‘Done being QUIET’

After going through Title IX case, SGA senator files Bill of Opinion to improve proceedings

Abby Church

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**Editorial Staff**

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**
Abby Church
breezeditor@gmail.com

**MANAGING EDITOR - PRINT**
Shanna Kelly
breezepress@gmail.com

**NEWS EDITORS**
Connor Murphy & Katelyn Wiltzmyer
breezenews@gmail.com

**CULTURE EDITORS**
Kailey Cheng & Traci Haggard
thebreezeculture@gmail.com

**VIDEO EDITORS**
Genevieve Edelson & Alexa Fitzpatrick
breezavideo@gmail.com

---

**Advertising Staff**

**CREATIVE DIRECTOR**
Olivia Marino

**AD DESIGNER**
Rita Vohra

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The Breeze, the student-run newspaper of James Madison University, serves student, faculty and staff readership by reporting news involving the campus and local community. The Breeze strives to be impartial and fair in its reporting and firmly believes in First Amendment rights.

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By ABBY CHURCH
The Breeze

A Student Government Association senator is pushing the JMU administration for greater transparency and resources in Title IX proceedings after going through what she calls a “disorganized,” “unethical” and “corrupt” Title IX case that involved a professor’s unwelcome sexual behavior.

Erin Coogan, a senior public policy major, filed a Bill of Opinion that SGA will consider on Tuesday, according to a Facebook post.

The big-picture items listed in the bill include an increase in the number of staffers in JMU’s Survivor Advocacy office and an increase in university programming to educate students and faculty on inappropriate relationships between faculty and students.

Historically, Coogan said, Bills of Opinion — which are meant to represent the opinion of the student body — are “pretty rare.”

In the same Facebook post from Feb. 15, Coogan wrote that the bill needed 200 signatures in order for it to be voted on by SGA. She said the bill received all 200 signatures it needed to move on to the next step in the process within five hours of it being made public.

Coogan’s Title IX case concerned her time as a lead grader for the professor’s 295-person general education class. The teaching style of the class included a team of student assistants and a group of paid graders.

Part of the case’s formal complaint concerned an off-campus meeting between Coogan and the professor in May 2018 to discuss her new position as lead grader.

In her statement to Title IX, Kaplan wrote that when she became a grader, older graders told her to make sure it was clear she wasn’t interested in the professor and that he was “very touchy” when they talked.

Rachel Swetnam, a 2018 alumna who was the lead grader before Coogan, submitted a statement for the appeal process that Coogan said wasn’t taken into consideration, because it didn’t pertain to her situation directly.

In her statement to Title IX and in an interview with The Breeze, Swetnam said the professor would put his hand on her back and make comments to her about what she was wearing. She stopped wearing certain outfits and lipstick to class because of the professor’s comments.

“Hed favorite dresses or makeup things of mine...”

Rachel Swetnam
JMU alumna (’18)

In October 2019, a Title IX hearing panel found the professor responsible for sexual harassment. Sanctions recommended by the panel included him being “prohibited from supervising undergraduate students in an employment capacity” and being “barred from mentoring student researchers for a period of three years” so the professor’s current students could graduate, which the professor’s dean agreed with in the final decision.

In statements submitted in the original case file and in his response to Coogan’s appeal, the professor denied the allegations. He said the numerous stories included in the case from Coogan’s colleagues were “unsubstantiated” and weren’t related to the formal charge, and he referred to the comments as “hearsay.” He said he didn’t remember the exact words in his conversation with Coogan at the off-campus meeting but said the conversation wasn’t “graphic, explicit, or focused on sex.”

In her interview with The Breeze, Swetnam said that when she inquired further about the professor’s decision and sanctions go on to be implemented through their supervisor, Vice Provost Marilou Johnson said.

Once the appeal process was over, Coogan said she spoke with Johnson and asked if the provost’s office or anyone in the provost’s office had any discretion over sanctions once they’re put in place. Coogan said that once the sanctions are handed down, the provost’s office has no further contact with the department.

“ And I said, ‘How do you know that they carried out the sanctions?’ And they were like, ‘Well, we trust our department heads,’” Coogan said.

When Coogan asked if the provost’s office was open to increasing transparency through annual meetings with the department to ensure the sanctions were followed, she was told that they would expect the department head to reach out if there were any issues.

Coogan said that when she inquired further about the possibility of creating a “standard of meetings,” she was told the current system was efficient and that her comments would be passed along.

“They said that they hadn’t seen anything that would make it necessary to change, but it’s also like, how do you know because you don’t ever check in with [the department],” Coogan said.

Johnson wouldn’t comment on her conversation with Coogan, but she said it’s the department head’s duty to implement sanctions and said the provost’s office trusts them to do so.
Coogan's case concerned her time as a lead grader for the professor.
Alumna proves her dedication toward environmental awareness by promoting sustainable energy education for K-12 students

By KAMRYN KOCH
The Breeze

Alumna Remy Pangle (‘99) focuses on advancing educational efforts for the K-12 community through her position as director of JMU’s Center for the Advancement of Sustainable Energy. CASE’s goal is to increase sustainable energy implementation through research, education and outreach.

Pangle said she’s had a passion for science since middle school, and she mainly focused on biology because of her dream to find a cure for her metabolic disorder while in middle and high school. She took part in an internship with a Massachusetts biology lab doing research on this disease, which she said furthered her interest in the field. However, she said that as a student at JMU majoring in integrated science and technology, her focus shifted toward environmental science.

“The ISAT program definitely drew me in,” Pangle said. “The way ISAT teaches environmental science, it’s very problem-based, and I think that the idea of saving the world and helping people becomes a reality when they teach it that way.”

