that’s sort of where it started.”

After finding his competitive side in first-person shooter games, Quan developed a knack for battle royale-style games, particularly the popular Fortnite.

“Fortnite” world, began to play in gaming competitions in which he’d often win money and real street credit in the gaming community. He’s made upward of $4,000 streaming and playing Fortnite on his PC.

“I have never met someone who … found as much success playing video games,” Quan’s roommate, Jacob Carter, a sophomore media arts and design major, said. “It was kind of eye-opening to see how financially rewarding playing video games from your own home can be.”

Although gaming may seem like an easy activity to be good at, there’s a huge difference between recreational and professional gaming, Henry Monk, a junior computer science major and president of JMU’s gaming club, PlayMU, said.

“A lot of people overlook how skill-intensive [esports] games can be,” Monk, said. “A lot of games require people to be incredibly fast thinkers, able to analyze situations and react immediately … but across the board, the most important thing is dedication.”

According to PC Magazine, esports tournaments are held in stadiums for thousands of gaming fans. The Next College Student Athlete says scholarships are offered at top universities for esports teams, and Major League Gaming says professional gaming leagues draft everyday people to play on the national level. This indicates that there’s demanding competition in the gaming world.

Like Monk, Quan believes what really sets professional gamers aside from the casual “fun gamers” is commitment.

“To be a competitive gamer, you have to put in the extra hours,” Quan said. “It really becomes more like a job.”

Even though he appears to be at the top of his game, Quan admits he never stops practicing.

“It’s all about working to get better,” Quan said. “I’m always going over mechanics in creative mode or reviewing my recorded games to see what I could’ve done better. Going that extra mile is really what separates public gaming from professional gaming.”

The long hours required to perfect gaming moves and become the very best at a game can often deter people from going down the route of professional gaming.

“The biggest thing [about gaming] is the dedication. There’s the typical thought on gaming: that it’s a waste of time or that there are better things you can be doing with your life,” Quan said. “But for me and for other people too, I think, gaming is also a stress relief. It gives you a chance to relax a bit. I see it as something you can do that can add some excitement to your life.”

“Having a community of people that all share an interest [in gaming] can help create a sense of belonging.”

CONTACT Alexandra Dauchess at dauch2al@jmu.edu. For more on the culture, arts and lifestyle of the JMU and Harrisonburg communities, follow the culture desk on Twitter @Breeze_Culture.
Live Life at the Top!

Enjoy Life at the Top with our conveniently located premier student housing! 865 East offers tenants the means to escape the stress of student life through amenities such as our Rooftop Lounge, Game Room, Fitness Center, and much more!

865 East Port Republic Road  |  (540) 442-8885

Stop by today for a tour or give us a call for rates!

Thanks for a Great Season!
CONGRATULATIONS ON AN AMAZING FOOTBALL SEASON!

Sentara RMH Medical Center | Proud Team Madison Sponsor

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter, @SentaraRMH.
As Pedro Aponte, associate professor of musicology, enthusiastically lectures to his 8 a.m. music history class, he smiles and constantly moves his hands, pacing back and forth. Today, he’s teaching his class about famous American composers.

While trying to explain the different musical styles of two composers, he walks over to the large piano in the front of the room and plays the two different kinds of melodies for his students. He finishes and gets back up to continue his lecture, once again pacing across the large room in the music building.

He’s a long way from the slums he grew up in. Aponte was born in a rough neighborhood on the west side of Caracas, Venezuela. The oldest of three kids, he grew up in what he said was a poor family.

“I don’t come from a family of people with education,” Aponte said. “My dad dropped out of high school, and my mom didn’t even make it to high school.”

Aponte said his neighborhood was dangerous and full of crime, something he had to deal with every day growing up. In 2018, USA Today ranked Caracas as the second most dangerous city in the world with a homicide rate of 111.2 per 100,000 people.

“Going home, you have to grapple with safety and be home early, and you never know when you’re going to be robbed,” Aponte said. “My parents did have a vision. They knew that the key to moving up was education, and they were very strict about our education.”

He said his parents’ influence helped him stay focused on education while many of his peers didn’t, especially once he got to high school. Aponte said there was a high dropout rate. His graduating class consisted of only 40 or 50 people of the over 200 hundred that he entered high school with.

“That kind of qualifies me as an oddity, being able to make it through high school,” Aponte said. But his parents weren’t the only factor in his life that helped Aponte make it through school. At around 12 years old, he picked up a flute for the first time.

