RESPECT FOR PRIVACY
Virginia law requires consent for distribution of student information

NEWS 4

PRESSED FOR PARKING
Despite JMU’s efforts to add more garages, construction reduces number of available spots

OPINION 13

‘LOSS TO HUMANITY’
Music professor remembered for his influence at JMU and beyond

CULTURE 21
Foxhill TOWNHOMES

OFF-CAMPUS LIVING AT ITS BEST

CALL (540) 432-5525 TODAY TO SCHEDULE A TOUR!

4-BEDROOM FURNISHED TOWNHOMES WITH TWO FULL BATHS

Pet Friendly • Gym Membership Included
Some Units with Unfurnished Basements • Washer/Dryer
Electric with Cap, Water, Internet & Cable Included

foxhill@umicomunities.com 1627 Devon Ln, Harrisonburg, VA 22801
The Breeze @TheBreezeJMU
Thursday, August 23, 2018
breezejmu.org

BEST LUCK!
New & Returning JMU Students

Stop by our branch during Madison Union Open House
Thursday, September 5, 11am–2pm
We’ll have t-shirts and prizes, including your chance to win $150 in JMU swag!

Madison Union Branch (Next to the Post Office)
(800) 424-3334 ext. 1700 • cofcu.org/madisonunion
By JESSICA KRONZER
The Breeze

Confidential contacts
Virginia bill on student privacy impacts JMU’s systems

A bill went into effect July 1 and has created some changes to how professors, faculty and students access and share personal information at JMU. The bill places a restriction that Virginia colleges have to ask for students’ permission before sharing their information within the university or to third parties.

Previously, any third party could request student phone numbers, emails and addresses without expressed consent from the students. The university couldn’t withhold this information under the Freedom of Information Act. FOIA allows citizens to request legal documents from the government, which applicable federal agencies must disclose unless they fall under an exemption.

This issue of protecting student privacy came to light after students received text messages from Virginia House of Delegates Delegate Tony Wilt, who ultimately defeated Finnegan and represents Harrisonburg along with some of Rockingham County, subsequently drafted a bill to require the university to ask students for permission before sharing their personal information.

Wilt also had concerns about businesses taking advantage of FOIA. He’s associated with his family’s concrete business and feels that no company should be able to exploit students, even for its own gain. Previously, individuals could request students’ information and solicit to them.

“Whether I’m trying to sell you concrete or a condominium or a car or to get you to vote a certain way, I don’t think that you as a student, you as an individual, should [have] your most personal private contact information … available out there for people to use for their potential gain,” Wilt said.

According to Bill Wyatt, JMU’s director of communications and university spokesman, the legislation has caused some unintended consequences for the university. One change for students is that they can no longer access other classmates’ emails in the directory.

Students will now be prompted at the beginning of each semester with two questions on MyMadison. They can decide if they want their information disclosed internally to those at the university and if they want their information disclosed externally to third parties.

Wyatt explained that JMU has contracts with third parties that involve sharing students’ email addresses and phone numbers. One example would be the emergency notification system, which sends alerts via a third party. According to Wyatt, JMU puts privacy clauses in these contracts, but under the new bill, there’s concern over whether they should be sharing this information at all.

“We don’t have the technical resources to [send out emergency alerts] in-house, so that’s why we’ve contracted with a third party,” Wyatt said. “What we’re trying to do now is sort through the legality of those vendors. Are they an extension of the university so we can provide them email addresses, or phone numbers … they need to do their job?”

Another challenge for the university is that professors can’t give students contact information for others they’re working on group projects with. Christina Roeder, a management professor in the College of Business, is dealing with this problem. Under the new law, Roeder has to blind copy students when she emails them so that they can’t see each other’s emails.

“In the College of Business, particularly in management, there’s teams in every class,” Roeder said. “It’s just going to make an already logistically difficult job, at times, more difficult.”

Roeder understands the concern with having access to identification numbers, phone numbers or even names of students who aren’t in her professor’s class. She didn’t realize that email was threatening information and said she wants to learn more about the policy.

“I want to follow, obviously, the rules and the policies,” Roeder said. “So I’ll do that, but, you know, sometimes those things can only make your life a little bit more difficult.”

Wilt is open to amending the bill to account for issues for the university. He encourages schools to reach out and share their concerns with his office.

“If the university or students are experiencing specific problems, and we need to go in and do some tweaking, absolutely I’m willing to look at that,” Wilt said.

The bill was drafted over two months while the house was in session with input from representatives from several Virginia schools and universities, along with legislative services. He never wanted to create issues for the university, but instead wanted students to have a voice in who gets access to their information.

“It felt like we came up — after everybody’s input — with a bill that everybody would be happy with and we tried to anticipate scenarios, but unfortunately sometimes we may miss something,” Wilt said.

CONTACT Jessica Kronzer at kronzejf@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
Hands-on experience

Harrisonburg Citizen Academy inspires community involvement through exposure to governmental functions

By GRAHAM SCHILTZ
The Breeze

Contrary to their label, public officers have jobs that are often unknown to the public. The Harrisonburg Citizen Academy was created to foster an understanding of city government by giving each department a platform to educate community members about how they work. With over a dozen departments within the city of Harrisonburg, the roles and importance of each can be difficult to understand.

The program is comprised of 13 weekly, two-hour sessions running from the end of August to the middle of November. Created in 2006, between 20 and 30 community members attend a class every Thursday night from 6-8 p.m. Each week sees a different department host its own presentation to explain what it does and give insight into what goes on behind the scenes. The presentations are designed to bridge the gap between citizens and government.

“They walk away with just an understanding of what city departments do and what kind of questions and considerations we have to make sometimes,” Thanh Dang, Harrisonburg city planner, said. “We get people who now, they know us because they’ve been introduced to them, and they know who we are. We’re real now, we’re people.”

The different departments put an emphasis on making their presentations just as engaging and interesting as they are informative. In previous years, the Public Works Department put on a “parade of trucks,” an event in which service vehicles such as snowplows, street sweepers and garbage trucks are driven around and explained by their operators.

“By Graham Schiltz at breezecopy@gmail.com. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
Change demanded

JMU amends student handbook after sexual assault protests

By KATELYN WALTEMYER
The Breeze

After reading dozens of students’ posts on social media about JMU’s handling of recent sexual misconduct cases, Jewel Hurt, the student body president, pushed for the implementation of an amendment to the student handbook. As a result, character statements will now only be used in the Sexual Misconduct Accountability Process after an individual has already been found responsible.

While changes to the student handbook are made annually, the Student Government Association formally addressed the change in a tweet due to the outcry of students on social media this past summer. Tim Miller, vice president of student affairs, sat down with Hurt and Desiree Edemba, student representative to the Board of Visitors, on Friday to finalize the change.

