Harrisonburg schools implement further security measures after Florida school shooting and local threat

Jessica Kronzer

Columnist discusses how to successfully get through the worst of your 20s

Kathleen Smith

A look into what it takes to set up the Duke Hall gallery

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‘Strong drive for service’

Alumni’s friendship extends beyond JMU with Teach for America

By THOMAS ROBERTSON
The Breeze

Teach for America has established partnerships with 53 communities across the country. From Massachusetts to the islands of Hawaii, TFA has made its presence felt wherever it sees an opportunity to have an impact.

In America, 9 percent of kids growing up in low-income communities will graduate from college by the time they’re 25, according to TFA’s website. To combat this issue, TFA confronts educational inequity and looks to expand educational opportunities by recruiting teachers and placing them in an area that has a high need for educators.

Cassie Thompson, JMU’s TFA recruiting manager, started out as a teacher with the program. She’s a first-generation college student, and when she graduated from the University of New Mexico, she decided she wanted to help other kids who may think a college education is unattainable.

“I really wanted to do something that had great impact,” Thompson said. “I wanted to really ensure that students like me, who come from low-income backgrounds, who don’t have a ton of resources, have opportunities to achieve everything that they possibly could.”

JMU has produced teachers who are currently working with TFA to combat problems in the education system. Thompson works with JMU students who are looking for more information on TFA and helps them figure out if it’s the right program for them.

“I’m really inspired by a lot of the students I meet,” Thompson said. “They have a really strong drive for service. They have a really strong understanding of what it means to be a Duke and what that will bring to them, and they want that for other kids.”

Jenna Stone, a special education resource teacher at Wendell Phillips School 63 in Indianapolis, is a JMU alumna (’16) who began working for TFA in 2017. She didn’t even know she wanted to teach until right after she graduated from JMU.

When Stone found out that a class she had taken, which travels to JMU once a week to work with students, needed someone to teach the class for a year, she decided to get a Transition to Teaching License and take the job. She enjoyed the experience so much that she decided to continue teaching. Stone said a lot of the issues she sees in today’s political and social climate could be improved upon by tackling educational inequity.

“Right now, all of the people that are probably the most passionate to make the changes that I want to see in the world aren’t being given those resources,” Stone said. “The people that these problems are directly impacting are being silenced because of their circumstances.”

Economic and social inequity aren’t the only things that Stone and TFA are trying to tackle through education. Much of the work TFA does involves the needs of children with learning disabilities.

One of Stone’s students has non-verbal autism spectrum disorder. At the start of this school year, Stone asked him to say his name. His gaze would wander around, with attempts at saying his name coming out as mumbles of confusion. Just a few days ago, Stone witnessed her student say it for the first time.

“I almost cried,” Stone said.

JMU alumus (’16) Tommy Turpin was close friends with Stone while at JMU. Turpin now works as a special education teacher at Olney Charter High School in Philadelphia through TFA. Turpin’s sister has multiple learning disabilities, which led to large shifts in behavior when she couldn’t understand her coursework. When she’d become overwhelmed or start to cry, teachers would sit her in the hallway for the remainder of class.

“I’ve seen ... students really struggling in school and the implications it has on them when they have a teacher who doesn’t really understand what the disability is or how to teach or how to help,” Turpin said. “Because of that, I was really interested in advocacy in the school systems and seeing how we can include more of a well-rounded special education program.”

Making that change has been more difficult than Turpin expected. As a student looking from the outside in, he said it’s easy to underestimate all of the responsibilities of a teacher.

“The idea of a teacher that you see on TV and in movies and when you’re not a teacher looking at the career in education, is wildly different than actually doing it,” Turpin said.

Turpin and Stone were close friends in college. Turpin was accepted to TFA long before Stone had considered applying. Stone said that Turpin hasn’t only taught kids in the classroom, but others around him as well.

“I always knew Tommy as somebody that was going to do Teach For America and it just was really fitting for him,” Stone said. “In a lot of ways, I’m just following in Tommy Turpin’s footsteps.”

CONTACT Thomas Robertson at rober3tl@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
**IN BRIEF:**

**WORLD:**
**SYRIAN GOVERNMENT CONTINUES ASSAULT ON EASTERN GHOUTA**

Wednesday, Syrian government forces launched another assault on eastern Ghouta, the last rebel-held enclave near Damascus. Hundreds have died in the 11 days of bombings, despite a Russian plan for five-hour daily ceasefires. The Russian ceasefire plan intends to establish a corridor for humanitarian aid to reach trapped civilians and wounded individuals. The U.N. Security Council, including Syrian ally Russia, passed a resolution on Saturday for a 30-day ceasefire throughout the entire country. The measure has yet to take effect. Russian and Syrian government officials stated that recent military actions are against terrorist groups excluded from the ceasefire.

**NATIONAL:**
**RETAILER PULLS ASSAULT-STYLE WEAPONS FROM STORES**

Yesterday, Dick's Sporting Goods announced it would no longer be selling firearms such as the AR-15 in its stores. While such weapons haven't been sold in its main shops since 2012, a subsidiary known as Field & Stream still continued this practice. Additionally, Dick's will no longer sell high-capacity magazines and any customers must be at least 21 years old to purchase a firearm. The decision came as students and teachers resumed classes at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School after the Feb. 14 shooting. In the aftermath of the shooting, other companies such as The Hertz Corporation, United Airlines and Delta Airlines have ended discounts for National Rifle Association members.

**LOCAL:**
**AUGUSTA COUNTY PREPARES FOR PROTEST AGAINST LOCAL BUSINESS**

According to the Augusta County Sheriff’s Office, a local resident approached police requesting a permit to protest on Saturday against Nexus Services, a company that assists immigrants in legal trouble. Nexus stated that the group planning to protest is called the Three Percenters, a militia that was present at the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, last year. According to WHSV, the alleged protest group is actually the Ghost Squad, another militia group. In 2016, Nexus brought a $1 million lawsuit against the Augusta County Sheriff’s Office in which the latter was accused of conspiracy to ruin the reputation of Nexus.

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**ARREST REPORTS:**

**news desk**

From Feb. 5-25, the Harrisonburg Police Department made 168 arrests. When compared to the month of January, assault and battery charges have remained relatively constant.

According to HPD, the charges include:

- **24** assault and battery
- **9** contempt of court
- **2** grand larceny
- **8** driving while intoxicated
- **4** noise violations

This is the first time that an individual has been arrested on noise violation charges in 2018.

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Local schools increase security

By JESSICA KRONZER
The Breeze

After the school shooting in Parkland, Florida, and threats made to Skyline Middle School and Thomas Harrison Middle School, Harrisonburg City Public Schools are increasing security. Some of these measures include installing buzz-in systems outside schools and an increased police presence.

According to Scott Kizner, superintendent of Harrisonburg City Public Schools, the threat made last Monday was addressed quickly. A student sent a text message to Kizner regarding a threat posted on Instagram. The superintendent then created a response team and police were notified of the threat.

Kizner was informed of the threat less than five minutes after it was posted. He felt this report helped identify the student and arrest them only four hours after the post was reported.

Kizner also explained that the 13-year-old who allegedly made the threat created an account solely to post the threat. He didn’t have many followers who saw the post firsthand before the account was deleted.

These concerns prompted schools to move forward with increasing security measures. Skyline Middle School had a buzz-in system installed on Tuesday and other schools in Harrisonburg will receive these systems in the coming weeks. This system would prevent intruders from entering the office before being buzzed in by a staff member.

Officer Scott Drugo, the supervisor of school resource officers, verified the Harrisonburg Police Department has increased its presence since the shooting in Florida. Drugo explained that all HCPS have assigned resource officers — also members of the HPD. The schools will now have additional officers on patrol several times a day.

“We like to get there when most of the students are gathered in one location,” Drugo said. “Whether it be getting off of the buses in the morning, getting on the buses in the evening or swinging by at lunchtime.”

The police department was made aware of the threat to the middle schools following several parents reporting it. Drugo feels that these parents were helpful in effectively addressing the threat.

“It’s always good to have those extra eyes and ears watching social media, being cognizant of what their students, or their sons and daughters, are seeing on social media, so that’s a big help for us,” Drugo said.

Drugo also said that in an emergency, they don’t expect one single school resource officer to handle the situation. Instead, this officer acts as a way to alert other officers.

“Typically there’s probably a dozen officers available to respond to anything that could happen, so we’re literally only minutes away of getting a dozen police officers at any school if something bad should break loose,” Drugo said.

HPD’s ultimate goal is to keep children safe at school. The measures they’re taking are meant to address student and parental concerns.

“A lot of this is just copycat stuff and hopefully we can take this and learn from it and then have a nice, calm, safe and secure environment for all the students in the city,” Drugo said.

Deanna Reed, mayor of Harrisonburg, supports the efforts of the HPD and of the school system in trying to make Harrisonburg schools safer. According to Reed, future changes in security could include additional resource officers.

“(Superintendent Kizner) needs an extra one at Harrisonburg High School because he only has one,” Reed said. “In a couple of months when he presents his budget, he’s going to have additional positions in there that we would have to approve.”

Reed emphasized that despite recent events, HCPS are extremely safe. She feels they have community support in how Harrisonburg addressed the threats.

“I feel confident that we are protected, our kids feel safe, nobody feels uncomfortable,” Reed said. “I believe our parents feel like we’re taking the necessary steps for their children to be safe and continue to do drills and lockdown procedures in schools to make sure that kids know exactly what to do in case there’s a type of intruder.”

Kizner reaffirmed that schools are the safest place for children because of their security. Through being a member of Virginia’s Board of Juvenile Justice, Kizner has visited multiple prisons and doesn’t want schools to reach that level of security.

“We’re a school that promotes, hopefully, the best of teaching and learning and part of that is people need to go to school feeling that it’s a safe place, but also it’s a place that’s not overly controlled,” Kizner said.

Kizner explained that parents at the Feb. 20 school board meeting were able to ask questions about schools’ security. He feels dialogue is important moving forward.

“The school system has a very important obligation to make sure when children and adults come to the building that they feel safe and we’re taking those measures,” Kizner said. “A broader community conversation has to happen about how safe is our community … What are the solutions that have been shown to be successful and not solutions that are more from the emotions and less from the research and evidence of helping?”

Contact Jessica Kronzer at kronzejf@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
During Ronald Reagan’s presidency, there was a national crackdown on crime leading to tougher policies such as drug regulation. This tough-on-crime approach has led to the U.S. having the largest prison population in the world today. Three years ago, a JMU professor was inspired by the book, “The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness” by Michelle Alexander. This led to the development of a prison writing course at JMU.

Sarah O’Connor, a writing, rhetoric and technical communication professor, has been an integral faculty member at JMU. She began teaching part time at JMU in the English department before working as an editor of the magazine at Mary Baldwin. In 2001, she came back to work in the writing program, now the WRTC major. She also developed a course called The Rhetoric of the Personal Narrative and co-founded and co-directed the humanitarian affairs minor.

O’Connor started writing and publishing in 1991. She’s been published in the Virginia Quarterly, Texas Review, commentaries for NPR, Writing On the Edge and more. One of her most recent publications in 2017 was an article in Reflections Journal, a service-based and community-learning journal.

O’Connor’s first love has always been writing. Her father, also a professor, inspired her to become a teacher. It was when she began teaching writing in the community that she became focused on social and community-based issues, leading to a class on prison writing.

“Prison writing has become an important genre of writing,” O’Connor said. “The interesting thing about prison writing is prisons touch on every aspect of American society.”

O’Connor touches upon various social issues in the criminal justice system like mass incarceration, mental illness, the death penalty and solitary confinement. She’s had past inmates, prosecutors and prison guards speak to her class. Additionally, students were able to go to the Rockingham County Jail and speak with a guard. Last spring, O’Connor’s class had the opportunity to visit the Virginia Correctional Center for Women in Goochland, the first women’s prison built in Virginia.

“It’s a wide-open campus, doesn’t have any walls,” O’Connor said. “We were able to go through that one and there were three women, inmates, who … talked with us about their experience and we saw the classrooms where they have class and where they live.”

Margaret Jo Linscott, a senior public policy and writing, rhetoric and technical communication double major, was in last spring’s class. Her experience in this course steered her direction of law school to focus on disenfranchised groups in the community. O’Connor’s curriculum opened her eyes to the realities of the life of the prison population and the hardships of prisoners reintegrating into society.

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see VOICE, page 9
Big Brothers Big Sisters hosts
Bowl for Kids’ Sake

By MATTHEW SASSER
The Breeze

“Big Brothers Big Sisters is the only youth-serving organization that provides professionally guided one-on-one mentoring services for children in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County,” Lindsay Douglas, director of BBBS, said.
BBBS serves nearly 600 kids each year in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County. Bowl for Kids’ Sake brings in approximately 25 percent of its budget each year, which significantly impacts the number of children it can serve annually, according to Douglas.

Bowl for Kids’ Sake, the largest fundraiser for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Harrisonburg-Rockingham County, will be taking place at Valley Lanes Bowling Center on Saturday for the 32nd year. The goal for this event is to raise $110,000 — they’re currently at $69,612, according to the Bowl for Kids’ Sake Fundraising website.

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This is the 32nd year of the annual fundraiser. All of the money raised at the event will go directly to Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Ben McCormick, a sophomore history major and volunteer at BBBS, sees his experience with the organization as positive. Each member is partnered up with a little, or an individual they'll mentor throughout the program.

"In college, we have almost zero interaction with those younger than us," McCormick said. "It's been such a great commitment in my life. Getting to know my little has been such a fulfilling experience for me."

McCormick and his little Eric do everything from playing sports to going to the movies to spending time at JMU. Whether it's going to Chick-fil-A for his first milkshake or visiting the planetarium for the first time, McCormick believes this experience has been mutually beneficial.

From 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Valley Lanes, participants can set a fundraising goal. According to Douglas, 600-800 people are expected to be present at this event, which has a beach theme this year.

Businesses can also choose to sponsor the event. Close to $50,000 will come from sponsorships from local businesses and organizations that choose to come together and bowl for an hour and a half. The largest contributor so far is Cargill Turkey and Cooked Meats, which has raised $4,000, according to the Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraising website.

Megan Adams, a junior communication studies major and president of the BBBS club at JMU, loves hanging out with her little, whether it's doing homework or playing with her little's friends. Her desire to be a part of this club stems from her wish to give back to the Harrisonburg community.

"We're in a bubble sometimes and we don't realize that there is a crazy different world outside of the JMU bubble," Adams said. "That's been the biggest experience for me — learning about the people that live here beyond campus."

Adams has registered for Bowl for Kids’ Sake as a virtual bowler. Since the event takes place over JMU’s spring break, students may not be able to commit to physically attending, but can still provide support through their virtual presence.

While this is the third decade the event is being held in Harrisonburg, it continues to provide awareness for the active role BBBS plays in the community. All the money raised goes toward the operation of the organization, which directly supports those in surrounding areas.

"It’s really exciting to see hundreds of community members come together to support children who are facing challenges in our community," Douglas said.

CONTACT Matthew Sasser at sasserma@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
Your 20s suck, and that’s OK

KATHLEEN SMITH | contributing columnist

I’ll come right out and say it: I’m 21 and I hate it. It’s terrible. When I was a kid, I remember telling my mom that I couldn’t wait to be an adult because I’d eat McDonald’s every day. Now, I’m grown up — yes, eating McDonald’s every day — but wishing I was a kid again. I don’t know when my thinking reversed; maybe it was when I started paying my own bills and buying groceries. It’s no fun being 21, even though I can finally buy alcohol. I thought it was crazy, but with a vengeance. I know that when I felt this way — and trust me, sometimes I still do — the worst part for me was the loneliness. I’m living at college, away from my old friends and family and I’m feeling sad. I thought you’re supposed to have your mid-life crisis when you’re 50, not now.

After reading all that, one might be feeling a little down. It seems like the only way to get through these growing pains is to do nothing and deal with them. But don’t prepare for the worst yet; there are ways to help ease the listlessness. Getting involved in campus life, meeting new people and working out are all great ways to feel better. I know everyone says this, and it’s been repeated a hundred times, but it’s worth repeating again: Exercise is awesome. OREc is chock-full of amenities that anyone can take advantage of, including exercise classes, cooking classes and even trips to Massanutten, among other places. Do new things with friends, take walks and enjoy the small bits of happiness life has to offer. Allow yourself to take full advantage of anything beautiful you see, whether it be a rainbow reflecting off a fountain or dogs on the Quad. Understand that sadness happens and that being uncomfortable — although annoying — is normal. It’s OK to feel alone sometimes, and learning to enjoy your own company is rewarding. After all, I’m my biggest fan.

I think the No. 1 reason why this quarter-life crisis exists is because of the misconceptions that students have after graduation. They need a job, a promising career path and a steady significant other to be deemed a “successful” college graduate. However, as the Huffington Post puts it, “Once you start working, you’ll be working forever.” Enjoy the bits of freedom you have, like the last salty sips of a jumbo margarita at Jalapeño’s. The Breeze reserves the right to edit submissions for length, grammar and if material is libelous, factually inaccurate or unclear. Letters and guest columns should be submitted in print or via e-mail and must include name, phone number, major/year if author is a current student (or year of graduation), professional title (if applicable) and place of residence if author is not a JMU student. The Breeze assumes the rights to any published work. Opinions expressed in this page, with the exception of editorials, are not necessarily those of The Breeze or its staff.

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Kathleen Smith is a senior communication studies major. Contact Kathleen at smit27ke@dukes.jmu.edu.
Generation to change gun laws
Student calls for restrictive policies

SYDNEY MACK | contributing columnist

Gun control — the idea that new laws need to be put in place to make firearms more difficult to purchase, carry and own. After the shooting in Parkland, Florida, the debate re-emerged in the media. In a video of an enraged and devastated father of a Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School victim, the father talks to President Trump at a listening session, where he emotionally appeals for restrictive gun policies.

“It stops here with this administration and me,” he said. “I’m not going to sleep until it is fixed.”

Mass shootings aren’t a new phenomenon. The U.S. is suffering from a gun-violence epidemic — one that’s been rapidly affecting schools across the nation. Since the Sandy Hook shooting in 2012, there’ve been more than 400 kids reportedly shot in their own schools or college campuses.

As a student myself, it’s terrifying to read. U.S. citizens have the chance to make history, but more importantly, they have the opportunity to come together and say enough is enough. As a generation, we have and must take it upon ourselves to fight and change matters we find unsettling, and our next should be gun policies.

Now, I’m not saying that all millennials are or should be “anti-guns.” I understand people enjoy their Second Amendment right to bear arms, but I’m not advocating for a complete ban — I’m advocating for more restrictive and controlled gun policies to ensure the safety and comfort of citizens. And surprisingly, a few gun-owning, hunting millennials support the same notions.

Freshman McKenna Head acknowledged the danger of guns and emphasized the importance of gun safety.

“Growing up in a home with guns, I knew at a very young age the dangers which they could inflict,” Head said. “I was extensively taught by my father about gun safety.”

McKenna’s family is full of hunters and has had guns in their household for as long as she can remember. She believes there should be mental health screenings, background checks and gun-safety classes enforced before citizens can purchase a gun of their own.

“All buyers should be subject to mental health screenings and extensive background checks,” Head said.

Curious, I asked what she personally believes would help solve the devastating issue of mass shootings in the U.S.

“While I have been around guns and fellow hunters my whole life and do consider myself to be pro-gun, I strongly believe that lawmakers should be making gun control a priority,” Head continued. “Especially right now. I think it’s way too easy to purchase a gun, especially one as deadly as an assault rifle.”

Most kids, regardless of whether they own guns or wholeheartedly support gun control, believe the same thing from my experience. Gun laws in the U.S. are lenient and actions must be taken reduce gun fatalities. Right now, if you aren’t considered a fugitive and pass a simple background check, you can purchase a gun. You must be at least 18 years of age to purchase shotguns or rifles and ammunition. All other firearms — handguns, for example — can only be sold to people 21 and older and only a dozen of the 50 states require purchase permits for handguns.

I anticipate and hope that the millennial generation as a whole will step forward and use our voices and smarts to better the system — a system that currently seems to be failing us. Too many innocent children and students have lost their lives and will continue to unless change occurs. If we let this moment pass, we’re just as complicit as the politicians who’ve done nothing.

Sydney Mack is a freshman political science major. Contact Mack at macksg@dukes.jmu.edu.
Hidden clubs on campus

Unique organizations that could improve JMU experience

SOPHIA CABANA | liberté

New students may have noticed that JMU has a lot to offer outside the classroom, but with roughly 400 clubs and organizations on campus, finding your place can be difficult. Fortunately, there are some opportunities for Dukes who don’t want a crazy time commitment, don’t know where to begin, yearn for something interesting to do outside of class or want to make some close friends and memories at JMU.

There’s a club for everyone at JMU, no matter what their interests are. While some clubs are regularly talked about as “resume boosters,” there are also plenty of clubs molded to unique and specific interests that aren’t as famous, but serve as a great way for Dukes to do what they enjoy with like-minded friends.

1. Chocolate Milk Monday

For students inclined to spend their free time relaxing at home with a glass of chocolate milk, the Chocolate Milk Monday Club might be a better place to relax and make some friends. While the club started out as merely a group of friends drinking chocolate milk together every Monday, it’s now a recognized club that not only drinks chocolate milk at Monday meetings, but also has dinner together. If you can’t always make it on Mondays, you’re still welcome at the club’s weekend get-togethers.

2. JMU Ghost Hunters

Dukes who “ain’t afraid of no ghosts” and want an excuse to explore old, mysterious places might feel at home with the JMU Ghost Hunters, one of the most enigmatic clubs on campus. The Ghost Hunters’ mission to “find scientific evidence of the paranormal ... and contribute to the scientific community” will surely resonate with deep believers in the supernatural who want to find proof that the undead linger among us. If you’re a skeptic, then this could be a great opportunity to broaden your horizons and see if the experiences you have with the JMU Ghost Hunters change your mind.

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As seen in the article in the Jan. 18th issue of The Breeze...

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by JMU alumnus Tom Arvis

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3. Cinemuse Film Club

For those Dukes who consider themselves film connoisseurs and critics, the Cinemuse Film Club is a way to enjoy their passion while forming friendships with other students. Whether you’re an aspiring director, actor, up-and-coming screenwriter or simply a film enthusiast, you’re welcome at the Cinemuse Film Club. According to the club’s Be Involved page, its purpose is “to educate James Madison University and the Harrisonburg community on the creative aspects of classic, independent, foreign films,” while also encouraging “a passion for the art of cinema” and inspiring more creative endeavors among members of the community.

4. Outdoor Adventure Club

The Outdoor Adventure Club is a group of hundreds of members that offers the opportunity to explore the rugged beauty of nature to all those outdoorsy Dukes. Excursions occur every weekend so that members can pick and choose to do whichever adventures they have time for.

5. 3-D Printing Club

For Dukes who love design and technology, the 3-D Printing Club can be a way to harness creativity. Whether you know everything there’s to know about 3-D printing or hardly even understand what it is, all are welcome to come and explore the possibilities it can offer. You’ll have the opportunity to be educated about the capabilities of this relatively new technology while also enjoying access to the 3-SPACE lab in Carrier Library. The 3-D Printing Club lab hours are Thursday nights from 7-9 p.m. and Sunday afternoons from 4-6 p.m.

6. Cosplay Guild Club

As a club for creative students who are more interested in crafts than cinema, the Cosplay Guild aims to serve as “a creative outlet where members can share their crafting knowledge in a safe and positive environment” so that everyone can hone in on their cosplaying skills together.

With so many ways to get involved on campus, it’s a wonder anyone ever feels bored or lonely. No matter what students do to find their places at JMU, joining organizations can positively affect them socially, emotionally and intellectually, and all of those aspects are crucial to having a good college experience. Everyone’s time at JMU will pass whether they use these years to the fullest or not, so they may as well find an activity that shapes them in a positive way and adds value to the college experience.

What matters isn’t so much what students do to get involved, but rather what it adds to personal experience and happiness.

Sophia Cabana is a freshman history major. Contact Sophia at cabanasl@dukes.jmu.edu.

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Sophia Cabana is a freshman history major. Contact Sophia at cabanasl@dukes.jmu.edu.

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The year was 1986 on JMU’s campus at a party on fraternity row. David Saacke stuck up a conversation with a partygoer, where after light banter, the partygoer casually revealed he was the Duke Dog mascot. He told David mascot tryouts were the next day and he should show up. Still in a trance from the reveal, David smiled and agreed.

The next day, he had no desire to go. Yet, in an effort to remain a man of his word, David threw on gym clothes and went to tryouts. As he reluctantly stepped into the gym, he noticed 10 or 12 other men looking to take the throne as the next Duke Dog.

“All I remember is thinking, ’I can’t believe I’m doing this,’” David, chief technology officer at Washington and Lee University and a JMU alumnus (“’89), said. “It was like dancing in front of a whole campus, you know. You had to do a little dance, you had to do the walk, but you’re doing it all in your JMU gym clothes. Like, you don’t have the suit on.”

On top of being overly expressive, the Duke Dog needed to be comfortable interacting with the crowd — especially children. A warm and friendly disposition, high-fiving, waving and blowing kisses were all part of the job description. It also didn’t hurt if they could bust out some dance moves as well as master the iconic Duke Dog walk.

“I de/f_i  nitely told all my friends — like that was my fun fact coming as the Duke Dog mascot, he loved messing around with them. The way the suit was structured back in the ’80s, David could sit next to his friends facing forward and actually turn his head to look straight at them. ’It’s like throwing on an invisible cloak where you get to do whatever you want and you don’t have to worry about the repercussions of someone talking about how goofy you are,’ David said.

From being chased off the field by Virginia Military Institute fans to accidentally breaking off the George Mason Patriot mascot’s nose, David has boundless stories. These are the kind of memories he’s shared with his daughter Olivia Saacke, a senior geographic science major at JMU, over the years.

“I never expected her to go to JMU,” David said. “All our kids, they picked their own direction and the fact she picked JMU has been a gift for me because I’ve got to relive memories that I’d forgotten just by visiting.

With her father’s hands-off approach, Olivia learned to fall in love and that’s really kinda essentially what college is about is trying things out. ”

As graduation rapidly approaches, Olivia reflects on her memories at JMU. Years later, David does the same: thinking back to all the mascot suit offerings. “It was just one of those college memories that’s kind of one of those back-pocket things that every now and then will come up,” David said. “I don’t mention it typically to anybody still, but like, either a kid or someone on campus will find out and it just always starts a great conversation. And it’s a memory I’m glad I have. It was a solid experience in an area that I never would’ve forced myself to go and that’s really kinda essentially what college is about is trying things out.”

CONTACT

Ali Gips at gipsar@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.
Strolling by the variety of shops downtown Harrisonburg has to offer, one will find an artist's niche. Discovering a messy and colorful table of supplies, art screens strewn about, displays of talented design work and the latest hits playing over the speakers, JMU alumna Bailey Steele ('15) knew The Mark-It screen printing and embroidery shop was the perfect place to begin her career after graduation. Now a successful graphic designer for the New York City-based nonprofit, the Center for Active Design, Steele has pursued a passion for her work. Excited that it would be made public for the community to enjoy, Steele happily agreed when The Mark-It asked to display her art once again.

“It was a great job and I really had a great time working there, being able to show up to work in your gym shorts and get messy,” Steele said. “It’s a great place on Earth and was definitely one of my favorite jobs.”

Majoring in graphic design at JMU, Steele was compelled to work somewhere she could showcase her talents. The print shop recently held a show as part of the Arts Council of the Valley’s First Fridays Downtown event featuring artwork that she left behind in Harrisonburg.

“It’s work that somehow added up to represent this time in my life in Harrisonburg, which was all these works that I had created within the last two years of my time there,” Steele said. “It was fun to see some old work resurface that I hadn’t thought about in a while.”

In “Prints From the Years without Sleep,” Steele’s work includes vibrant and funky designs of everyday objects such as salt and pepper shakers with polka dots or a collection of mismatched objects like books, a fish bowl and a knife, allowing each colorful aspect to create a brand-new meaning. Others show more abstract and energetic yet cohesive designs, like a can exploding into a cloud of shapes and patterns.

“Bailey is a supremely positive person with a great attitude,” Jeff Guinn, owner and manager of The Mark-It, said. “She seems to really take the time with her design work to have a dialogue with the client. It’s nice to be able to show the work of someone who has worked here before.”

After graduating, Steele remained in Harrisonburg for a year and continued to work at The Mark-It. Then, she moved to New York for a three-month internship with a design firm. At the same time, she was given a position as an administrative assistant for the Center for Active Design. There, she produced many different designs for posters, slide decks for presentations and marketing collateral and was offered her current position as the only full-time designer.

“I realize that I embody a life of many privileges which allow me to move freely and I don’t want to erase the struggles many native New Yorkers face on a daily basis,” Steele said. “But I suppose my transition to New York was smooth because the extra year I spent in Harrisonburg gave me plenty of time to mentally prepare.”
DESIGN  | Steele’s work ignites an emotional response

The Center For Active Design strives to use design to promote a healthy lifestyle. As their only graphic designer, Steele takes on a lot of responsibility.

“I get all sorts of projects thrown my way, so it’s been a good, challenging environment,” Steele said. “I especially think it’s always interesting to create a logo from scratch, and just all the conversation that goes into that. You get one chance to hit people with some sort of emotion or feeling.”

Involving herself in personal projects, Steele assists in running a newsletter for the group New York City For Abortion Rights by making flyers and is currently helping a friend in Richmond, Virginia, to create an LGBTQ community-building website.

Professor Dawn McCusker, coordinator for the graphic design program, taught Steele in advanced typography and senior graphic design portfolio courses. Proud of Steele’s success, McCusker never had a doubt that her former student would endeavor such prosperous opportunities in New York City.

“She was always a passionate student,” McCusker said. “I know she is doing a lot of social awareness and social justice projects, which is wonderful. I mean, that’s just who Bailey is. She wants to design for good and to have a voice. We always teach our students just how powerful graphic design can be and when visual communication is effective it can reach so many people. Bailey has been able to take that education and apply it."

As a graduate of the School of Art, Design and Art History at JMU, Steele believes it’s important that more creators take on artistic careers. While some may say that studying visual arts is unrealistic, she argues people should explore their creative passions.

“I think we need as many visual thinkers working as possible at this political moment,” Steele said. “There are so many voices and messages that need to be heard. Creating a visual language around those ideas will help amplify an emotional response, which is undoubtedly a force for change.”

CONTACT Traci Rasdorf at rasdortl@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.

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Each session features six panels, 4-5 students per panel; program will be available at jmu.edu/cal/madrush.shtml.

QUESTIONS?

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The craft of exhibition

By JAZMINE OTEY
The Breeze

Prior to setting up each exhibit in Duke Hall, the bare white walls loom over each volunteer, intern and Duke Hall employee. The exhibit is lifeless and boxes full of artwork are scattered on the floor. It doesn’t take long before the helpers feed off each other’s creativity and manipulate the vacant space into a vibrant world.

There’s a great deal of work that goes into setting up an art exhibit. Regardless, the helpers do so with the utmost enthusiasm. John Ros, the Duke Hall art director, recently came on board this school year. But with nearly 20 years of professional experience in the art realm, he took the position on with every bit of confidence.

“This is a learning gallery,” Ros said. “So what that means is it’s a space where interns are basically employed to learn the steps to take. That’s what we’re here for, to teach people different procedures about what it is to run a contemporary gallery space.”

Before a new exhibit is set up, the previous gallery has to be taken down — referred to as the changeover process. Given that it takes over a week to complete, it’s potentially one of the most difficult tasks, but through an exhibition proposal form. The other process consists of Ros, the chief curator, proposing an idea. After one of these two steps has been completed, the ideas are then discussed with the faculty members who can propose exhibits through an exhibition proposal form. The other process consists of Ros, the chief curator, proposing an idea.

After five days of endless tasks, the gallery was opened to the public Tuesday.

“My favorite part about setting up is working with the artists,” Abigail Kon, a Duke Hall intern and a sophomore art history and marketing double major, said. “I love getting to know the artists and it’s just a really unique experience, especially for those of us who want to work in art institutions.”

Duke Hall chooses which artists to display through two different processes. Faculty members can propose exhibits through an exhibition proposal form. The other process consists of Ros, the chief curator, proposing an idea.

Ros makes it a goal to set up each exhibit differently from the ones that came before it. While dedicating nearly 12 hours a day to the speedy setup process, Ros doesn’t refrain from giving not only himself, but those working alongside him a challenge.

“The space is relatively versatile and I [want to] try to create different experiences,” Ros said. “I mean, I work with space as an artist so for me it’s really interesting to allow the space to do different things. I [want to] be interested in it too. I don’t [want to] just do the same thing all the time. So I’m challenging myself, too.”

After everything is set up, there are still other tasks to complete. From scheduling artist receptions and lectures to promoting the exhibit, the work is endless. Regardless, it’s a memorable experience for all of the exhibit workers.

“Honestly, it’s really exciting,” Kon said. “I’ve always wanted to work with art and facilitate artists and creative people. So it’s really really fun for me to be able to help them get their work seen and set up and I love to write about them and read information about them and then actually meet them in person and be a part of getting their art into the world.”

No matter how difficult the process, each member does it out of love and passion for the subject at hand. Once it’s all put together, they can sit back and fully appreciate all of their hard work.

“One of my favorite parts is when it’s all done and you can step back and see the fruits of your labor,” Ros said. “You see all these moving pieces coming together and you can finally rest for a minute. I mean every part of it is fun and I think it has to be because it really is a labor of love. I mean, we’re certainly not in it for the money.”

CONTACT Jazmine Otey at oteyjl@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.
With spring athletics getting underway for the Dukes and the star athletes becoming all the chatter throughout campus, none have more heat going their way than sophomore Kevin Kelly, a pitcher for JMU baseball. A stud relief pitcher — and starter when needed — Kelly has been the catalyst for the Dukes’ hot start to the year and is continuing to build off his impressive rookie campaign.

In his first season with the Dukes, the Collegiate Baseball Freshmen All-American was lights out, striking out 38 batters in 34 innings pitched. His five wins and 2.91 ERA led the team last year, and batters hit a measly .244 against the right-hander. While Kelly dominated the mound his freshman year, the Dukes went 14-27 on the season including a horrendous 7-17 in the CAA. Despite his team’s lack of success as a unit, Kelly laid the foundation for an outstanding career.

“He’s very humble,” assistant and pitching coach Jimmy Jackson said. “If you even joke with him about being a freshman All-American, he just smiles and shakes his head no. To him, it’s no big deal.”

Kelly spent the offseason working on the one thing that would perfect his approach on the mound: honing in his changeup. While Kelly did have a lot of success against right-handed batters, the lefties had an easy time reaching base — something Kelly wasn’t willing to let slide by. Adding a changeup in both of his pitching motions would make it difficult for lefties to get an easy read on his pitch, making it a necessary development.

Poised for another year of success, Kelly took the mound for the first time in 2.2 innings of relief against the High Point Panthers. While he did give up one earned run, his scorching arm struck out five batters and allowed just two hits on the way to his first save of the season. He would follow his first performance up with another five-strikeout showing, albeit earning a loss after giving up a run late in the game. He’d quickly rebound in his third performance, earning his second save of the year against The State University of New York at Albany. He’s amassed 11 strikeouts and a 2.57 ERA in seven innings pitched this year, an electric start for this surging unit.
“Watching him develop over time has been a really impressive transition,” head coach Marlin Ikenberry said. “We knew he was going to be solid.”

Aside from his newly developed changeup, there’s another beaming difference between this season and the one before: The Dukes are actually winning games. With JMU sitting at 6-2 on the young season, Kelly’s success is finally complemented by the team as a whole, making the early part of the season much more enjoyable than his first year in purple and gold. While Kelly has all the investment in ensuring individual success, he knows it means nothing if it doesn’t translate to wins.

“Individually, I’m trying to do just as well or better as last year,” Kelly said. “But as a team we’re aiming for the CAA Championship. We’ve got to hold up our end pitching-wise.”

Another unique aspect of Kelly’s game is his personality on and off the field. Unlike a majority of closers at the collegiate and professional levels — who are commonly high intensity and exuberant characters — Kelly is a silent killer on the mound. He keeps to himself, remains humble throughout and excels both on the field and in class — an abnormality at his position, without a doubt. The coaches, however, have no issue with Kelly quietly flying under the radar.

“He’s extremely low maintenance,” Ikenberry said. “He goes about his business the right way and you don’t even have to worry about him.”

Just because Kelly has a timid approach to the game doesn’t mean his teammates and coaching staff are modest when talking about his play. The Dukes’ star pitcher is talked about among the team as the toughest guy to get a hit off in practice, based off the heat he brings to his composure in tight situations. Everyone around the Dukes noticed his confidence grow throughout the year.

“The better he did and the more he pitched, the more confidence he got,” Jackson said. “And it helped that his teammates all the time were telling him how nasty his stuff was.”

The present and future of JMU baseball, off to another tremendous start in his young career, is keeping his mouth sealed shut. He’ll let his cannon of an arm do all the talking for him.

CONTACT Blake Pace at paceba@dukes.jmu.edu. For more baseball coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.
By CONNOR MCCARTHY
The Breeze

After a disappointing 2017 season, in which JMU baseball pitching staff accrued a 5.57 ERA (third worst in the CAA), the Dukes' arms have bounced back early in 2018 with a team ERA of 2.59 (second in the CAA). While JMU's hitters have struggled to a team batting average of .241, the pitchers have kept the team afloat by allowing more than three runs in just two of their seven games.

"When you have good pitching, it'll keep you in ballgames," head coach Marlin Ikenberry said. "Our pitching has been solid, and that's what's been so exciting for us. Our guys are competing and getting better every day."

Senior southpaw Colton Harlow has enjoyed a hot start to the 2018 season after an up-and-down year. In Harlow's two starts this season, he's pitched 12 innings, held opposing batters to a .209 batting average and earned a 1-0 record. He hopes to continue his initial success and establish himself as an ace and leader the team can rely on.

Outside of Harlow, only one other pitcher has made more than one start — and that's junior right-handed pitcher Dan Goggin. With a 1.64 ERA and a 2-0 record, Goggin has already made a positive impact on the Dukes' staff after transferring from Cumberland Community College this year. Opposing batters are hitting a measly .175 with only two extra-base hits against him. It's been an adjustment to go from community college to Division-I athletics, but Goggin has already found himself in a rhythm and hopes to continue adjusting throughout the season.

"The hitters are better for one," Goggin said. "But you know it's the same thing everywhere. You go to the park, get your work in, play your game and things will work out."

Of course, Harlow and Goggin aren't the only ones getting it done on the pitching staff. Players such as sophomore RHP Kevin Kelly and freshman RHP Nick Stewart, who was named CAA Rookie of the Week on Tuesday, have also made early contributions. Kelly has collected two saves and struck out 11 in seven innings pitched. Making his first career start against the University at Albany, Stewart went five strong innings, striking out five batters and only giving up one run on two hits. The Dukes' depth should help keep their arms fresh down the road — which they didn't have last season.

"We definitely feed off each other," Harlow said. "It's really reassuring to know that someone has your back if you're struggling. Coming out of the game and handing the ball off to someone you trust is always a good feeling."

It may be early, but if JMU's pitching staff can continue this early season success, this team has a good chance at jumping back into the race for the CAA title. The Dukes' bats were projected to be one of their strengths this year and should start to come around once the players get more at-bats. JMU has already hit eight home runs this year — first in the CAA — which means once they start getting on base more consistently, the runs should come.

CONTACT Connor McCarthy at mccartcs@dukes.jmu.edu. For more baseball coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.
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