“I was involved in music, and this is something that largely contributed to me sticking on a path that was favorable to me in the end,” Aponte said.

He played the flute in the El Sistema Children’s Orchestra, a program created in 1973 to help keep poor children off the streets.

“Had I been born in a middle class family, I probably wouldn’t have gotten involved with music,” Aponte said.

The El Sistema program consists of different orchestras for a variety of skill levels, and as children in the program improve, they move up. While Aponte moved through the levels of El Sistema throughout high school, he had no intention of pursuing a career in music. Instead, he wanted to become an engineer.

Despite his family’s financial struggles, Aponte was able to study engineering, but he decided it wasn’t for him.

“It wasn’t rewarding enough,” Aponte said, which prompted him to drop out and move back home.

Back in Caracas, Aponte returned to El Sistema and pursued music, focusing on flute performance. In addition to returning to El Sistema, Aponte was accepted to the Instituto Universitario de Estudios Musicales, a music-only university in Caracas that was largely staffed with people from El Sistema.

By his second year at the music school, Aponte was hired to teach at one of the lower-level schools in El Sistema, which he said was a major turning point for his future. He also auditioned and made it to the second tier orchestra, where he received a salary. Aponte said it was at that point that his parents began to realize he could make a living in music. After he graduated from college in 1995, Aponte had the opportunity to join one of the city’s professional orchestras, but he had other plans.
MUSICIAN Venezuelan professor gives back to JMU and Harrisonburg community

from page 25

“Even though I had the option of staying and making a decent living, there was a part of me that wanted to get more education, so that’s when I came to the States,” Aponte said. While he wanted to go to graduate school in the U.S., he still didn’t have the money. This issue was resolved by the place Aponte would one day call home. That same year, Aponte enrolled at JMU on a full ride.

“I came to JMU and did a master’s in flute performance, but that wasn’t the end of it,” Aponte said. “So I left in ’97 to continue my education.”

In 1997, Aponte attended the University of Pittsburgh and, this time, he chose to pursue the research angle of music. He graduated with a doctorate in historical musicology.

“A student in Aponte’s 8 a.m. class raises her hand to answer a question about American composer Aaron Copland. When Aponte calls on her and she answers correctly, his face lights up with a big smile.”

At JMU, Aponte helps students in more ways than one. In addition to teaching, he’s also an adviser for the general music minor.

“Every day, I deal with students that remind me of myself in that they’re not music majors, but they’ve been taking music their whole lives,” Aponte said. “So they’re here, and they may be engineering majors as I was, and they still pursue musical studies.”

Eric Ruple is the interim director of the school of music at JMU. In his time as interim director, Ruple has made note of Aponte’s excellent reputation in the music department.

“He is extremely friendly, helpful, intelligent guy. He is very much a team player; he works well with everybody,” Ruple said. “I’ve never heard a bad word about him from colleagues. He is definitely a very popular person to work with and to be around.”

Aponte said he has a natural desire to help people — not just his students.

“My dad is always helping at the soup kitchen in our church,” Amanda Aponte, Pedro’s daughter, said. “He’s always putting others’ needs first.”

Today, Pedro, his wife and their four children live on their family farm outside of Harrisonburg, the place they’ve called home since 2002. Growing up, Pedro’s grandfather owned a small farm where he provided fresh food for his family, something Pedro decided he wanted to replicate for his own children.

“Sustainable agriculture is something I have always been fascinated by because it reminds me of my family,” Pedro said.

The farm is six acres, and the Aponte family uses every inch. The fields — where they grow broccoli, onions and lettuce among other produce — are carefully planned out, and many are home to plants covered by black plastic tarps for the winter.

“The first year we expanded, we grew more food than we had anticipated — so much so that we gave a lot of food away,” Pedro said.

“So, the second year, someone asked, ‘If you’re growing so much food, and I like what you’re doing, would you consider selling us some?’ So, we did that.”

All of a sudden, the Apontes had a new business on their hands and a way to help their community. The next year, the word spread, so the Apontes started a program called The Community Supported Agriculture Program, a sort of farmshare. Pedro said they grew food for 40 families in the past year.

Looking back, Pedro said he couldn’t have gotten this far without music, and he isn’t the only one with a passion for it — the Apontes are a musical family. Pedro’s wife, Maria Aponte, is a music professor at Eastern Mennonite University. Pedro met Maria in El Sistema when the two were children.

“We’ve known each other for as long as I have been involved with music,” Pedro said.