“Honestly, I felt like it was something that should’ve been done a long time ago,” Hurt said. “It’s just something that needed to be done and it needed to be done now.”

Cody Edwards, a senior musical theatre major, decided to organize a protest on campus after providing emotional support for several of his friends who experienced sexual assault. Over the summer, when one of his close friends decided she wouldn’t be returning to JMU this year due to the presence of her alleged attackers, Edwards knew something had to change.

He later announced on Facebook that he would organize a weeklong protest called Students for Change, set to take place during 1787 August Orientation. Edwards said he was tired of feeling helpless, so he decided to step up.

“JMU always asks its students to step up but now I think it’s time for students to ask JMU to step up.”

Once he decided to follow through with the protest, Edwards intended to give the JMU community what he believed to be the best opportunity to make its voice heard and begin conversations with freshmen. Over 260 people expressed interest in the event on Facebook but as of Wednesday only a handful had participated in the demonstration.

According to Hurt, regardless of the number of people who participated in the protest, it’s important to realize the changing atmosphere on campus. She also agreed it’s time for JMU to take action.

“I think what we’re doing is great — we have to keep the dialogue going though,” Hurt said. “That’s what I hope won’t stop, now that we have the ear to the administrators let’s use it and let’s sit down at the table and let’s come up with positive solutions moving forward.”

By KATELYN WALTEMYER
The Breeze

On Saturday a VSP trooper was in Harrisonburg on an unrelated traffic stop when he observed a male chasing another from KFC toward CVS located at 780 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. The trooper notified HPD and they arrived on the scene at CVS — both of the suspects were separated and a firearm was confiscated. They were taken into questioning at HPD’s Major Crimes Unit. Preliminary findings indicate that the suspect, Jesus “Bobby” Remigio, 32, of Jacksonville, Texas, kidnapped and waved the gun into questioning at HPD’s Major Crimes Unit. Preliminary findings indicate that the suspect, Jesus “Bobby” Remigio, 32, of Jacksonville, Texas, kidnapped and waved the gun into questioning at HPD’s Major Crimes Unit.

Two Harrisonburg residents were reported as missing on Aug. 7. Elizabeth Rodriguez Rubio, 48, and her granddaughter, Angie Carolina Rodriguez Rubio, 12, were last seen on Aug. 5 with their alleged abductor, Hareton Jaime Rodriguez-Sariol in Harrisonburg. Sariol is in custody and HPD along with other partner agencies are still searching for the two missing individuals.

President Donald Trump attacked former attorney Michael Cohen on Twitter Wednesday morning, stating, “If anyone is looking for a good lawyer, I would strongly suggest that you don’t retain the services of Michael Cohen!” His tweet was in response to Cohen admitting he contributed “hush-money” payments to women under Trump’s direction.
Entrepreneurship minor opens curriculum to all students

By THOMAS ROBERTSON
The Breeze

For over 15 years, JMU students outside the College of Business have been clamoring to enroll in a curriculum that could help them start their own business. After a two-year approval process, CoB is now offering an entrepreneurship minor to students across campus.

The program is led by Entrepreneurship Minor Coordinator Christina Roeder. Throughout her 17 years at JMU, she’s been called by other departments asking if their students could take one of her classes. She had to say no, because CoB 300 was a prerequisite to her entrepreneurship course.

Slowly, she was able to offer her curriculum to more and more students after opening Management 472, New Venture Creation, to other majors. The course gained enough popularity to begin adding the minor. However, Roeder said the process has been tough because no additional resources, such as extra class space, were given in conjunction with the new minor.

“We’ve talked about this for many years,” Roeder said. “The No. 1 thing is lack of resources that have been put toward this. We don’t have a faculty line to teach it. We’re barely servicing our own students. So this was us really pushing ourselves to make this happen.”

Students both within and outside of CoB can learn something new from the curriculum. Halle Duenkel, a junior computer information systems major, had an interest in technology and entrepreneurship since watching her father found Knight Point Systems in 2005. KPS was recognized in Inc. this year as one of the country’s 5,000 fastest-growing companies, and that success has continued to inspire Duenkel.

“My dad is one of my biggest role models,” Duenkel said. “He’s the epitome of a leader, of a Christ-centered man and of an amazing father.”

When Duenkel was 14, she founded a faith-based nonprofit called Compassion in Actions with the goal of helping the poor in both the U.S. and around the world. Her nonprofit started several projects, including Every Kid Needs Play, which collected sporting equipment from her area in Northern Virginia and shipped it to impoverished areas in the Dominican Republic. She hopes to start another nonprofit and continue giving back to those in need after college. But since her father handled a lot of the financials and behind-the-scenes work of her previous nonprofit, Duenkel thinks she still has more to learn through the new minor.

Knowledge such as how to get a patent, how to sell ideas to investors and how to find business partners will be focuses of the minor that Duenkel and other students can use to start companies.

“Once I’m at the right point in my life and feel like I have all the skill sets ready to start my own company, that’s definitely a goal of mine and I think this program will definitely be really beneficial in getting me there,” Duenkel said.

There will be a meet and greet during the minor’s first night of class with the program’s faculty, the management department head and Patrick McQuown, executive director of the Center for Entrepreneurship. McQuown hopes to establish collaboration between the new minor and the pre-established CFE, which focuses on helping students grow their existing businesses. He said he’s excited to have an entrepreneurship resource on campus for students who don’t yet have an established company.

“I think it’s great,” McQuown said. “If you’re potentially interested in joining a startup or doing your own thing later on and you know that at this point, then you should definitely take a look at it.”

Roeder understands the minor isn’t the place students can come to and build their business, but she says she’s excited to start providing students with the skill set they need to start one later in life.

“We’re hoping to grow future entrepreneurs by giving them the toolset that they’ll need, so when they come upon that idea or find themselves in that situation, that they’ll have some of the knowledge they need,” Roeder said.

CONTACT Thomas Robertson at breezenews@gmail.com. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
from page 6

Miller acknowledged that sexual misconduct is a pertinent topic to students. He announced that he’ll be looking at policies in the handbook throughout the year and meeting with groups of students to get feedback on how to improve JMU as a whole. “I think for me this is a chance to try something that students have felt passionate about and see if we can have a better process,” Miller said. “I believe very strongly as someone new but [as] someone at this institution, we have to continue to review how we do things and make sure we’re doing them in the best way possible.”

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

Participants in the Students for Change protest signed a pledge to increase awareness of sexual assault.
The Breeze JMU
College promotions network

Stay connected and download “The Breeze” app! Look for it at www.breezejmu.org, googleplay or the apple app store!

Dare to Doodle

Apply to be a Breeze cartoonist.