After graduating from JMU, Pangle earned her master’s degree at the University of Maine and began working at the University of South Florida. There, she worked on a project related to climate change and carbon storage in ocean sediments, and she helped with teacher education on geographic information systems and remote sensing. She said she soon decided that she wanted to come back to Virginia, and having kept in touch with ISAT professor and executive director of CASE Jonathan Miles, she asked him if there were any jobs available.

At the time, Virginia was developing the Virginia Coastal Energy Research Consortium, which is an association comprised of several colleges in the state with a goal to research coastal energy issues. JMU was in need of someone with a marine science background, and Pangle leaped at the chance.

Pangle said that after working for about three years on this project, she wanted to be in a more education-based role. She was appointed as director of education and outreach for CASE around 2010, and once Virginia became a Wind for Schools state, she began to manage JMU’s Wind for Schools program. This program, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, aims to increase knowledge and awareness of wind energy for K-12 students, college students and the surrounding community. As director of this program, she conducts outreach to K-12 schools across the state to promote the building of wind turbines as an educational opportunity with environmental benefits.

“She’s very successful,” Miles said. “She has a lot of initiative and a lot of energy, and really, I give her the credit for building up our relationships and our projects that involve education at the K-12 level in particular.”

Pangle said she feels that the construction of these turbines at schools not only benefits students but their parents and the community as a whole. By spreading awareness about alternative energy sources, she said, she hopes that the community can develop more acceptance for these projects.
Pangle said she’d like to see more attention on marine energy in the future.

“I think it’s important that kids know about wind and solar and all these other energy sources because they’re going to be a solution for our future,” Pangle said. “Being a little bit more well-versed in the facts kind of combats some of that misinformation that’s out there and helps to grow acceptance of some of the projects.”

Pangle said she also focuses on supplying educational kits to teachers across the state to help make the learning experience more interactive. She has collected information on various curriculum materials on wind and solar energy with a goal to provide teachers with an array of options with little to no cost. The kits, which have six activities each and are customized according to grade level, were first placed at museums around Virginia.

After realizing the materials weren’t being utilized as much as she desired, Pangle said, she partnered with Virginia Cooperative Extension and began placing the kits at 4-H centers instead. She trains 4-H staff with workshops on how to use the materials correctly.

Another initiative that Pangle implements is the KidWind Challenge, which tests K-12 students’ abilities in either wind or solar competition where they must construct a wind turbine or power something creative using solar energy.

In 2020, JMU will host the KidWind state competitions. JMU competes in similar competitions at the collegiate level, and students who participate in this are encouraged to volunteer and act as mentors for younger competitors. Senior ISAT major Jamie Mease will compete for her third year in 2020 and is an intern for Pangle. She said she enjoys volunteering and being a role model for these students and that she admires Pangle as a mentor.

“Besides being every resource that I’ve ever needed, I think a big part of it is the passion,” Mease said. “Also, Remy knows everyone, so if we ever need anything, she’s great to have.”

In addition to the expansion of wind and solar energy emphasis, Pangle said she’d like to see more attention on marine energy in the future. As for CASE, Pangle wants to keep the topic of alternative energy “fresh” so that students and communities don’t quickly lose interest.

“It’s fun to go out and find fun, creative ways for kids to get excited about science,” Pangle said. “Energy just feels like such a timely and necessary topic for kids to be learning about.”

CONTACT Kamryn Koch at kochkr@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
By MATTHEW SASSER
The Breeze

Each weekend from Jan. 31 to Apr. 11, JMU students assist individuals with their taxes through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. Taxes are handled by graduate accounting students, and Spanish translation is offered by Spanish majors.

Students participate in eight weekend sessions, which take four hours each. Prior to interacting with a client, they must complete coursework that reviews very specific individual tax laws and must certify at a basic and advanced tax law level by passing a test.

“It’s a rewarding experience, being able to help them out, and it’s also great to get that real-world experience,” Thomas Cage, a graduate accounting student, said.

The VITA program in Harrisonburg was started by JMU professor Ron Cereola in the mid-2000s at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church. That program closed, but he approached the JMU accounting program three years ago to start a new one.

In its first year, the program helped 150 taxpayers, JMU tax professor and VITA site coordinator Nancy Nichols said. That number grew to 250 and 450 over the next two years, and Nichols said she hopes they serve around 600 clients this year.

“It’s a rewarding experience, being able to help them out, and it’s also great to get that real-world experience,” Thomas Cage, a graduate accounting student, said.

The VITA program is free for anyone to attend. The only material required is a copy of last year’s tax return if available, a photo ID for the taxpayer and their spouse and a Social Security card for all dependents.

Edgar Guzman is a graduate student in accounting, but he’s also fluent in Spanish. He said being bilingual is a valuable skill that allows him to work with clients without as much of a language barrier.

“Some of the vocabulary, I wasn’t aware of,” Guzman said. “It’s a nice learning opportunity and experience.”

Riley Stapleton, a graduate accounting student, works as a reviewer to double-check other students’ work. He said he believes this class is valuable because it provides the experience of working with a client.

So far, in the three weekends it’s been held this year, students have assisted 160 clients. Students assisting with the tax preparation said they know anytime they aren’t certain about something, they can always check with a professor.

“You feel more responsibility because you want to do it right and correctly,” Stapleton said. “It’s a really great program, and I’m thankful to be a part of it and give back to the community.”

CONTACT Matthew Sasser at sasserma@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
A ban on the use of handheld devices while driving may become a reality at JMU as Virginia lawmakers crack down on distracted driving.

In Virginia, there’s an existing ban on holding a cellphone while driving through highway work zones, but lawmakers said they’re determined to expand this ban to include holding a cellphone while driving anywhere in Virginia. The bill, HB 1439, still has to pass in the Senate.