Over the years, the two became close friends and eventually wound up playing in the same orchestra. They later began dating and married before leaving Venezuela together to go to grad school in the U.S.

Pedro said that the Apontes created a musical environment for their children. Amanda is a freshman music major at JMU, and she’s following in her parents’ footsteps.

Pedro’s journey to JMU was an unconventional one, but thanks to his passion for music and the values he learned in El Sistema, his children are growing up in a much better place than he did. Pedro said he’s grateful to be where he is today.

“He has taken advantage of his opportunity in an incredible way, and he’s brought that sense of gratitude to everything he’s done here,” Ruple said. “He’s an incredible colleague and teacher.”

Pedro’s hard work and dedication paid off, and thanks to his passion for music and teaching, his children are growing up in a much safer place than he did.

“We don’t realize how privileged we are,” Pedro said. “You have no idea. You don’t have to worry about how you’re gonna get home at night because it’s safe, but that’s not how it was where I grew up.”

CONTACT Colby Johnson at johns6cj@dukes.jmu.edu. For more on the culture, arts and lifestyle of the JMU and Harrisonburg communities, follow the culture desk on Twitter @Breeze_Culture.

Pedro Aponte
Professor of musicology

“Had I been born in a middle class family, I probably wouldn’t have gotten involved with music.”

GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION BY KAILEY CHENG

PHOTOS COURTESY OF COLBY JOHNSON
Thanks for a Great Season, Dukes!

The Official Beverage of JMU Athletics
Remember the names

Seniors depart as winningest class in program history after three FCS National Championship appearances

By CATIE HARPER
The Breeze

Not long after losing the FCS National Championship game, redshirt seniors Ron’Dell Carter, Ben DiNucci and Riley Stapleton each walked off the stage following the postgame press conference. Before each left the platform, head coach Curt Cignetti stopped them, one by one, for a simple handshake. The exchanges were quick between the fifth-year seniors and the first-year head coach, but they signified the end of a run.

The trio of players sat to address the media only a few minutes prior. Their faces were blank — occasionally forming into flashes of disappointment and sadness — as they fielded questions on topics from the loss to their time with the program. “There’s got to be a winner every game, there’s got to be a loser every game, and we just happened to come up on the short end of the stick today,” DiNucci said as he looked toward the ground.

Coming into the national title game, the JMU senior class had already cemented itself as one of the best to wear the purple and gold. It’s the winningest class in program history with 51 victories and six players named to 2019 All-American lists, and some were FCS National Champions in 2016.

For Stapleton, his entire college career has been based in Harrisonburg. The Indiana, Pennsylvania, native redshirted his first season at JMU but later became a constant threat at the wide receiver position, finishing second in program history for receptions (169), fifth in receiving yards (2,113) and second in receiving touchdowns (22). “It’s tough to put in, like, one or two sentences,” Stapleton said with a slight shake of his head. “It’s been an amazing experience. I wouldn’t change it for the world. JMU holds a special place in my heart, and, uh, it’s tough to look back right now just because this hurts so much.”

Even though Carter and DiNucci started their careers elsewhere — both playing in the FBS first at Rutgers and Pitt, respectively — their importance to JMU football can’t be denied. DiNucci, a two-year starter at quarterback, climbed into the record books after only playing in 28 games. The Wexford, Pennsylvania, native finished his career as a Duke tied for third in program history for completions (479), fourth in passing touchdowns (45) and seventh for total offense (6,718). DiNucci also fought his way to a major comeback after a difficult end to last season.
"I haven’t been here for four years, but I’ve had the pleasure being here for the last two," DiNucci said. "It sure feels like I’ve been here for four or five years. These guys have been nothing but brothers to me."

Carter joined the JMU football program in 2017 fresh off its first FCS National Championship win since 2004. His brother, Robert, was on the team from 2015 to 2018, and sitting in Frisco, Texas, that Saturday, Carter told the media he wished he never went anywhere other than JMU.

The defensive lineman played one season at Rutgers before reuniting with his brother in Harrisonburg. During his time playing for the Dukes, Carter became one of the top defensive players in the country.

During the 2019 season alone, Carter epitomized a senior leader on and off the field. He recorded 66 tackles, 12 sacks and 27 tackles for loss. Carter’s disruption in the backfield this season earned him eight First Team All-American selections, and he was also selected as a STATS FCS Buck Buchanan Award Top-3 Finalist.