Email breezeopinion@gmail.com

Burrito Oh!
farm fresh

OPENING SOON
at James Madison Square
minutes from Bridgeforth Stadium

now taking pre-orders for tailgate spreads
mention The Breeze for free guac and chips!

www.burritooh.com
JMU student found dead in Devon Lane residence

Nathan Campbell, a sophomore finance and political science double major, was found dead in his home on the 1300 block of Devon Lane Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. He was 20 years old.

The cause of death is still under investigation by the Harrisonburg Police Department pending an autopsy from the medical examiner, but there's no indication of foul play at this time. Campbell was from Herndon, Virginia.

"The university is deeply saddened by Nate's death. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends during this difficult time," Bill Wyatt, JMU spokesman, said in an email.

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

Campbell was a sophomore finance and political science major from Herndon, Virginia.

TANNER LESLIE / THE BREEZE
NOW ANY WAY YOU ORDER EARN POINTS TOWARD FREE PIZZA

IN STORE
NEW

ONLINE

BY PHONE
NEW

CHOOSE ANY 2 or MORE MEDIUM 2-TOPPING PIZZAS FOR $5.99 EACH

and start earning points.*

DOMINOS.COM.REWARDS

*Dominos Piece of the Pie Rewards program is open only to U.S. residents 13+ with a Pizza Profile account who order online from participating Domino's locations. Points redemption only valid online at participating locations. *Limit one order of $10 or more (excludes gratuities and donations) per calendar day can earn points. Only valid at participating area locations. For complete details, visit dominos.com/rewards. Any delivery charge is not a tip paid to your driver. Drivers carry less than $20. ©2023 Domino's IP Holder LLC. Dominos, Dominos Piece and the modular logo are registered trademarks of Domino’s IP Holder LLC.
The Breeze welcomes and encourages readers to voice their opinions through letters and guest columns. Letters must be no longer than 250 words. Guest columns must be no more than 650 words.

The Breeze reserves the right to edit submissions for length, grammar and if material is libelous, factually inaccurate or unclear. 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.

Letters and guest columns should be submitted in print or via e-mail and must include name, phone number (if applicable) and place of residence if author is not a JMU student.

For a chance to be featured in print or online, visit our website and look under the opinion section for submission forms.
It’s likely close to a unanimous vote that the only thing at JMU worse than having to get up and go to class once you get to campus is having to park. This school has been notorious for its terrible parking situation, and this academic year is bound to be even worse due to the new construction across campus.

Commuter students at JMU pay $284 for a parking pass, yet aren’t guaranteed a spot. If one were to stop and think about this, it’s as logical as paying for a gym membership and not knowing if you’re going to be let in every day.

By the time classes start in the fall, there’ll be four parking decks with spaces for commuters: Champions Drive, Grace Street, Warsaw Avenue and Chesapeake Avenue. With all the spots for commuters in these four decks combined, there aren’t even 2,000 parking spaces. JMU has more than 10 times the amount of upperclassmen as there are spots in the parking decks. Students shouldn’t have to wander around a parking lot for an hour trying to find a spot when they have classes and studying to get to.

It’s unfortunate that with all the progressive and exciting construction around campus, students have lost even more parking.

To add to the list, the new lot outside the stadium, which replaced Godwin Field, has also been labeled for staff, Convos G and H is closed and the two lots in which the Union Bank & Trust Center is being constructed are now gone. While there will be a parking deck over there eventually, the already few spaces have to be taken away.

The university is encouraging students to use alternate forms of transportation. While this is an eco-friendly idea that can always be supported on some level, it also reaches a point of asking too much. Carpooling can be difficult when people have varying schedules and the buses have a tendency for being unreliable. Students who don’t live on campus and pay nearly $300 should be able to park at the university they pay a great sum to attend — this really isn’t asking too much.

The university shouldn’t be attempting to compensate for the spots lost during all the construction. This is a pre-existing issue, and rather, adding parking should be among the forefront of JMU’s projects. If the problem is addressed, then every time the university expands with construction in the future, it won’t have to bend over backward to try to make parking work too.

While I’m grateful I attend a university where parking is one of students’ biggest complaints, this is nonetheless an issue that needs to be dealt with. It’s unfortunate that the school year hasn’t even started and the dread of parking has already set in.

Shanna Kelly is a junior media arts and design and Spanish double major. Contact Shanna at breezeopinion@gmail.com.
Dangers of drug culture

New Haven overdose sparks conversation about risk of synthetic marijuana for college students

In New Haven, Connecticut, last week, over 70 people overdosed on synthetic marijuana. Almost all occurred on the New Haven Green, a historic park bordering Yale University’s campus, and 12 occurred in a 40-minute period—an average of an overdose every 3 1/3 minutes. The synthetic marijuana, known as K2 or spice, was laced with fentanyl, an opioid roughly 50 times stronger than heroin. It’s not surprising then that so many overdosed on it so quickly after smoking so little.

Overdoses related to synthetic marijuana are on the rise in America as a whole, not just Connecticut. Two hours away in Washington, D.C., last month, over 300 people overdosed in a two-week period, and several died as a result. While the cause of death has not yet officially been declared as due to K2, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner says it “heavily suspects” they’re related to the synthetic cannabinoid.

A couple things make synthetic marijuana dangerous. It’s hard to regulate since it’s made of legal ingredients, and as soon as one combination of the legal ingredients is regulated, the recipe changes. Second, it’s marketed as a fun recreational drug, substitutable for marijuana, when it’s actually far more potent. Third, it’s very popular to lace with other drugs, particularly opioids like fentanyl. This adds not only the danger of rapid overdose and death, but also the insidious threat of opioid addiction for those who survive exposure.

College is many people’s first chance to be independent and break away from the rules of their parents. This leads many to their first experiences with the drug culture prevalent on all college campuses, including here at JMU. We’ve all been warned not to leave our drinks with other people or drink jungle juice we don’t know the ingredients of, but the same caution should apply to anything we put in our bodies.

Alcohol education is something JMU takes seriously, as I’m sure we all remember taking the online AlcoholEDU course before our freshman year. However, if we’re educated about the dangers of smoking synthetic marijuana, we can stop it from happening here. The worst thing to say about a death is that it was preventable, and every death due to K2 has been preventable.

All it takes is one dealer to substitute some K2 for their regular weed for an overdose epidemic to happen in Harrisonburg. However, if we’re educated about the dangers of smoking synthetic marijuana, we can stop it from happening here. The worst thing to say about a death is that it was preventable, and every death due to K2 has been preventable.

To help out your fellow Dukes, spread the word about the risks that come with synthetic marijuana before an overdose happens here.