According to the Governors Highway Safety Association, the ban is already in place in 21 states and Washington, D.C. All of the bans in place are primary enforcement laws, meaning an officer may cite a driver for using a handheld cell phone without any other traffic offense taking place.

According to the Senators Highway Safety Association, the ban is already in place in 21 states and Washington, D.C. All of the bans in place are primary enforcement laws, meaning an officer may cite a driver for using a handheld cell phone without any other traffic offense taking place.

Fairfax Senator Scott Surovell (D) is the lead sponsor of the Virginia Senate bill that had similar wording to HB 1439 that passed 33-to-7 on Jan. 29.

Gov. Ralph Northam (D) is expected to support the measure when the bill to ban handheld devices while driving through work zones was proposed last year, he added the amendment to ban it throughout all of Virginia.

The House has passed the bill 52-to-48, and the Senate is currently deliberating.

“Drivers distracted by mobile phones are hurting and killing more and more Virginians every year, along with causing millions in property damage that drives up insurance premiums,” Surovell said.

According to Drive Smart Virginia, 80% of all crashes and 65% of all near-crashes involve driver inattention within three seconds of the crash. Lawmakers said they aim to decrease these numbers through legislation.

In both 2018 and 2019, similar bans were proposed but failed to pass each year. In Richmond, a ban on handheld devices while driving, which is what lawmakers are hoping to accomplish statewide, has already been approved and will be implemented this coming June.

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“All anyone needs to do to know there is a problem is look to their left or right while driving in traffic,” Surovell said. “Finding a driver looking at their phone is not hard in this state.”

Students Abby Snodgrass and Corinne Landrum at JMU said they’re skeptical about whether this ban will make that much of a difference, as they said they both believe people won’t care about whether there’s a ban or not.

Snodgrass, a sophomore justice studies major who’s a member of Safe Rides, said she supports the ban but doesn’t see many students caring about the consequences of the ban.

Some criticism with the bill is that the enforcement of the bill will be difficult. Proving someone was on their phone could be challenging.

“I think it will be difficult to enforce the ban because it’s such a common occurrence that it will be hard for police to reach everyone,” Snodgrass said.

When contacted by The Breeze, Safe Rides declined to comment.

Sophomore English major Corinne Landrum is from Richmond, and she said she doesn’t believe the ban will matter there or anywhere else in Virginia.

“T don’t think it will be enforced because most drivers are probably not aware of it either and will continue to use their phones regardless of rules, and there will be too many using their phones for the ban to be enforced efficiently,” Landrum said. “The speed limit isn’t even enforced in many areas throughout Richmond.”

According to Drive Smart Virginia, 13 states saw an average 16% decrease in traffic fatalities within two years of passing a handheld device ban.

“Law enforcement officers have more important tasks than regulating cell phone usage,” Landrum said.

CONTACT Eda Tercan at tercanea@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
Polarization between parties is possibly the worst thing for the U.S.

ALLISON BAXTER | what now?

I hate talking about politics. There’s nothing worse to me than engaging in a conversation that turns uncomfortable halfway through once I realize the other person and I don’t see eye to eye. The most awkward moment of my semester was when my professor asked everyone in the class individually if he or she would impeach or acquit President Trump. Since the current event was a highly partisan issue, depending on how a student answered seemed to expose his or her party affiliation. With a high level of partisanship in politics today, I fear losing the respect of half my classmates and communication studies double major. Contact Allison at baxte2ae@dukes.jmu.edu.

Want to praise someone or get something off your chest? Darts & Pats is the place to do it. Submit your own at breezejmu.org.

A “safety-first” dart to students and parents who step off the sidewalk without looking both ways.

From a concerned member of the faculty who thinks the crosswalks are there for a reason and is just trying to get through campus without hitting anyone.

A “you-rock” pat to the always positive dining hall employee who works the True Balance station most days of the week.

From a student who appreciates you going the extra mile.

A “learn-self-control” dart to myself for already having run out of dining this semester.

From a girl who’s only going to punch these days, I guess.

An “I-appreciate-you” pat to my French professor for teaching me how to really enjoy learning the language.

De quelqu’un qui adore ta classe.

As college students, our solution should be to move away from political identity. It can be easy to disagree with someone else’s opinion over social media, but interacting and having a relationship with that person in real life allows for a better understanding of political views. As college students, our solution should be to move away from political identity. It can be easy to disagree with someone else’s opinion over social media, but interacting and having a relationship with that person in real life allows for a better understanding of political views.

Washington stated that “one of the expedients of Party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions & aims of other Districts.” This explains why there’s a polarization in the media right now. Each party wants to present its views to the public as the right or best ones, even if it means twisting the words of the other party.

One U.C. Berkley article believes that a solution to party polarization is intergroup contact. It’s easy to disagree with someone else’s opinion over social media, but interacting and having a relationship with that person in real life allows for a better understanding of political views. As college students, our solution should be to move away from political identity. It can be easy to disagree with someone else’s opinion over social media, but interacting and having a relationship with that person in real life allows for a better understanding of political views.

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No Bern

Democrats might not stand a chance if Bernie Sanders is the Democratic finalist

JOSIE HANEKLAU | open outlook

Bernie Sanders is a fan favorite for many Democrats, largely because he advocates against injustices that don’t always get much attention. Not only has he been a staunch advocate for taking action about climate change, but he’s also preached about greater equality in areas like the workplace and housing.

Over 50 years ago, Sanders even marched on Washington with thousands of other activists including MLK Jr., according to NPR. For many, Sanders rightly represents America by speaking up for those often overlooked.

It’s no secret that America is divided. Just after Trump’s election, a Gallup poll showed a “record-high” feeling of cleavage among Americans, with 77% of respondents saying the nation is divided. Today, many can agree that four years of Trump has unearthed suppressed hatreds, extremists on every side and a surging inability of people to cooperate with anyone across the aisle.