"I transferred in here three years ago, and it was for this reason — to compete for a national championship," Carter said. "Those guys in that locker room, I wouldn’t trade them for the world. Win, lose or draw, I want those guys to the end."

While the trio won’t take the field again for JMU, the players who wait behind them for their own chance have had at least a season to learn from teammates like Carter, DiNucci and Stapleton.

During Saturday’s contest, there were glimpses of the future when athletes like redshirt sophomore quarterback Gage Moloney and freshman running back Latrele Palmer took the field.

“Tackles,” Carter said. "I've been fortunate to see great leaders before I got here — the Bryan Schors, Andrew Ankrah, Simeyon Robinsons ... All of us were able to learn from them, and we were able to basically preach all that stuff to the young guys, and hopefully, they'll just carry on the legacy."

When the three Dukes walked out of the press conference, they headed down the hallway of Toyota Stadium and into the locker room. Carter took off the No. 5, DiNucci the No. 6 and Stapleton the No. 10 for the last time as JMU football players.

They won’t be back for spring camp in a few months, but that doesn’t mean football is over for the three or any of the other seniors. There’s always a chance to play on Sundays.

**CONTACT** Catie Harper at breezesports@gmail.com. For more football coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.
By NOAH ZIEGLER
The Breeze

JMU football is about to undergo a transitional period.

No, the Dukes won’t have a down year because of the number of seniors leaving following their 2019 FCS Championship loss. It’s clear JMU has enough talent returning to the fray next season.

In the 2020 season, there will be a complete change in the faces of the team.

Fifth-year players like wide receiver Riley Stapleton and cornerback Rashad Robinson became fan favorites with clutch plays in high-profile games, etching their names in the JMU history books. Quarterback Ben DiNucci and wide receiver Brandon Polk didn’t begin their collegiate careers in Harrisonburg, but they eventually found a home at Bridgeforth Stadium and took major strides in 2019.

Defensive ends Ron’Dell Carter and John Daka — leaving as true seniors — have terrorized opposing quarterbacks but now will move on and attempt to play professionally.

The late signing period is less than a month away, meaning more recruits will sign their letters of intent to play for the Dukes. The transfer portal will give more FBS players the opportunity at a fresh start, an important tool for FCS teams to use to bolster their squads.

JMU has proven it can take FBS players and develop them into the top players in the country. Carter and DiNucci, who came from Rutgers and Pitt, respectively, were named First Team All-CAA and found themselves on numerous award watchlists. Polk, the Dukes’ top receiver this season, came from Penn State for his final season of eligibility.

The entire running back group is returning, including junior Percy Agyei-Obese, who’s coming off a 1,216-yard season. Freshman Latrele Palmer got valuable minutes in the national championship against North Dakota State and carried the ball 60 times over the course of the 2019 campaign, averaging 4.7 yards per attempt.

The offense Cignetti and offensive coordinator Shane Montgomery brought to JMU is one that relies heavily on the run game to give it an opportunity to pass or utilize run-pass option plays. Returning every running back on the roster is good for a team searching for its next quarterback, but what plays a crucial role in the success of running backs is the offensive line.

The Dukes lose two key linemen — Mac Patrick and Jahee Jackson — but return three starting O-Linemen. Incoming freshman Tyler Stephens and Stanley Hubbard, a UConn transfer, will also provide reinforcements for Jackson and Patrick’s absence.

Other transfers like safety Joseph Norwood from UMass and defensive end Abi N-Okonji will also get the chance to establish a big presence in the team with the departures of Carter, Daka and senior safety Adam Smith.

The transfer portal is vital for competitive FCS teams, and Cignetti’s staff recognizes that. There’s talent on the Dukes’ roster ahead of the 2020 season, but additional players are expected to come. The next few months are important for the outlook of the team, but the coaching staff is already working to reload and get back to Frisco, Texas, in a year’s time.

CONTACT Noah Ziegler at breezesports@gmail.com. For more football coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.
CONGRATULATIONS
DUKES ON ANOTHER GREAT SEASON
JMU football’s players are still digesting what happened.

From a near upset of FBS power West Virginia in late August to rampaging through the regular season and playoffs, the Dukes’ season came to a close at the biggest stage of FCS football.

JMU had the chance to play spoiler in NDSU’s dynasty yet again and prove that the program belongs in the same echelon as the Bison. It was a chance for No. 2 to prove itself as the true No. 1 team, but its magic ran short.

The Dukes defeated five ranked teams in the regular season before adding two wins over seeded opponents in the playoffs. The team built a resume that few teams could match, even after falling short in the 2020 FCS National Championship.