Luke Borman is a senior international affairs major. Contact Luke at bormanin@dukes.jmu.edu.
Darts & Pats has been a Breeze tradition since the 1990s. For a chance to have your dart or pat in a print edition, visit our website and look under the opinion section for the submission form.

A “not-ready-to-go-back” dart to professors already sending emails about assignments.
From a student trying to enjoy the last few days of summer.

A “good-on-you” pat to D-Hall for offering a ton of diverse food options.
From a student who’s been waiting for three years.

A “son-of-a-gun” dart to my roommate who forgot to turn on our electricity.
From someone who just wants some air conditioning.

A “thanks-for-feeding-my-caffeine-addiction” pat to my coworker for blessing the office with coffee.
From a student running low on energy.

An “I-can-finally-watch-Game-of-Thrones” pat to my new roommate for blessing my apartment with HBO.
From a student who knows winter is coming.

A “thanks-for-being-a-great-school” pat to JMU for making it so hard to say goodbye.
From a student studying abroad this semester.

PSST... YOUR AD COULD GO HERE!

The Breeze
BREEZEJMU.ORG
YOU ARE READING THE
BEST MID-SIZE
WEEKLY NEWSPAPER
IN VIRGINIA

CONGRATULATIONS BREEZERS, AND BEST WISHES TO OUR GRADUATES!

WINNER OF THE VIRGINIA PRESS ASSOCIATION’S GRAND SWEEPSTAKES
(NON-DAILY NEWSPAPERS, 3,500-6,999 CIRCULATION)
As students across the country prepare to go back to school this fall, vast issues face this nation. Among those is the relevant, looming student-loan debt crisis, and our media has spent the last week talking about Omarosa Manigault.

Clearly, I’m not going to waste an article engaging in character assassination of Omarosa — just a paragraph. In short, many people are free to call this president a liar, and there’s some credence to that. However, Omarosa doesn’t have that luxury because she’s a bonafide liar hurling the same repulsive accusations of racism towards a man she has vehemently and steadfastly defended from those accusations repeatedly.

Furthermore, she taped a wiretap to her thigh to record General Kelly in the Situation Room as a publicity stunt for the purposes of monetizing her time in the White House by selling a salacious book condemning everyone she worked with. Short of being undercover for the DEA or working as a narc for the local police department, anyone who wears a wiretap underneath their dress is not to be trusted.

While Omarosa has certainly lost credibility, I bring it to light to show how easy it is to spiral into “gotcha” petty political coverage. Freedom of the press was granted to educate the public on the most important issues of our time; the Founding Fathers would be disgusted by the press’ behavior. Shame on our media for giving so much time to this shady staffer — we deserve better than this.

The over-coverage of these accusations on the press’s part is far from surprising. The media has a long history of covering politics in a horse race fashion — covering the ups and downs of the business, the trendy issues and the poll standings much more often than the facts and the substantive debates of governing.

Social Security and Medicare are going bankrupt, the country is $21 trillion in debt; American healthcare costs need to go down; we’ve had a festering immigration crisis for 30 years in the face of broken promises from politicians of both parties; our public education system needs reform and of course, something needs to be done about the $1.5 trillion in student loan debt American graduates and workers are shouldered with.

While we agree these issues need to be solved, there is disagreement on just how to achieve them — and that’s natural and healthy in a democracy. Our time in the political sphere needs to be spent cordially and seriously debating solutions to these problems, not on a 15 minutes of fame author that offers tabloid junk better left in the supermarket than clogging up national airwaves.

The Omarosa coverage that was thrust on us for 34 collective hours last week by MSNBC, Fox and CNN was an utter waste of time. It was a distraction, second perhaps only to Michael Wolf’s book “Fire and Fury” and the coverage it received this past winter. In uncertain times, I’m certain neither Michael Wolf nor Omarosa Manigault will even be in the glossary of American history 100 years from now; to the contrary, they’ll be a mere afterthought — if that. Understand, they’ve offered no solutions to the extraordinary challenges this country faces.

At the end of the day, people who are struggling to pay their bills and mortgage don’t care about rumors — they care about results. Remember, this is a representative democracy: If the Resistance wants to beat President Trump in 2020, they’ll have to do it with a candidate that campaigns on a substantive platform to help the middle class like Obama in ’08 and Clinton in ’92, not by another salacious book. If they want their candidate to be reelected in 2024, he or she will have to deliver on those results.

Thomas Jefferson once said, “Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.” Vigilance in educating the public, that is. The media, in their Omarosa 101 course it offered last week, has deviated far from its crucial task of educating the citizenry.

Eli Galiano is a junior political science major. Contact Eli at galianes@dukes.jmu.edu.
HANNAH ZEIGLER | random thoughts

The JMU campus will be undergoing drastic construction in the following years. In fact, more than $250 million worth of construction is in process for the upcoming semester. The areas under construction are older buildings in dire need of renovation. While it’s a large and pricey endeavor, it’s much needed.

Current and future construction includes the College of Business expansion, the Union Bank & Trust Center, Phillips Hall, Wilson Hall and a Chesapeake Avenue parking deck. Completed projects consist of the Godwin Field lot and the infamous D-Hall. A new residence hall on East Campus is also in the works.

These new renovations and constructions are necessary, as JMU is rapidly expanding. Between 2014 and 2017, the freshman class enrollment for JMU increased between one and two percent each year.

Older buildings like Chandler Hall, P.C. Dukes and Top Dog were outdated and needed to be torn down. All of Lakeside, along with the Village, are set to be reconstructed. These dorms have not yet been air conditioned.

Having lived in Shorts Hall my freshman year, I experienced firsthand the unpleasantness of living in a dorm that hadn’t been renovated since the 1980s. The hallways were narrow and dim, there was no air conditioning and everything was severely outdated.

However, with all this construction comes loud noise and the ruining of the beautiful aesthetic of JMU’s campus. While D-Hall was being built, it was a hindrance, as students were forced to walk around the construction site. Its placement in the middle of campus ruined the natural flow between the Quad and East Campus.

The tearing up of Godwin Field looks unsightly, as does the destruction of Dukes and Top Dog. Part of what makes a college campus great is the beauty and peaceful atmosphere, but that peace is ruined when there’s a clamor of construction noises.

Some people won’t care about the noise and disruption that construction projects introduce to campus life, while others are hampered in being able to study outside or walk to classes. Personally, I find the inconveniences of construction to be well worth the result.

JMU’s campus is beautiful and aesthetically pleasing — in fact, the campus is Virginia’s most Instagrammed landmark. Newer buildings like SSC are fresh and modern, making them popular destinations for students.

However, these construction projects might also deter those touring the campus from choosing JMU. Another drawback is that while the projects are being done all at once, it might be seen as unfair to older or current students who won’t get to enjoy the end result.

The tearing down of old dorms in Village and Lakeside are a necessity, as it’s unfair and ridiculous that students should have to pay the same room and board price as those living in Skyline or Bluestone.

Although I most likely won’t be at JMU when Top Dog and Dukes are finished, I’m glad they’re being renovated. While Top Dog wasn’t in horrible shape, Dukes needed to be redone. The interior was dingy and uninviting.

As for other buildings on campus, I’m glad that Wilson Hall is being redone as well, as its age is noticeable. While the Bluestone buildings are what make JMU’s campus iconic and beloved, I feel they need to be renovated and all should be air conditioned, particularly Burruss Hall and the buildings lining the Quad.

Although multiple construction projects bring disruptive noises and eyesores and obstruct students’ paths to classes, they’re much needed and crucial in making JMU appear modern and sophisticated.

Hannah Zeigler is a junior media arts and design and anthropology double major. Contact Hannah at zeiglehm@dukes.jmu.edu.
Welcome JMU! Go Dukes!

For One Day Only

BUY ONE GET ONE

FREE! Cajun Filet Biscuit

2 Pc. Chicken Dinner $2.99

Includes One Fixin’ and Made From Scratch Biscuit

Offer Valid in Harrisonburg, Charlottesville, Winchester and Staunton, Virginia locations only!
Expires September 30th, 2018
The Breakfast Bus has become an unparalleled hot spot in Harrisonburg. Now, this popular late-night stop officially opened a standalone store, "The Breakfast Bus Station," where Strite’s Donuts previously stood.

"When this opportunity came up, it was kind of a godsend," owner Christian Heafner said. "It's not like we had to secure a place downtown and rebrand where we were at, then tell people, 'Oh, check out our new location.' We were fortunate enough to get the same place that we started."

Originally, Heafner reached out to Carl Strite, the owner and founder of Strite’s Donuts, in hopes of parking the bus there a few times. Heafner chose the area because it’s central to the surrounding living areas of Hunter’s Ridge, Devon Lane and Forest Hills Manor. Eventually, it became the bus’s permanent location.

It was clear that the bus, with only a few tables and chairs, was too cramped for the almost 350 customers and orders per week it had to keep up with. The bus often sold out of its stuffed sandwiches, waffles and bagels within one or two days, making it difficult to stay open at times.

Strite could sense Heafner’s growing passion for the unique dining experience he’d created. In March 2018, Strite sold the store to Heafner and plans for remodeling began.

"I wish him well and I just hope and pray that he does really well there," Strite said. "He really put a lot of effort into getting it ready and making a good presentation and I think that's going to go a long way for him."

The new store attempts to recreate the vibe customers feel on the bus. It features rustic decorations like stained wooden pallets and burlap coffee bean sacks that cover the previously plain white walls. The outside of the building is a bright replica of the familiar purple and gold painted on the bus. There’s also a section of the store dedicated to a coffee bar and bakery, which serves things like espressos, cappuccinos, doughnuts and other pastries.

"It’s kind of crazy," Steven Miller, Heafner’s best friend who helped build and fund the bus, said. "After working on it for two-and-a-half years in my backyard, the fact we finally actually were selling food and making money on it was pretty awesome. It’s a pretty good feeling to actually build something."

Although opening the station was a top priority, the bus itself remains a major part of the company. Heafner and Miller plan to repaint the bus and continue to use it for catering and special events around Harrisonburg. Additionally, the station features a delivery service for not only items on the menu, but convenience items as well.

"We’re trying to get to the point where we have everything online so it’s super convenient," Heafner said. "Where you say, ‘I need this or I want a candy bar with it or I need some toilet paper with it, or whatever it may be, you can have it delivered to your house.

So now that we have a much bigger work area, we’re actually going to start doing breakfast delivery and we figured why not just deliver everything we have in the store?"

Some advantages of having the store in addition to the bus include warmer seating during the colder months and much more space for customers to relax and employees to work. One goal of The Breakfast Bus is to run the station 24/7. Heafner said the business will need about triple their current staff in delivery drivers alone to accommodate it. With an all-night schedule, Heafner hopes this new station will bring the same energy and atmosphere the bus did.

"It’s fun to come onto the bus and experience the nostalgia of something you probably haven’t ridden on since middle school," Heafner said. "But at the end of the day, it’s just the fact that it’s a spot that’s safe. You could go and drink and party all night and even when the bar is closed, you know that there’s a spot where you can get good food, there’s decent music and there’s a fun little crowd there all the time."
Students and faculty reflect on Sam Cross’ life and legacy at JMU

BY ABBY CHURCH
The Breeze

After tough days, JMU alumna Deanna Kennett (’06) remembers showing up for bass lessons with Samuel Cross. While she was there to learn music, Sam — as he preferred his friends call him — would instinctively know when something was wrong.

“He was like, ‘OK put the bass down, let’s just talk. Let’s just talk about what’s going on,’” Kennett said. “I think about what school would’ve been like without that and I’m just so grateful to have had somebody who really nurtured me and made sure to look out for me and take care of me during my time at JMU and beyond.”

Sam, one of JMU’s longest tenured professors, passed away on July 4 from natural causes at 78 years old. He had been retired from his role as a bass professor since 2013.

According to his obituary, he studied at the University of Texas at Austin and Indiana University. Professor emeritus Bob McCashin says Sam came straight to JMU after graduating from IU and was the university’s first full-time bass faculty member — it was the only place he ever taught. During his 44 years in Harrisonburg, he taught classes like Music in General Culture, String Techniques, Theory and Ear Training, Music History and more.

While Sam was known for being a gifted bass player and teacher during his time at JMU, he was better known for his impact on others. McCashin describes him as supportive, accommodating and kind.

“He was one of those individuals who was just helpful in most any way he could be to anyone who needed help or support,” McCashin said.

When McCashin first arrived at the university, Sam was on the search committee that hired him. He recalls going through auditions with him in which some students could barely hold a bow.

“There’d be [a student] I’d say, ‘Surely you’re not going to take this student,’ and he said, ‘Oh, I see some potential,’” McCashin said. “And two years later they’re playing the Boccherini Concerto. I mean, he just had this sixth sense about auditionees and potential and he could just see those things in prospective students.”

Bill Posey, the former director of concert and support services in the School of Music, had Sam for his music history class during his time as an undergraduate. He recounts Sam’s toughness as a professor.

One day, Sam asked Posey which instrument he played. When he said trumpet, Sam teased that brass players didn’t make above a C in his class. From that moment on, Posey made sure that didn’t happen.

“He challenged you as a student,” Posey said. “He did it in a humorous way sometimes, sometimes in a direct way. It made you want to do the best you could.”

One of the things Sam was most well-known for was his wit and eccentric personality. Kennett recounts he always had funny one-liners. McCashin told a story of Sam passing by conference rooms full of people on his way to get his mail. He’d walk in to say, “I vote no,” before leaving.

“You just never really quite knew what would come out of his mouth,” he said.

Through his quips, he bridged the gap between the professional and personal aspects of his life. Kennett said during his time at JMU, he acted as both a father figure and teacher.

“When he was in the room with you for a lesson, he was there as his entire self, not just ... wearing the professor cap,” Kennett said. “And I think the most unique quality as a professor is just his ability to ... help develop the person, not just developing the musician.”

Every time Kennett came to visit Sam after graduating, they always went to Taste of Thai to catch up. She said Sam held studio parties at his house every year where he’d make everyone a huge Thai feast.

“He found a way to turn the bass studio into one big family and knowing and caring about everyone individually,” Kennett said.

Out of everything she’s learned from Sam, the love for playing stuck. Kennett says Sam wasn’t able to play as much further along in his life and always loved hearing about her endeavors. He was also supportive of Kennett during her career path change.

As a music industry major, Kennett began her college career more focused on performance. When she made the decision to switch to administration, Kennett said Sam encouraged her to pursue a career in which she could use her full talents and abilities. She now works as the senior manager of education of Ensemble Connect at Carnegie Hall.

Sam’s impact on the School of Music was so instrumental, that a scholarship was created in his name. The Samuel G. Cross String Education Scholarship supports the String Music Education program and is given to a junior or senior every year. But his influence spans beyond the classroom and the music he taught.

“I think Sam’s loss is a loss to humanity,” McCashin said. “It really is, because I think about just the things I know and the people I know that he influenced and helped and supported and the universe in which all of that took place, and I just can’t imagine all of the people and the rest of the universe that I didn’t know about.”

CONTACT Abby Church at thebreezeculture@gmail.com. For more on the culture, arts and lifestyle of the JMU and Harrisonburg communities, follow the culture desk on Twitter @Breeze_Culture.
Oh, the places they’ve gone

With more than 60 summer study abroad programs, JMU offers world experiences through travel

Leeyah Jackson | The Breeze

Elizabeth Donovan, a junior communication studies major, studied in Ireland for eight weeks to gain class credit while exploring her Irish heritage.

“Family trips are awesome, but being able to experience a new trip with people your own age and a professor is a completely different experience,” Donovan said. “It’s just such an amazing thing because when else are you going to be 19, 20, 21 years old and traveling?”

Junior Earth science major Hannah Liddle studied abroad in the island nation Malta. The trip focused on sustainability, technology and education.

“I’m so respectful of other cultures because of it,” Liddle said. “Every place I went was completely different (...) and I now have friends from about 15 different countries.”

Mary Minns, a junior communication studies and writing, rhetoric and technical communication double major, studied abroad in Costa Rica.

“There was a big emphasis on having quality time even though I wasn’t part of the family,” Minns said. “I have lasting relationships with them now because of that.”

Andrea Econa, a junior nursing major, studied in clinical hospitals in Tarragona, Spain.

“It was really good to get out of the United States since I’ve lived in Virginia almost my whole life,” Econa said. “It definitely changed my outlook toward wanting to travel more and makes me want to live abroad in the future.”

CONTACT Leeyah Jackson at jacksold@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.
Step in line

JMU student dances with Radio City Rockettes at summer camp

By ANDREA BRUSIG
The Breeze

At the age of eight, Sara Moncure knew her dream was to become a professional dancer and perform alongside the Rockettes. After her dance studio received a backstage tour of Radio City Music Hall, the home of the Rockettes, Moncure fell in love with the props, stage and company as a whole.

Moncure, a junior media arts and design major, saw a glimpse of her dream when she participated in the Rockettes Summer Intensive over the summer in New York City. The week-long intensive included seminars, choreography and exclusive question and answer sessions for the participants. This wasn’t the first encounter Moncure has had with the company — she participated in their mini intensive last summer.

When Moncure was in high school, she stumbled upon an ad in Dance Spirit Magazine for RSI. She tore the ad out and pinned it in her room, deciding almost two years later she was serious about auditioning.

“It was one of the best times I’ve had in my life — kind of being on cloud nine and being where these women that I’ve idolized since age eight rehearse and perform. I was completely hooked, and I told my mom I was going back to audition,” Moncure said.

When she auditioned a second time for the full intensive, she was upset to find out she was put on the waitlist. All the sadness and nerves were set aside when she received an email in April saying she was offered a spot.

“It was a milestone within itself, because when you’ve had this childhood dream and you finally see the little glimmers of hope come in your direction, you want to latch onto every second and enjoy the ride,” Moncure said.

see DANCE, page 24
The intensive was filled with long hours of learning choreography, questions and answers with instructors and a special performance at NYU for friends and family to conclude the week. Moncure said her favorite part was the showcase, since it made her excited to audition for the company later this year. While rehearsing for the showcase, Moncure said her closest friendships were formed.

Moncure wasn’t the only Duke there during the intensive. The program allowed her to connect with two incoming freshmen who happened to be there the same week she was. Cathleen Turner, a theatre major and Emily Zach, a dance major, met Moncure by pure luck.

“It was kind of funny that it happened,” Zach said. “I had a JMU lanyard tied around my backpack and when Sara saw it, we started talking about that and got to know each other.”

Turner, on the other hand, met Moncure after overhearing her conversation about JMU. Moncure was surprised there were multiple people at the event who knew about the university.

“We were sitting in the dressing room together and we were all making small talk,” Turner said. “It was kind of awkward. We didn’t really know what to talk about, but I heard someone in the corner talking about JMU and I was just like, ‘Wait, who goes to JMU?’”

Turner said this sparked the beginning of a close bond between the pair and they were placed in the same line together for the showcase. Each line worked together the whole week, which came as a surprise to Turner. She said she took for granted how effortless the Rockettes make their routines seem.

“It’s so much harder than it looks,” Turner said. “It really humbles you to do it yourself. Everyone has a moment in the week when you want to break down and cry, but it’s so worth it in the end to show yourself that you really can do it.”

After spending two summers with the company, she plans on attending an open call audition for the next spring. She said participating in the intensives has given her an opportunity to catch a glimpse of what the auditions will be modeled after.

“Your dreams aren’t as far away as you think they are. I always thought that by a certain age it would be out of reach. A lot of people say that having a career in dance is a fantasy, but I don’t agree with that,” Moncure said. “I feel like if you push yourself enough to make it happen, then it will come true — that’s what comes with hard work, training and keeping focused on your process and not worrying about other people’s doubts.”

**Contact** Andrea Brusig at brusigap@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.

‘Your dreams aren’t as far away as you think they are,’

Sara Moncure
JOIN THE STUDENT DUKE CLUB

$25 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

• MEMBERSHIP APPAREL GIFT
• EXCLUSIVE SEATING & ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES AT ATHLETIC EVENTS
• EARLY ACCESS TO PREMIER EVENTS
• MEMBER-ONLY EVENTS, INCLUDING HOSPITALITY AND ALUMNI OUTREACH AND CONNECTION
• DUKE CLUB BONUS POINTS
• DISCOUNTS WITH DUKE CLUB PARTNERS

JOIN AT JMUDUKECLUB.COM/SDC
OR CALL (540) 568-6461

UPCOMING EVENT

JMU FOOTBALL WATCH PARTY
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 AT NOON
GRAFTON STOVALL THEATRE

FREE SNACKS PROVIDED!
OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS

STUDENT DUKE CLUB TAILGATE ON 9/15/18 - FOOTBALL HOME OPENER
Backup quarterback Hunter Etheridge's impact on the field comes from his leadership off it.
As beads of sweat form on the stray hairs of his beard and fall helplessly to the scorching hot turf, junior center Mac Patrick gets set in position. With one hand resting on his thigh and the other curled around the top of the football, he snaps the ball to the quarterback for what seems to be the umteenth time. A clean exchange is made, Patrick stands up and senior running back Trai Sharp runs by his right side. No contact is made with the defense — the team is taking it easy with a “helmets-only” practice in preparation for its second scrimmage of the summer — but that doesn’t prevent the players from growing weary of the tedious and tiresome training.

The summer practices for a college football athlete is like clockwork, except the clock seems to move at half the speed. They wake up, go to practice, get the necessary treatment they need, work out, attend team meetings and repeat that on an endless loop for a month. The team has Sundays off but, aside from that, it’s full throttle until Sept. 1. The Dukes follow a very strict and thorough process on a daily basis, but the coaching staff tries to keep the attitude fresh.

“A different approach to keeping things fresh comes in the goofy nature of some of the team’s best players. Redshirt senior cornerback Jimmy Moreland, widely known as the joker of the team, uses his kooky attitude and over-the-top charisma to send a lighthearted vibe to the rest of the guys in the locker room.

“I try to bring the energy every day to practice,” Moreland said. “Everyone looks at me as the funny guy on the team, they love being around me, so I try to get everyone going.”

While the meticulousness of pre-practice, practice and post-practice are weighing down the minds and energy of the team, it’s important to respect the necessity for such forethought. Helmets-only practices and other precautions are meant to ensure no contact, collisions or, more importantly, injuries.

JMU has had a relatively healthy summer, with only one unnamed freshman wide receiver banged up because he hadn’t had his ankles taped by the training staff — a requirement of the coaches. Ice baths are open for use after practice near Gate A of Bridgeforth Stadium, and the training staff is equipped to tend to all aches and pains.

“I think we’ve done a great job at taking care of our bodies,” Patrick said. “After every practice, making sure we’re getting the specific treatment we need … I always get in the cold tubs first, then shower. I’ll probably stop in the training room to get some ice for whatever is bothering me.”

A different approach to keeping things fresh comes in the goofy nature of some of the team’s best players. Redshirt senior cornerback Jimmy Moreland, widely known as the joker of the team, uses his kooky attitude and over-the-top charisma to send a lighthearted vibe to the rest of the guys in the locker room.

“I try to bring the energy every day to practice,” Moreland said. “Everyone looks at me as the funny guy on the team, they love being around me, so I try to get everyone going.”

While the meticulousness of pre-practice, practice and post-practice are weighing down the minds and energy of the team, it’s important to respect the necessity for such forethought. Helmets-only practices and other precautions are meant to ensure no contact, collisions or, more importantly, injuries.

JMU has had a relatively healthy summer, with only one unnamed freshman wide receiver banged up because he hadn’t had his ankles taped by the training staff — a requirement of the coaches. Ice baths are open for use after practice near Gate A of Bridgeforth Stadium, and the training staff is equipped to tend to all aches and pains.

“I think we’ve done a great job at taking care of our bodies,” Patrick said. “After every practice, making sure we’re getting the specific treatment we need … I always get in the cold tubs first, then shower. I’ll probably stop in the training room to get some ice for whatever is bothering me.”
Summer training camp consists of daily sessions for four weeks with two scrimmages from page 27

Not only can such tedious precautions help players survive the summer, but they also go a long way in building a healthy body for a physically challenging season. This is something the coaching staff is placing a strong emphasis on, after key contributors like graduate student running back Cardon Johnson and redshirt junior linebacker Dimitri Holloway were sidelined for the season by the end of Week 3.

“There’s expectations for treatment times, we’re constantly talking to them about hydration,” Houston said. “We check all meals, we check their dorm rooms at night. There’s a certain expectation for conduct, but the thing is we’ve had no problems with anything during camp.”

Whether or not the players grow fatigued and anxious as the preseason continues, the microscopic precautions are furthering the team’s chances at a fourth-consecutiveCAA Championship and third straight FCS national championship appearance. That still doesn’t mean the players aren’t ready to hit someone not in the purple and gold.

“It comes a point in time when you get tired of playing against your teammates and you wanna just face some competition,” redshirt junior defensive lineman Ron’Dell Carter said. “You wanna go get someone else.”

CONTACT Blake Pace at breezesports@gmail.com. For more sports coverage follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.
JMU alumnus claims his first World Series of Poker title

By ABBY CHURCH
The Breeze

When poker player and JMU alumnus Yaser Al-Keliddar ('02) woke up the morning of July 9, his original plan was to take the day off. Three days later, he had $154,000 in his pocket, a gold bracelet on his wrist and a World Series of Poker championship title to his name. Al-Keliddar's victory at the Las Vegas poker tournament marked his first huge cash payout.

Al-Keliddar flew to Nevada in June for poker specifically. During his six-week excursion in the city, he rented a house with a few other friends and played in various tournaments.

The morning of his day off, Al-Keliddar received a call from his friend Adam Hendrix about an hour and a half before the World Series of Poker tournament began. Hendrix asked if he was going to play.

"I didn't even know about it, so I said no," Al-Keliddar said. "But then I said, 'Maybe I should,' and he said, 'Yeah you definitely should.'"

Hendrix said he'd been giving Al-Keliddar a hard time because he plays limit holdem, a variety of poker with set betting according to a hard time because he plays limit holdem, a

Al-Keliddar's victory at the Las Vegas poker tournament marked his first huge cash payout. Along with the gold bracelet, Al-Keliddar also won a few pots — including a big one on a flush. When he noticed Helslpi had only a few chips left, he went all-in and found himself in a dominating position.

When the dealer ran the board for all-in, it didn’t help Helppi’s case. Consequently, Al-Keliddar won the game and received $154,000 and a coveted gold championship bracelet.

Some of Al-Keliddar’s friends were watching from back home in D.C. JMU alumnus Jeff Dinkelmeyer ('01) kept up with the tournament through a live feed.

"This is like, his huge win," Dinkelmeyer said. "It’s a huge accomplishment … [winning a bracelet is] something that’s going to stay with you for the rest of your life."

Al-Keliddar’s victory came right after his favorite team’s. An avid fan of the Washington Capitals, he flew out to Vegas a week later than he’d planned because he wanted to see the Caps win their first Stanley Cup in Game 5 in Vegas and even partied with friends in the same club that the team went to following their championship win.

“Just to celebrate the Caps’ victory and hoping that maybe their luck would rub off on me,” Al-Keliddar said. "I was just sort of like, ‘Wow, I’m getting pretty deep in a world series tournament and maybe I could win this tournament, that would be pretty cool,’” Al-Keliddar said. "A World Series bracelet is a very big deal for poker players, it’s like how people keep score."

At the end of day two, only eight players remained. Al-Keliddar was tied for the chip lead with Finnish player Juha Helppi. The final day, when the game got down to three players, he called the bluff of third-place finisher Justin Pharlo with a king, queen, three, nine and nine on the board. Al-Keliddar had three in his hand. When the tournament came down to him and Helppi, Al-Keliddar held a 2-1 lead.

"I remember thinking that if I lose this heads-up battle, it’ll be kind of devastating because I’ll probably never get another chance to win a bracelet," Al-Keliddar said.

As the game pushed forward, Al-Keliddar started closing the gap and won a few pots — including a big one on a flush. When he noticed Helslpi had only a few chips left, he went all-in and found himself in a dominating position.

When the dealer ran the board for all-in, it didn’t help Helppi’s case. Consequently, Al-Keliddar won the game and received $154,000 and a coveted gold championship bracelet.

Some of Al-Keliddar’s friends were watching from back home in D.C. JMU alumnus Jeff Dinkelmeyer ('01) kept up with the tournament through a live feed.

"This is like, his huge win," Dinkelmeyer said. "It’s a huge accomplishment … [winning a bracelet is] something that’s going to stay with you for the rest of your life."
By BLAKE PACE
The Breeze

For Harrisonburg native Nikki Newman, her way of life was decided years before her birth. Her father, Charlie Eric Newman, was a member of JMU football from 1979-82, while her mother Robyn was a starter on JMU’s field hockey and lacrosse programs. The two met each other in between practices on the turf in Bridgeforth Stadium, and so began the birth of a JMU family.

That family would increase by two over the next several years, with the birth of Nikki and her brother Charlie Grant. The two would spend the early parts of their lives entrenched with JMU Athletics — attending football and other programs’ games on a weekly basis.

“Growing up, we used to go to all the football games,” Nikki said. “We would walk down the train tracks to the football field, and I remember running around with my brother on the red track surrounding the field.”

Although the track no longer remains, Nikki will find herself running around Bridgeforth Stadium nearly 20 years later. JMU football’s play-by-play radio commentator Dave Thomas took to Twitter mid-August to welcome Nikki to the JMU Sprint Broadcast Network. She will serve as a sideline reporter for all 2018 home games, a position created with the intent on Nikki filling its role.

Those same childhood memories would make a lasting impact on Nikki. As she grew older, colleges took quick note of her basketball talent. Playing in the Amateur Athlete Union circuit, Nikki drew interest from her hometown college early on and JMU would keep a close eye on her throughout high school. When it came time to decide, Nikki was conflicted with where to take her talents.

“Originally I thought, coming out of high school, that I wanted to get out of the area,” Nikki said. “But once I was around some of the women’s players and coaches, as soon as they offered I knew that’s where I wanted to be.”

Despite not coming to the decision until the summer before her senior season, Nikki would officially become a Duke in 2009. Charlie Grant was already a member of the football team and would graduate in 2010, leaving Nikki the chance to shine in her next three seasons. As a player, she won three conference championships (’10, ’11, ’14) and was the CAA Defensive Player of the Year in 2012.

Not only was Nikki a member of some extremely successful basketball seasons, she was the heart and soul of the team. In the 2011-12 run to the NIT national championship game, Nikki hit a clutch, game-tying three point shot in the second-round matchup against Wake Forest with 6.6 seconds on the clock. The Dukes would win in overtime and advance all the way to the championship game before falling to Oklahoma State, 75-68.

Beyond their playing careers, Nikki’s parents and brother are season ticket holders for JMU football games. Their immediate family alone has made its collective mark on JMU Athletics, however, their involvement today stretches far beyond the bleachers.

“Anybody who has been to JMU or been around JMU realizes the family atmosphere,” Nikki said. “We’ve made so many connections with people who either work at JMU or past alum … bloodline or not, there’s a lot of people there I’d consider family.”

When it came time to hang up the shoes and graduate, Nikki couldn’t stay away from the purple and gold. Suiting up on the sideline, Nikki would begin color commentary for the women’s basketball team. She’s done the job exceptionally for several years and added brilliant insight on the life of a student athlete, which caught the eyes of a few very important individuals.

“Nikki has always been my first choice to join our crew,” Thomas said via email. “We wanted someone who was deeply connected to JMU, and that’s for sure Nikki.”

Her insight as a young member of the media filled with fresh ideas in an industry that’s always adapting is what struck Thomas and Estes the most when deciding to bring her in. They’ve already spent time brainstorming ways to bring an increased exposure to their audience, and Nikki’s bright and forward-thinking mind are already making an impact for the upcoming season.

As for the transition to football, she doesn’t expect it to be as effortless as it was covering women’s basketball. Nikki might not feel as if she knows all the intricacies of football, but knowing JMU has become a second nature by this point. She’s thankful, though, to have the experience of her brother and father to sprinkle in knowledge and advice here and there.

“I’m excited about it,” Charlie Grant said. “It’ll be some good family conversation around the dinner table … She’s definitely been around [football] her whole life so she knows the game.”

Nikki will spend the 2018 football season strapped to the JMU sideline, providing in-game news and breaking developments for what should be an exciting college football season. It seems almost too fitting that she’ll spend her Saturdays on the turf in Bridgeforth, walking along the same land her very own life began, roughly 30 years prior.

CONTACT Blake Pace at breezesports@gmail.com. For more sports coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.
Welcome back

JMU

LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE

Apply today

BRAND NEW CLUBHOUSES | RENOVATED APARTMENTS

Check us out!

540.432.0600 | live-thehills.com