What America needs now more than ever is a healthy dose of moderation. A moment to recalibrate and cool tensions by meeting in the middle is necessary to rise up from the chaos. It’s not to say that Sanders’ ideas aren’t quality ones, but they might not be realistically achievable at this point in history simply because of how drastic they are. Sanders may be a decade or so ahead of his time.

No doubt, if Sanders were to be elected president, America would undergo remarkable changes in more than one area. Yet, it’s another question to ask if America is ready for them. Sanders has revolutionarily big ideas, like free college and universal healthcare. The root of these plans is to support the American people, and those in support see them as a needed change.

It might be more likely to have a Democratic president if Sanders isn’t the Democratic finalist.
Many people are too stubborn to consider the simple methods that could radically reduce homelessness.

**JILLIAN CAREY**

One out of three Americans are only one paycheck away from being unable to afford a place to live, according to CBS News. There’s something incredibly taboo about the topic of homelessness. It’s as if the second someone loses a house, they’re no longer human.

They’re the people you pass on the street, desperately avoiding eye contact with. They’re the people you spare a moment’s empathy for before forgetting about them entirely and continuing with your day. They’re the people on the edge of a highway that your dad might scoff at from the safety of your car, telling you never to give them money and that they just need to get a job.

According to nationalhomeless.org, 44% of homeless people have jobs, and even them, they can’t end their homelessness. Many people who are homeless and working hide the fact that they’re homeless in the first place, according to homelessadvice.com. In a situation like this, the first thing to buy wouldn’t be a place to live — it’d be things like food and maybe a phone plan. It’d be hard to answer emails or stay in touch with a boss without one.

Funnily enough, the cheapest way to eradicate homelessness is as simple as providing homes, according to Business Insider. The cost of homelessness quickly racks up for a city, including costs of healthcare, social welfare and the justice system. Providing homes for those that are homeless would end up saving cities the justice system. Providing homes for before forgetting about them entirely and continuing with your day. They’re the people on the edge of a highway that your dad might scoff at from the safety of your car, telling you never to give them money and that they just need to get a job.

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Additionally, the same source says that, should a parent kicks their child out of the house because of their identity, that child has few options other than being lucky enough to know someone who’s willing to take them in. In even then, “couch-surfing” is still considered a form of homelessness, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless.

This is most likely because of homophobia and transphobia within families. LGBTQ people face “social stigma, discrimination and often rejection by their families,” according to the National Coalition for the Homeless. If a parent kicks their child out of the house because of their identity, that child has few options other than being lucky enough to know someone who’s willing to take them in. In even then, “couch-surfing” is still considered a form of homelessness, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless.

Additionally, the same source says that, should they not be lucky enough to find someone to take them in, they’ll face greater difficulty finding homeless shelters that accept and respect them. Realistically, the same people who argue against simple methods to end homelessness are likely the same people who have never felt close to experiencing it themselves. At the very origin of it, a homeless person is no less a person because of their lack of housing. It’s rude to pass people on the street while avoiding eye contact. It’s demeaning to lie and say you forgot your wallet at home. It’s insulting to buy someone a meal instead of handing them that same money you bought it with.

There’s no way of knowing what someone’s dietary needs might be like without asking, and more importantly, someone who’s homeless could be spending that money on something more important to them, such as clothing, toiletries or any number of other necessities. It’s not up to some random person walking down the street to decide a person’s character and claim they would’ve spent that money on alcohol or drugs.

To quote Twitter user Alexis Isabel, “You are significantly closer to being homeless than you will ever be to being a billionaire.”

Jillian Carey is a sophomore media arts and design major. Contact Jillian at breezeopinion@gmail.com.
TOO MUCH, TOO SOON | A more moderate Democrat stands a better chance with the Republican party

That said, Obama was barely able to pass the Affordable Care Act, and the idea of health care for all is an even more intense plan. Free college sounds nice in theory, but critics challenge the issue of quality. According to Forbes, this is partly because countries that have free college are often forced to cap their enrollment and individual funding, causing the quality of the institution to decline. It seems unlikely that after the turmoil of Trump’s presidency, Americans would be willing to take such a sharp turn to the left with brand new policy ideas that have brand new pros and cons never seriously considered before.

This month, Sanders won the Democratic primary vote in New Hampshire — but narrowly. Once Americans start recognizing the painful truth that Trump could very likely see office again in 2020, they just might jump ship from their Sanders hopes, whose plans of action may prove extremely difficult to pass in America’s current divide.

If Democrats, or Americans in general, want to make an honest change after the destruction of Trump, they need to focus on someone whose ideas are moderate enough to both make a change and pass through the legal system. Sanders, as revolutionary as he may be, just might not be that person for 2020.

Josie Haneklau is a sophomore political science and psychology major. Contact Josie at hanekljr@dukes.jmu.edu.

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Colin Haywood

“So basically, I transferred here this year. I went to a school in Delaware called Wesley College. It had about 1,800 kids; it was very small. I was a business major, and I was also taking Spanish classes because they didn’t offer a Spanish major or anything. I got to play baseball there — that was basically the reason I went in the first place — but I realized that I needed something more. I needed a bigger school, more opportunities and I saw that they had an international business major here, along with obviously a Spanish one — along with a lot of great opportunities to get involved, and other things like the Spanish club, club baseball, club dodgeball — and I get to go study abroad next summer.”

Watch the video and submit a nomination on breezejmu.org

Welcome to the plant house

Local plant store owner grows business downtown in partnership with Sparrow’s Flowers

By MORGAN VUKNIC
The Breeze

In August, Kari Carpenter decided to leave her teaching career behind to start a new venture: a plant business. She said that she was starting to bring the stress of teaching home with her and that her physical health was declining as a result. During this stressful time, one thing that brought her peace and happiness was plants.

She said that once she realized she could create a new career out of this interest and help spread it to others, there was no looking back.

She quickly launched her website, The Plant House, which features all kinds of plants, pots, containers and decorations for sale and even offers tips on how to care for plants. Carpenter has set up delivery hours for orders and has a certain area of Harrisonburg that she only delivers to in order to keep the plants safe.

Recently, Carpenter has been expanding her business. She currently has a partnership with Sparrow’s Flowers in downtown Harrisonburg and participates in pop-up shops with other local businesses such as The Frame and Factory Gallery and Agora Downtown Market, and she’ll be bringing her plants to JMU’s Farmer’s Market on campus in the spring.

“My partnership with Sparrow’s Flowers is absolutely perfect right now,” Carpenter said. “It allows me to still run my website and fill orders from home while having plants downtown for a different shopping experience. I’m so lucky to be able to house some of my collection there.”

Carpenter said her husband, Michael, and daughter, Lindsey, have been helping her with her business since it first started. They assist with organizing plants, running events and unloading equipment. Both Michael and Lindsey said they enjoy helping Kari with her store and that they’ve become more passionate about the plant business themselves in the process.

“I love being outside, and as part of that, I love nature and all growing things,” Michael said. “I really enjoy having plants in the home and the soothing effect they have on people. I don’t have the passion for the hands-on care and attention [Kari] gives the plants, but I value the results her efforts provide on the quality of plants she sells and grows.”

Lindsey said that by helping her mom and seeing her do something she truly loves, she’s been inspired to start her own plant collection and enjoys spreading the joy of selling plants to customers.

The Plant House has grown exponentially since it first started. What started as a small online shop now has an active Instagram page and has ventured outside of the online world. Carpenter said her shop mainly attracts college students and other people who are passionate about plants. By being so close to the JMU campus, The Plant House is an easy way for students to get plants for their apartments or dorms.
“More people are supporting her in their houseplant ventures,” Lindsey said. “The pop-up events always bring a lot of people who follow the Instagram account or that have questions they want to ask or to see all the plants in person.”

Kari said that as her store has grown, she’s become more aware of the go-green movements that are happening. She said they’re crucial movements and that it’s a necessity that people start making decisions that’ll benefit the planet. In her business and lifestyle choices, she said, she tries to reflect these new movements. For example, Kari said she shops small and locally when possible, follows a vegan diet, limits plastic use and chooses products without harmful chemicals.

“I’m certainly not perfect, but when I know better, I try to do better,” Kari said. “I am currently being vocal about the use of plastics in greenhouses. I think there is change on the horizon, and until then, I will continue to ask questions and spread awareness and reuse or donate nursery pots.”

Through this new endeavor, Kari said she’s created a business that gives her an outlet to do something that she loves and to spread that love to other people.

“I love spending time caring for plants, learning about them and talking to others about them,” Kari said. “I created the perfect job for myself.”

CONTACT Morgan Vuknic at vuknicma@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.

Phi Beta Kappa has sent out Invites!

Be sure to check your emails as of February 20th

www.jmu.edu/pbk/
Soup for the soul

Three easy, warm and cozy recipes to make this winter

Dump-and-go minestrone soup

As Dukes recover from the recent "JMFlu," they’ll need hearty, hearty meals to get back up on their feet. Besides a trip to MedExpress and a good Netflix season to binge, a good remedy that might make recovery better is a comforting soup. Here are three cheap and easy options to nourish a weakened body through the cold days ahead.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 sweet onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1 can of diced tomatoes
- 2 cans of cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 3 cups low-sodium vegetable stock
- 3 cups water
- 8 ounces of uncooked ditalini pasta
- 12 thin asparagus spears, stems removed and cut into thirds
- 1 cup of frozen sweet peas
- 1 bag of fresh spinach
- 1/3 cup freshly grated romano cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Instructions:**

Add the diced onions, garlic, carrots, diced tomatoes, cannellini beans, stock and water to the crockpot. Cook on low for four to six hours. About 10 to 15 minutes before serving, add in the asparagus, spinach, peas and pasta. Cook on low for another 10 to 15 minutes, then stir in the grated cheese. Taste and season with salt and pepper as desired. Serve immediately with additional cheese on top.

Crockpot vegetable soup

This is another dump-and-go crockpot recipe because they’re just that easy. When sickness is going around, it’s known to knock people out for days. Being bed-ridden and miserable doesn’t make it any easier to cook a healthy, homemade meal — unless it’s this vegetable soup. Full of vitamins and fiber, this recipe will agree with any appetite and provide warm comfort on bone-chilling Harrisonburg days.

**Ingredients:**

- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 4 cups tomato juice
- 1 cup sliced carrots
- 1 cup sliced celery
- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 1 can of diced tomatoes
- 1 tbsp dried basil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 2 cups uncooked rotini pasta
- Shredded parmesan cheese

**Instructions:**

Add all the ingredients except the uncooked pasta and cheese to a crockpot. Cover and cook on low heat for eight hours. Add the pasta and stir. Turn the heat setting to high, and cook for 20 to 30 minutes or until the pasta is done. Serve topped with a sprinkling of cheese.

Easy, one-pot vegetarian chili

Broth-based soup isn’t for everyone, so if something warm and a little thicker sounds more appealing, this vegetarian chili is super easy, cooks all in one pot and is delicious in the winter months. This recipe uses six cans of vegetables, so there’s minimal preparation involved. Like any good chili, this recipe incorporates spices like chili powder and cayenne pepper to open up the sinuses.

**Ingredients:**

- 3 cans assorted beans
- 2 bell peppers, large
- 2 carrots, medium
- 2 stalks celery
- 1 can corn, whole kernel
- 4 cloves garlic
- 2 cans diced tomatoes with green chiles
- 2 tsp oregano, dried
- 1 yellow onion, large
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 1/2 tsp black pepper, freshly ground
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 2 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tsp Kosher salt

**Optional ingredients:**

- Shredded cheese
- Sour cream
- Avocado
- Lime

**Instructions:**

Heat the oil in a large pot over medium until shimmering. Add the onion, bell peppers, carrot, celery and garlic. Cook, stirring, until just tender, which takes about eight to 10 minutes. Add the chili powder, cumin, oregano, salt, black pepper and cayenne pepper, and stir to coat the vegetables. Add the tomatoes and their juices, beans and one cup of the broth. Stir to combine, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat as needed, and simmer uncovered for about 30 to 40 minutes until the chili thickens. Add up to one cup of broth for a looser chili, or just add the corn, and stir to combine. Ladle the chili into serving bowls, and serve with the optional toppings.
Crochet queen

By AMY NEEDHAM
The Breeze

As junior health sciences major Josie Buhrow settles into bed after a long day, she grabs her crocheting needle and yarn and gets to work.

Building off a basic loop stitch, Buhrow’s creation slowly begins to take shape as the stitches become more intricate. Thirty minutes later, she’s left with a coffee sleeve that’s ready to be sold to a loyal customer.

Buhrow sells the items she crochets — such as scarves, pom-pom hats and coffee sleeves — to raise money for St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. Her sorority, Tri Delta, regularly holds fundraisers for the organization, but Buhrow said she wanted to give back in her own way and first came up with the idea in April 2019.

“I thought that I would sell scarves because I’d given them to friends for Christmas gifts and birthday gifts, and they all really liked them,” Buhrow said. “I was like, ‘That would be so cool if I could actually do something good out of it.”

Buhrow said she first learned to crochet from a family friend a few years ago to find a more productive pastime. She said she now uses it as a way to unwind and alleviate recurring migraines.

“Instead of going through my phone and stuff, which can make my head hurt more and is a waste of time, I just crochet,” Buhrow said. “I also do it before bed to relax.”

Buhrow’s business is entirely nonprofit. She said she donates all of the proceeds directly to St. Jude after covering her supply cost. All of her products are sold for under $25, with prices ranging based on the amount of time each item takes to make.

“Sometimes the money going to help someone in need, they also get something out of it. ‘M’ Buhrow said. “It’s like, not only is I love buying from her because I know that she’s trustworthy and that all the money she’s already raised around $500 and doesn’t plan to stop donating any time soon. She said she’s grateful that she can give back to the children at St. Jude while also creating a product that her customers enjoy.

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Senior health sciences major Morgan Mauck said the fact that Buhrow’s products are tailored to her customers sets them above manufactured products. She said she appreciates how her friend makes each product from the heart.

“She’s just someone that is so happy helping other people,” Mauck said. “[And] you can’t really get crocheted, homemade things made with love at a store.”

Buhrow said she became a health sciences major because she wants to help those in need. She said she chose to donate to St. Jude because the organization’s priorities closely align with her own.

“I just love that St. Jude allows people to not have to worry about finances,” Buhrow said. “And when a kid has to stay there for months at a time, they don’t really feel like they’re at a hospital, which I think is really important.”

Buhrow’s friend, senior interdisciplinary liberal studies major Skyler Campbell, praised Buhrow for her selflessness and said her creations are special because Buhrow asks for nothing in return.

“‘M, ’ Buhrow said. “It’s like, not only is the money going to help someone in need, but they also get something out of it.”

CONTACT Amy Needham at needhaal@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.
Battle of the QBs

Opinion | Which championship winner had a better career leading the Dukes?

BY SAVANNAH REGER
The Breeze

It’s 2004 in Chattanooga, Tennessee. JMU football is in its first FCS National Championship game in program history against the Montana Grizzlies. With a transfer from Louisville, Justin Rascati, under center, the unseeded Dukes claimed their first crown, winning 31-21.

Flash forward to 2016. The Dukes are in Fargo, North Dakota, for the FCS Semifinals, with the chance to travel to Frisco, Texas. JMU headed into the Fargodome with first-year head coach Mike Houston and redshirt junior quarterback Brian Schor. Coming off the then-largest playoff victory against Sam Houston State, Schor led the Dukes to a 27-17 victory to put them back in the National Championship game for the first time since Rascati did it 12 years earlier.

Rascati brought the first national championship not only to JMU but to the CAA. Schor led the team to the championship in a year that started with uncertainty and beat a Bison team that had won the last five championships, leading up to 2016.

With both quarterbacks having championships under their belts, it might make people think about which quarterback is better and which one had a bigger impact on JMU.

There are numerous perspectives to look at, though, and both quarterbacks come from different backgrounds. Rascati was a Louisville transfer originally from Gainesville, Florida. He grew up in the South and went from the FBS to the FCS when he made the decision to come to Harrisonburg. Schor, though, was raised in Milford, Pennsylvania, and did a semester at Lackawanna College before transferring to JMU.

Rascati played three years at JMU with his most memorable being the 2004 championship season, but his stats were solid throughout his time as a Duke. In 2004, his completion percentage was 65.4%, the lowest out of all of his years, and he threw for 2,945 yards. In 2005, his completion percentage rose to 69.6%, completing just under 150 passes that year. Finally, in 2006, Rascati had 153 completions for 2,845 yards and a completion percentage of 66.2%.

For Schor, he didn’t play much his first season in Harrisonburg, unlike Rascati. In 2014, Schor only played in five games, and during those games, he only threw two passes for a 50% completion rate. He had one interception and no touchdowns that season. He improved in 2015 in part because of a season-ending injury to starting quarterback Vad Lee. Schor threw for 847 yards in eight games, which came with seven touchdowns and one interception.

Some argue that Schor’s peak year was in 2016, especially since it ended with the national championship. Schor had 29 touchdown passes in 14 games, six interceptions and a completion rate of 73.1%. Also that season, Schor threw for just over 3,000 yards, almost 1,000 yards higher than Rascati’s best year.

In comparison, both former JMU quarterbacks had similar rushing numbers. Rascati had 375 yards rushing in 2004, 306 in 2005 and a career-high 518 in 2006. In 2004, Rascati had 10 rushing touchdowns, and in 2006, he averaged 4.5 yards per carry.

In the four years that Schor was at JMU, his best rushing season was in 2016. That year, he had 569 yards and 10 rushing touchdowns. In 2015, Schor had 276 yards, and in his senior season in 2017, he put up 322 yards on the ground. All of these numbers are very similar to Rascati’s.

However, when thinking of an impactful quarterback, it isn’t just all about the statistics. They have to be able to play in big games, both at home and on the road. They have to deal with being down and then coming back while looking at every game like it’s their last.

After the injury to Lee in Schor’s second season, the Pennsylvania native had to come in and play under head coach Everett Withers. That year, the offensive numbers were there, but the defense wasn’t. When Withers left that offseason, there was uncertainty in JMU football, especially when Houston eventually came in. Starting the 2016 season, not many predicted that the Dukes would get to their second national championship appearance, but they did, with Schor having the best season of his career.

Schor had to go into Fargo, North Dakota, to play the unbeaten Bison and quarterback Easton Stick. Stick, now in the NFL, was in his first year after current Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Carson Wentz had graduated, and he was dominating offensively, giving the Bison the No. 1 seed, whereas JMU was No. 4 in that year’s postseason.

However, Schor did something that nobody had done in five years: He beat the Bison.

Schor also led the Dukes to a quarterfinal win the next season over Weber State. Weber State was the No. 8 seed that season and forced JMU to kick a game-winning field goal as time expired, but JMU wouldn’t have even been able to kick if Schor wasn’t there. Schor knew he had little time on the clock and knew he had to get kicker Ethan Ratke into field goal position.

Rascati, however, was just as productive and impactful. In 2004, JMU was unranked for the playoff run. It started at Lehigh, in which Rascati and head coach Mickey Matthews won, 14-13. Rascati then repeated the same appearance in the quarterfinals, with the same score of 14-13 against Furman, and JMU was once again on the road.

In the semifinals, the Dukes took on CAA rival William & Mary, the No. 6 seed. This game saw higher scoring, but it was nothing Rascati couldn’t handle. He had to step his game up for a CAA rival, and this game was different; the two teams knew each other. JMU took that knowledge to heart and won, 48-34. Finally, the last road game the Dukes played that year was the national championship against the Montana Grizzlies. In a game dominated by JMU’s offense, the Dukes and Rascati took the crown, 31-21. Rascati and the Dukes are still the only team to win the FCS National Championship going on the road each week.

Both Schor and Rascati have the statistics to make them incredible quarterbacks for the program. They both come from different backgrounds, and their paths to quarterback were very different. However, they both have experience in big games, and both of their games have impacted JMU football in more ways than one.

Looking at both sides, Schor looks to be the more impactful quarterback. His stats are equal if not better than Rascati’s, and he has bigger games that come with it. Yes, Rascati was the “road warrior” during his run, but Schor took the game in Fargo.

Schor also got the Dukes back to the FCS National Championship game in 2017, becoming the only JMU quarterback to start in two national championship games. Schor and Rascati are both legendary quarterbacks at JMU; Schor just comes out on top with both his statistics and his impact.

CONTACT Savannah Reger at regersj@dukes.jmu.edu. For more football coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.
Path to success

Devon Merritt’s dedication to the game helped lead the senior to leadership role after injuries as a freshman

By ANDREW OLIVEROS
The Breeze

JMU women’s basketball senior forward Devon Merritt has had a long journey to becoming an impactful player for the Dukes.

“I don’t believe success is a straight line,” Merritt said.

The forward from Reading, Pennsylvania, has been a threat on the court for the past four years, making sure her name makes JMU history.

During her freshman year, Merritt was out all season with injuries, coming back sophomore year to see her first full season of college basketball.

She said she felt like a freshman since she was out the year before. Junior year is the time she said she felt she had the most impact on the team, replacing five-star recruit and former JMU forward Kelly Koshuta.

“[I’m] trying to find a way to leave the team better than I came,” Merritt said, “to make sure the group of girls that’ll be here when I’m not here will be better than we’ve ever been.”

Off the court, her teammates said Merritt is someone they can talk to and come to for advice.

Over the past few years, Merritt said she’s helped JMU sophomore forward Casey Irvine. She said they’ve grown close, having gone through similar struggles in life and basketball. Both girls said they had a hard time transitioning from high school to college both physically and mentally.

“You don’t see crowds at women’s games and support like you do here,” Merritt said.

JMU senior guard Kamiah Smalls has been a teammate of Merritt’s for the past four years and her roommate for over two years. She said Merritt is the most positive person and always gives 110% to their team and dynamic.

“Devon is like a sister,” Smalls said.

Smalls said one of her most memorable moments with Merritt came during their sophomore year against Rutgers at home. A teammate passed the ball to Merritt in the middle of the court, and she crossed two of her opponents.

“I was like ‘OK, point god,’” Smalls said. “It was pretty cool!”

Redshirt senior center Kayla Cooper Williams said Merritt brings both energy and experience to the court each game. She also said Merritt has seen as much as any of the Dukes and that she uses that experience to help the rest of the team.

Not only are Cooper Williams and Merritt workout buddies, but Cooper Williams said that Merritt is someone to talk to. Cooper Williams mentioned Merritt sings, but that one can’t be sure what song she’s singing until she’s finished.

“[Merritt is] really goofy [and] always singing,” Cooper Williams said. “She’s energy; she keeps people laughing and brings that positive energy to the team.”

Head Coach Sean O’Regan said Merritt is always positive, vocal and fun-loving. He said she helps off the court, too, when seasons are getting long, bringing a positive attitude when there’s negativity either on the bus, at the hotel or at a restaurant for dinner “for like the 27th time.”

“I think Devon [has had] as unique of a kind of a path as, like, anybody I’ve seen,” O’Regan said. “As soon as she gets to practice, you can feel the energy lift up.”

O’Regan said he still thinks about Merritt’s time as a freshman. Merritt was out with injuries her freshman season — one of the injuries being shin splints — and O’Regan said it wasn’t certain she’d be back for her sophomore year.

The pair sat in his office for two hours, he said. They talked. They cried. He told her to trust him, that it was going to be a fun career for her; she just needed to stick it out. She did, and now she’s only a month or so away from closing out her career as a senior for the Dukes.

“It’s a cool story to me because she experienced the whole kind of a college experience,” O’Regan said. “You’ve experienced sitting on the bench, you’ve experienced starting, making basically a game-winning play against Virginia Tech last year.”

Merritt has gone through many things during her time at JMU, but that hasn’t held her down. She said she’s no longer worried about a certain task as she used to, O’Regan said. “Not really the physical side ... I really want to do news or sports broadcasting.”

CONTACT Andrew Oliveros at oliverab@dukes.jmu.edu. For more basketball coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.
Find the balance

JMU track and field and cross country runners manage a rigorous year-round schedule

By MADISON DEPALMA
contributing writer

Being a student-athlete for one of JMU’s varsity-level sports teams isn’t easy between balancing athletics and school, but being on two brings challenges other athletes don’t face.

There are 28 strong student-athletes who compete not only for the cross country team in the fall but also participate in track and field in the winter and spring, all while being a student. With the time and dedication required, these athletes work hard to balance it all.

What some may not realize is that these athletes take part in both cross country and track and field with no break in between seasons. They go from summer conditioning for cross country, to being in season for the sport during the fall. Next, they move onto track and field conditioning in the winter, followed by their indoor and outdoor seasons for the sport to finish out the school year.

“[Head cross country coach Dave Rinker] is really good about giving us a week or two to ease back on training in between seasons, and he is really good about communicating with us when we’re not feeling great. He really individualizes our training when we go to his office and say, ‘Oh, I feel really beat up,’ because it can be a lot, training three seasons in a row,” senior runner Caitlin Swanson said.

Swanson said that it can be difficult competing every season, but she said she loves it. Although training hard and competing all the time is a challenge, she said she couldn’t picture her JMU experience any differently.

Freshman runner Laura Webb explained that she loves being on both teams because she gets to compete all year long. She said it gives her a rush of adrenaline to keep moving forward and enjoys getting to go to practice and to workouts with her teammates.

“It’s what I did in high school. I did three seasons then, so it’s like a continuation of what I’m used to,” Webb said.

As for the student’s academic life, Swanson explained how her time on both teams has positively and negatively affected her school work. With scheduled practices and meets, she’s created routines for study habits to prevent coming up short on time and falling behind.

Athletes are forced to miss a day or two during the school week because of meets. There are also times when the Dukes miss classes on exam days, and those can be difficult to schedule because the athletes must coordinate their schedule with the professor’s schedule and find a time that works for both.

“I do better when I’m under pressure, so when I feel stressed out, that’s when I get most of my work done,” Swanson said. “Running track and cross country has taught us to have a really good work ethic, and it’s been neat to be able to see how running has helped me through my academic career these four years, so it definitely had a positive impact.”

While for both track and cross country athletes run as individuals, everyone’s placement in the races count toward a team total. Teamwork is a huge component of JMU’s cross country and track and field teams, Webb said. The Dukes’ biggest motivation to keep going is each other.

“During workouts, if I’m struggling, seeing someone right there next to me who’s also putting in the work inspires me to work harder,” Webb said. “Having someone with you in your low moments but also your high moments is really encouraging.”

CONTACT Madison DePalma at depalmae@dukes.jmu.edu. For more football coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.

Laura Webb (right) was All-ECAC in cross country in 2019.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF JMU ATHLETICS PHOTOGRAPHY

Thursday, February 20, 2020

By MADISON DEPALMA
contributing writer

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**Line Dance Lessons**
Dance Club is holding 8 weekly country line dance lessons at Blue Ridge Christian School, 290 Mill St., Dayton VA. Lessons start 1/24/2020 7:30-9:30 p.m. and run every Friday for 8 weeks. Cost $5 per person per evening. Attend all get the 8th lesson FREE. Questions email trascotti@gmail.com

**Community Event**
Free coffee and snacks, February 22, 9:00-12:00 am at Mabel Memorial Chapel, 2025 Reservoir Street. Parking available. All JMU students and staff welcome! Pastor John Swartz Phone: 540-282-1130

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Home Appliance Repair services anywhere near Harrisonburg and JMU. 540 208 5476 or visit [www.appliancerepairharrisonburg.com](http://www.appliancerepairharrisonburg.com) for more info.

**Launch Your Nonprofit: Steps You Need to Know**
Not all New Year’s Resolutions start in the gym - maybe yours is different! Are you thinking about starting a nonprofit organization? In this workshop, you will learn: how to prepare the process, the steps to incorporate in Virginia, tools and resources for startup nonprofits, and alternatives to launching. [https://launch-your-nonprofit.eventbrite.com](https://launch-your-nonprofit.eventbrite.com)

**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.

**Internet Sales Associate**

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**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](https://joblink.jmu.edu/postings/6587)

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