“Right now, to be honest, it doesn’t even feel real,” redshirt senior cornerback Rashad Robinson said. “It’s still kind of a shock to think that’s my last game. For five years, for what I’ve been through and the other guys in the locker room have been through, it hasn’t really hit me yet.”

Robinson was a member of the 2016 JMU team that won the program’s second national championship, interrupting NDSU’s run of five straight FCS titles. A season later, he was named the 2018 CAA Preseason Defensive Player of the Year, but a season-ending injury before the campaign began allowed him to be back in 2019.

Back as the team’s top cornerback, Robinson’s ball-hawk ability helped shut down opposing wide receivers. Redshirt junior safety D’Angelo Amos and senior safety Adam Smith also played a significant role in the team’s secondary, but Robinson’s experience and leadership played a major role in the development of the younger defensive backs.

Robinson ended the title game with five total tackles. He said he plans to take a week off and recuperate before training for the team’s Pro Day.

“This isn’t the last time you’ll see the Dukes in Frisco.”

John Daka
Defensive end

“It doesn’t even feel real”

JMU football players react to the Dukes’ FCS National Championship loss to North Dakota State

By NOAH ZIEGLER
The Breeze

JMU football’s players are still digesting what happened.

From a near upset of FBS power West Virginia in late August to rampaging through the regular season and playoffs, the Dukes’ season came to a close at the biggest stage of FCS football.

JMU had the chance to play spoiler in NDSU’s dynasty yet again and prove that the program belongs in the same echelon as the Bison. It was a chance for No. 2 to prove itself as the true No. 1 team, but its magic ran short.

The Dukes defeated five ranked teams in the regular season before adding two wins over seeded opponents in the playoffs. The team built a resume that few teams could match, even after falling short in the 2020 FCS National Championship.

“Right now, to be honest, it doesn’t even feel real,” redshirt senior cornerback Rashad Robinson said. “It’s still kind of a shock to think that’s my last game. For five years, for what I’ve been through and the other guys in the locker room have been through, it hasn’t really hit me yet.”

Robinson was a member of the 2016 JMU team that won the program’s second national championship, interrupting NDSU’s run of five straight FCS titles. A season later, he was named the 2018 CAA Preseason Defensive Player of the Year, but a season-ending injury before the campaign began allowed him to be back in 2019.

Back as the team’s top cornerback, Robinson’s ball-hawk ability helped shut down opposing wide receivers. Redshirt junior safety D’Angelo Amos and senior safety Adam Smith also played a significant role in the team’s secondary, but Robinson’s experience and leadership played a major role in the development of the younger defensive backs.

Robinson ended the title game with five total tackles. He said he plans to take a week off and recuperate before training for the team’s Pro Day.

“Pretty rough start in the first half. [They] hit us on a couple of trick plays, and the fake field goal hurt,” Stapleton said. “I think our offense stalled a little bit in the first half, but I thought we played better in the second half. We got it down to the wire, just couldn’t finish.”

When the offense stalled, NDSU redshirt freshman quarterback Trey Lance thrived. He finished the game with 166 rushing yards — the first time any player has rushed for over 100 yards against JMU this season — and one touchdown. His 44-yard touchdown in the second quarter was a critical point in the contest and showcased how quickly he can turn the momentum around.

Redshirt senior linebacker Dimitri Holloway said Lance’s ability to run the ball gave the Bison a major advantage. On plays where the running back takes the ball, the quarterback is effectively nonexistent, meaning there’s one less blocker for the defense to worry about. But when the QB runs it, the running back can block for him, allowing more gaps to be busted open.

With the 2019-20 season now finished, the team will now undergo a transition period. The seniors who have either graduated or will graduate in May will say their goodbyes, and the next wave of recruits will arrive in Harrisonburg with the same goals as the veterans did years ago. To senior defensive end John Daka, the blueprint has been made, and the talent will continue to flourish.

“This isn’t the last time you’ll see the Dukes in Frisco,” Daka said.

CONTACT
Noah Ziegler at breezesports@gmail.com. For more football coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter at @TheBreezeSports.
CONGRATS DUKEs FOR MAKING IT ALL THE WAY TO
THE NCAA DIVISION I NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP!

You can’t live any CLOSER TO THE ACTION
than if you LIVE ON CAMPUS!!!

Space is still Available for the 2020-2021 academic year!

Visit www.jmu.edu/orl and click on the “Online Housing System”
link to sign an On Campus Housing Contract TODAY!
WHERE WILL YOUR JOURNEY LEAD?

STUDY ABROAD!

Programs are still accepting applications!
Apply today at www.jmu.edu/global/abroad.
Relive the FCS National Championship

The top photos from the Dukes’ and Bison’s showdown in Frisco, Texas
Alumni-led

Blue Ridge Beverage

Congratulations

JMU

Football on their National Championship Run

GO DUKES
EAT LIKE A DUKE.

8 PC. TAILGATE SPECIAL
$19.99

8 pc chicken, 4 biscuits, 2 picnic fixin’s, ½ gallon iced tea

THANKS, DUKES FOR A GREAT SEASON!

1880 Port Republic Rd.
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Offer good through 1/30/2020 at participating locations only.
Please present coupon before ordering. Not good with any other offer or coupon.
Extra charge for breast piece substitutions. Limit one coupon per customer.
ACROSS
1. Barbecue remnants
5. Personal identification?
10. Rolands rival
14. Iris layer
15. Part of a “Star Wars” name
16. “It first!”
17. Tower of London guards
19. Local bond, briefly
20. PC key
21. Classic car
22. Frozen floaters
23. Celebratory smokes
25. 2019 awards for Giannis Antetokounmpo
26. Elaborate style
29. Checks out
31. Artist Yoko
32. “Nashville” actress Judd
35. Currantly
39. Vases with feet
41. With 45-Across, meat cut that suggests six aphy placed puzzle answers
43. Understand, in slang
44. Kremlin refusal
45. See 41-Across
47. Original “Star Trek” studio
49. Princess from Alderaaan
51. Links standard
52. Manilow song site
54. Giants’ div.
55. Giant
56. Mopes
58. Like much diet
59. __ bag
61. Grammy winner
62. Sporty car
63. To’s partner
64. Fitting tool
65. Lower-APR deal
69. Restaurant list not for everyone
71. Shiraz’s land
72. Giants and Titans
73. Physics matter
74. Nectarine centers
75. Donkeys
76. Filing tool

DOWN
1. “Squarely unconventional” Nissan
2. Baker
3. Vegetable that may stain a cutting board
4. Seattle-based insurance giant
5. Mont. neighbor
6. Colorful fish
7. Range rover
8. Gloomy
9. Daybreak deity
10. Ones involved in multiple problems?
11. Take by force
12. Shabby
13. Chocolate
18. “The Art of Loving” author
19. Fromm
22. Honey bunch
24. Blunders
26. Tavern order
27. Deli specification
28. Traffic markers
29. Talking on and on
31. “Rock
33. Mark
34. Highlander
36. Overused theme
37. Bites
38. Lacks alternative
40. Map markers
42. Scottish rejection
43. Result of a poor investment
45. Creme de la creme
50. Commercial charges
53. German city where the Bauhaus movement began
56. Vegas
57. Where Embroyos grow
60. Black-and-white crème
61. Grammy winner
63. Letter that rhymes with three others
66. Nephew of Cain
67. Keister
69. Trans map abbr.
70. Snaky shape

SUDOKU

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, please visit sudoku.org.uk

BreezeVideo

BreezeJMU.org/classifieds

Drivers Wanted
Come join the team delivering the best pizza in town! Chanela’s Pizza has been serving JMU since 1998. Drivers should be 18yo with reliable car, insurance and clean driving record. You will take cash home every night plus receive a paycheck every two weeks. Earning at least $100 a night is common while averaging $14-$20/hr. MUST be available late nights (2 a.m. daily, 3:30 a.m. Fri/Sat) and required to work at least one weekend night per week. Apply to chanellospizzajmu@gmail.com.

Graphic Designer Wanted
The Breeze JMU’s award-winning student media organization seeks a student graphic designer for print and online advertising. Job requirements include creating ads for clients, collaboration with Advertising Coordinator, page layout and design. Must be deadline oriented. Knowledge of Adobe software and previous design experience. EOE.
Apply at JMU Job Link https://joblink.jmu.edu/postings/6587

Pilates, Barre & Fitness Instructors Wanted
A new Pilates & Barre Studio in downtown Harrisonburg is seeking part-time instructors with a dance and/or fitness background to teach Pilates, barre and fitness classes. Make up to $30/hr once certified. Call or text Jessica @ 843.324.6987 for details.

Yard Work Needed
CONGRATS ON A GREAT SEASON
FROM, THE JMU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION