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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY TANNER LESLIE / THE BREEZE

According to the University Health Center, nicotine is as addictive as heroin, cocaine and alcohol. Research has also proven that it affects the maturation of the adolescent brain.

@thebreezenews | The Breeze | @BreezeNewsJMU | breezejmu.org | Thursday, December 6, 2018

Caught up in smoke

The University Health Center and SGA have spoken out about how, despite common beliefs, JUULs aren't better for the health of users than traditional cigarettes

By MARY HARRISON
The Breeze

Cigarette use is down in the U.S., but a trendy form of nicotine ingestion has been sweeping college students, high schoolers and teens across the nation. JUULs — the brand name of these compact e-cigarettes — can be responsible for younger individuals becoming hooked on nicotine.

Blamed for public backlash over teenage vaping, the sleek device has become so widespread, that the action has turned into a verb. As JUULing has grown in popularity, so has its reputation for being "better for you" than actual cigarettes. But JUULs were introduced to the market in 2015 and there's not enough medical data yet to determine long-term effects.

"Let's be clear, this product is meant to vaporize a poison — specifically nicotine — so individuals can inhale it into their bodies," Dr. Andrew Guertler, medical director of the University Health Center, said. "The amount of nicotine in one e-cigarette cartridge is equal to the amount of nicotine in a pack of cigarettes."

On Oct. 29, the Student Government Association held an informational session as part of its yearly "Today I Learned" series with an open panel for students to ask questions about JUULing.

"JUULing hit heights this year, so we wanted to let people make informed decisions," Calli Dukas, SGA academic affairs committee chair, said. "We took an unbiased approach to inform students of the risks."

This event was the first campus initiative regarding vaping. The e-cigarettes have become more accessible on campus, as both JUULs and JUUL pods can be purchased with FLEX at Mr. Chips, a campus convenience store.

"Aramark was responding to student requests for them to be sold in the convenience stores," Bill Wyatt, director of communications and university spokesman, said in an email. Aramark didn't respond to a request to comment.

JMU Policy 1111 restricts smoking within buildings and facilities, including libraries, parking garages, vehicles owned or rented by the university and individual offices. This isn't limited to cigarettes, but instead encompasses smoking as exhaling smoke from an e-cigarette or any kind of smoking device.

"The vapor is an aerosol, so we have secondhand smoke to consider," Mindy Koon, assistant director of alcohol and other drug abuse prevention at UHC, said. "Thirdhand smoke, which is released to furniture, can have negative impacts to others in the environment."

The December newsletter of "Potty Mouth," which is hung on the back of bathroom door stalls around campus, featured JUULs and its risks. JUULs, unlike tobacco products, have a non-traceable odor.

"The marketing, the flavor varieties, their novelty and the general idea that these products are safe make them attractive," Koon said. "Now that they changed the website and the way they advertise, I think there's potential for it to make a difference."

JUUL Labs claims that its products are for adult smokers, however, multiple lawsuits allege the mission as deceptively marketed toward minors. The suits additionally accused the e-cigarette startup of causing users' nicotine addiction.

Following these allegations, the FDA announced a campaign to curb teenage vaping and announced Nov. 15 that it would restrict the sale of flavored JUUL pods to areas unreachable to teenagers. To avert users from moving to cigarettes, the brand, which has over a 70 percent share of the e-cigarette market, continued to sell tobacco, menthol and mint flavors.

"If an individual is already addicted to smoking cigarettes, then yes, e-cigarettes are a better alternative," Guertler said. "The tars and other contaminants in cigarette smoke, which are the primary contributors to lung cancer and lung damage [result] in COPD."

According to Guertler, research has suggested that nicotine is at least as equally addictive as heroin, cocaine and alcohol. It affects maturation of still-developing adolescent brains and interrupts the progression of healthy neurologic pathways for acquisition of knowledge, attention and vulnerability to addiction.

JUULs contain the highest nicotine content compared to other e-cigarettes in the U.S. market. Many European countries have regulated or banned e-cigarettes, and when traveling or studying abroad, an avid JUUL user may revert to cigarettes.

"It is evident that nicotine, especially in the younger person, is a gateway drug and leads to use of more dangerous drugs and addictive behavior," Guertler said. "There is research that shows that in individuals aged 15-26, use of e-cigarettes is associated with advancement of traditional tobacco use."

The release of dopamine when nicotine is inhaled is thought to be the source of the pleasurable sensations experienced when smoking, and according to Guertler, can include relaxation, a buzz and a release of tension.

"After you've smoked a few times, nicotine begins to weaken your ability to feel pleasure, causing you to need more nicotine in order to sustain the good feelings," Guertler said. "This is the cycle of the smoking habit; in order to continue feeling pleasure from smoking, you must continue to smoke more cigarettes, more frequently."

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JACOB WEINHEIMER / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Chamberlain fixes phones right in front of his customers, creating a personal experience that typically lasts 15-45 minutes.

Student cashes in on lack of local, cheap phone repair

By MITCHELL SASSER
contributing writer

A cracked phone screen is a source of terror for most college students, but for Matt Chamberlain, it's a steady income.

Chamberlain, a senior integrated science and technology major, fixes iPhones through his business, Cracked 'n Shattered repair. His inspiration came from cracking his iPod Touch in sixth grade and wanting to do the small repair by himself, as opposed to paying $120 for a $10 piece of glass.

"Over time, I've built my confidence with working with electronics, it's natural," Chamberlain said. "But it's really taking off in college."

He started developing his talents in high school when friends would come to him with their iPhone 5s that needed repairs. Since then, he's had hundreds of students visit his business and is making between $750 and $1,500 a month.

"I just always love hearing the stories people have from how they broke it," Chamberlain said. "Whether it was a night out on the weekend, or they were in ECL and [it] just plopped off the table. I'm always curious to see how the customer broke their phone."

His prices range depending on the type of phone. An iPhone 4 costs $40 to repair, while an iPhone 8 Plus costs $90. The repair can range from 15-45 minutes, and he aims to fix it the same day the phone is given to him.

Senior Hannah Clark met Chamberlain through mutual ISAT classes. She has personal experience with Chamberlain's business.

"He's actually fixed a couple of my phones, I always tend to break the screens and he fixes them really quick," Clark said. "He will do it right there with you and explain what he is doing."

Chamberlain saw potential for his business to grow due to the lack of repair shops around JMU. He also actively posts in Facebook groups to alert students of his business, since they're his primary customers.

"I'm from Northern Virginia in Alexandria, and there's 30-40 cell phone repair shops in that area," Chamberlain said. "But here in Harrisonburg, I can only name three or four. The market is definitely there for it."

Zach Shaver, a senior integrated science and technology major, says he was impressed with Chamberlain's skill with handling iPhones. He also has had two of his phones repaired.

"I didn't want to tell my parents and I didn't have much money, so [Chamberlain] said that he has a business," Shaver said. "He took it, started separating the screen and the phone, and [it] only took about 10-15 minutes and cost $35."

Chamberlain caters his time toward students, sometimes doing multiple repairs in one day depending on how many people need their phone fixed. Moving forward, Chamberlain hopes to continue and expand his work.

"I definitely see room for the future of my business," Chamberlain said. "I want to move more into the hardware repair side of things, so right now mostly what I am doing is taking the old broken assembly and putting a new assembly on. I'd like to move into repairing the assembly itself, but I need special equipment for that."

Even after graduation, Chamberlain wants to keep Cracked 'n Shattered repair as a side project. He's also looking for a team of people that would help him run it in Harrisonburg.

"I think he's really efficient," Clark said. "I trust him because he works on computers and he's into programming. I think that gives him an advantage over other people."

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‘What community means’

Local church donates building to neighborhood organization, creating partnership between Mennonite and African-American communities

By MATTHEW SASSER
The Breeze

The Northeast Neighborhood Association announced a plan Nov. 21 to create a community center within Broad Street Mennonite Church. NENA has begun accepting ideas from the community for the future plans of the center.

The trustees of the Broad Street Mennonite Church voted to donate the building to NENA in recognition of and respect for those who have worked in the community over the past two decades. NENA's mission is to make the community a safer, more caring place to live and a welcoming neighborhood for families of all economic and ethnic backgrounds. They work in partnership with residents, city government and non-governmental agencies.

“I think anyone familiar with the area, if they grew up here, they have memories of that church,” Markita Madden-Puckett, a resident of the Northeast Neighborhood, said.

She says that she remembers her parent's generation telling stories about attending vacation bible school at the church. For Madden-Puckett, the church has been a symbol of what community can be.

“It's been a real representation of what community means,” Madden-Puckett said. “To have people from a Mennonite background come together with a traditionally African-American area in town, it really represents that blending of community and doing it successfully.”

The Northeast Neighborhood is a middle-class neighborhood that is primarily African-American with a strong Latino and immigrant presence. Broad Street Mennonite Church has traditionally served the Mennonite community, which is predominantly white.

“We plan to make this a safe space for community activities and meetings of various types,” Steven Thomas, a community organizer and event coordinator for NENA, said in an email. “The Northeast Neighborhood Association Community Center will be an attractive and sustainable institution in the Harrisonburg community for years to come.”

As part of NENA's African-American historical preservation projects, the Broad Street Mennonite Church has turned supervision of the facility over to an organization engaged in memorializing African-American history, according to Thomas.

NENA is open to any suggestions for ideas about the future of this new facility. Part of their goal is to integrate the public into their decision-making.

"Cultivating a closer working relationship with the James Madison University student population will be crucial to the success of the NENA Community Center," Thomas said. "We invite JMU students to contact us with their own ideas and propositions for the space and if any organizations on campus would like to utilize the Community Center we encourage all of them to contact us with their respective thoughts and ideas."

Nevin Zehr doesn't currently live in the Northeast Neighborhood but grew up on East Elizabeth Street. He considers the area his home.

"The Broad Street Mennonite Church has always been a progressive organization," Zehr said. "Unfortunately, their numbers have declined. I think this is a great way to give this asset back to the black community."

Zehr said he thinks programs that teach English as a second language don't get the funding they need in the Harrisonburg area. He said he sees the acquisition of this building as an opportunity for these programs to flourish.

"I think that would be a great way to bridge various communities that have different cultural backgrounds, but have the same economic interests," Zehr said.

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

PHOTOS BY TRISTAN LOREI / *THE BREEZE*

Way to go, Guy

UREC assistant director promotes diversity and leadership through exercise

HEATHER ECKSTINE / *THE BREEZE*

DeBrun goes out of his way to involve those who don't frequently visit UREC to participate in the outdoor recreation section.

DeBrun has also won a diversity enhancement award.

By BRIDGET MURPHY
The Breeze

Guy deBrun, assistant director of the Adventure Program at UREC, has promoted an environment through his work where it's encouraged for every student to be involved with outdoor recreation. He has gone as far as partnering with the Center for Multicultural Student Services and the Counseling Center to recruit individuals from all areas.

DeBrun's goals are to include people who may not always think to come to the outdoor recreation section of UREC by creating wilderness therapy trips and guided class camping trips. The hard work and dedication that he has shown in every aspect of his work was recently recognized with the Jim Rennie Leadership Award at the Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education National Conference.

Coordinator of the Adventure Program Sasha Griffith and deBrun work together to lead the Adventure Program and focus on many different aspects of recreation, such as climbing walls, adventure rental equipment (tents and sleeping bags), a trip program and the challenge course at Sentara Park.

"I hope to continue to mentor students, both those that are interested in pursuing the field of outdoor education and those who are broadly looking to enter the working force with some leadership skills," deBrun said. "I hope I can impact their skills in outdoor recreation so regardless in what they do in life, they have the skills to participate in the outdoors."

The recent award represents the impact deBrun has made on the Adventure Program at JMU as well as the years of work he has provided to AORE. He's served on its board of directors and as president of the association in years past.

The criteria for the award included "contributions to AORE which are far beyond the ordinary" and "leadership of unusual significance in the field of outdoor recreation and education." The awards committee believed the work and time he dedicated to AORE stood out most.

"With the outdoor recreation industry, you have to be a well-rounded person and have the hard skills to go out and lead a trip, especially being the assistant director," Griffith said. "You've got to have the soft skills of working in student development, knowing that the students that you're training may be experiencing it for the first time."

About 5-10 people are nominated for the award annually. According to UREC Associate Director for Programming Steve Bobbitt, it often takes multiple nominations to receive an award, but deBrun won the first time he was nominated.

Bobbitt worked with a few other colleagues to nominate deBrun in September. They thought he was worthy of the award because of his endless desire to bring people into the program and teach others.

"He's very passionate and knowledgeable about what he does, especially in the adventure field about being trustworthy and being thorough," Bobbitt said. "He loves working with students and that shines through every day in terms of what he does and he's really been able to take it to the next level in terms of how many students are in here and participating."

DeBrun said he's committed to diversity because he believes the benefits of spending time outdoors should be available to everyone. He wants to provide the skills and education for individuals to break down barriers in their way and be involved in the world around them.

The award has been given to 22 individuals since 1996 when it was created from a similar predecessor award. Out of the four "big awards" presented at the conference, Bobbitt said that the Jim Rennie Leadership Award is one of the highest honors.

This title adds onto the Adventure Program's strong reputation within the outdoor recreation and education community. DeBrun has also won a diversity enhancement award for the university, and the program has been awarded AORE program of the year as well.

"I think our well-being in general has a huge impact on how we go about the world and how we enjoy our lives," deBrun said. "So I think if you have the ability to impact people's health and well-being, you really have an opportunity to touch so many different parts of their lives and set them up for a way to be successful in life."

CONTACT Bridget Murphy at murph2br@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.

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MS043

It's grind time

Students are encouraged to study ahead of time and take care of their mental and physical health during finals week

PHOTOS BY HEATHER ECKSTINE / *THE BREEZE*

Libraries are expected to be full of students cramming for exams days before testing takes place.

ELIZA MACKNIGHT | two cents' worth

December is thought of as the best time of the year due to the holidays and festivities. For college students, however, this marks the beginning of finals season. With projects and exams all having due dates within the same week and counting as large percentages of grades, stakes are high and students feel the pressure to perform well. That being said, a number of students forget that the most important aspect of doing well during finals is time management.

Professors will often create large assignments that have due dates backing up directly to finals. Sometimes, it isn't easy to plan and get ahead on studying, but it's an important part of doing well. Leaving all the studying that needs to get done until the last few days before a huge test not only creates unnecessary stress, but makes it difficult to absorb the information being studied.

Trying to cram for an exam doesn't give the brain enough time to process a semester's worth of material, and no matter how long the content is being reread for, it won't stick unless it's being reinforced over a period of several days. The most effective way to study for a cumulative exam is to begin looking over old information the week before an exam and slowly working towards the newer material, studying a little each day. Everyone is different and finding a productive way to study will be a different process for each individual. However, getting ahead on studying is proven to help the most.

This is especially important to remember as students usually begin placing their health last as finals week rapidly approaches. Pulling all nighters, not eating and taking stimulant prescription drugs have become extremely popular on college campuses as ways to cram as much information into students' brains while staying alert and focused for long periods of time. While these methods might seem effective in the short term, they each have a lengthy list of negative long-term effects that come alongside them. Not getting enough sleep and developing poor eating habits, even just for a week, can result in weakening of the immune system. This alone can substantially increase the chances of being sick over winter break.

While taking prescription drugs as stimulants might enhance performance and concentration, as well as acting as a mood booster, they can also create unforeseen consequences. Besides not knowing how the brain will react to a drug not specifically intended for it, these drugs are also incredibly addictive and even taking just a few to get through finals week is enough to get anyone hooked.

Finals is a stressful time for every college student, and finding the time to plan ahead amongst a collection of other assignments and projects is difficult. It's important, however, to make time management a priority from the beginning so that health and well-being don't have to take a toll. College is about getting an education, but it's also about having fun, and everyone should be able to enjoy a well-deserved break without feeling the consequences of their finals week choices.

Eliza MacKnight is a sophomore psychology major. Contact Eliza at macknieg@dukes.jmu.edu.

DARTS & PATS

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

An **"I'm-trying-to-sleep-dart"** dart to the maintenance staff blowing leaves off the sidewalk at 8 a.m right under my window.

From an upperclassman who doesn't have class until noon and would like to sleep in a little.

A **"thank-you"** pat to Alex from the School of Nursing for helping bring lab supplies up to Occupational Therapy!

From a friend who appreciates your help very much.

A **"help-me-pay-it-forward"** dart to the JMU Alumni Association for not picking up the phone when I tried to call to find new JMU grads in need of a job.

From a 2008 grad who's committed to helping junior alums more than senior alums helped her.

A **"green-dot"** dart to the JMU band for sexual derogatory words in their victory song at the football game.

From a person who thinks that JMU's engagement with ideas and the world is better than that, and there are consequences!

Editorial Policies

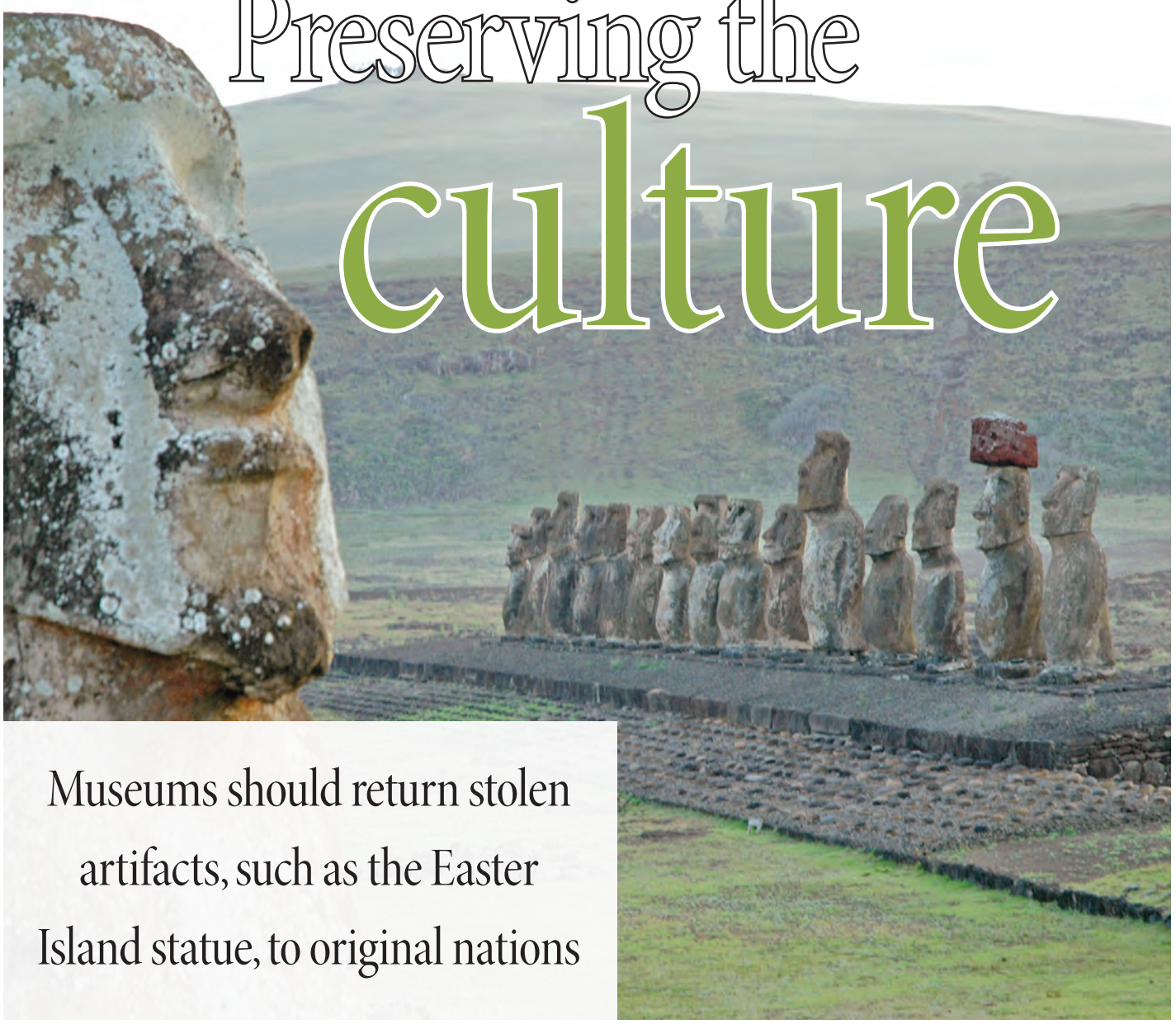
The Breeze
1598 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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, 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.

Preserving the culture



Museums should return stolen artifacts, such as the Easter Island statue, to original nations

COURTESY OF TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

The Rapa Nui nation urges for the return of the moai statue on display at the British Museum.

RYANN SHEEHY | contributing columnist

A recent delegation of Easter Islanders sent to London have spoken out about the injustice surrounding an eight-foot tall moai statue that's been on display in the British Museum for around 150 years. Similar to cultural artifacts looted in other colonized nations, the statue named Hoa Hakananai'a, meaning "stolen friend," was taken from Easter Island by Richard Powell in 1868, shipped to Great Britain and given to Queen Victoria as a gift.

The statue is now known as one of the most photographed artifacts in the museum and is a favorite of the museum's six million annual visitors. The governor of the Rapa Nui nation, Tarita Alarcon Rapu, pleaded with England and the British Museum in a tearful press conference for the return of the statue that's believed to hold the souls of their deified relatives.

The British have a long history of stolen or otherwise illegally possessed art and artifacts because of the immense power of the once-massive British Empire. The British Museum in particular is full of these looted treasures. In addition to the enormous Easter Island head statue, the museum displays four Elgin statues from the Parthenon in Greece as well as a second, smaller Easter Island statue named Hava.

Many colonizing nations regret their dark pasts and have made strides to reconcile the wrongdoings of their ancestors. However, museums around the world have been slow to realize the pieces they've housed for centuries may rightfully belong to a culture silenced by dominant white countries.

Many say we live in post-colonial world, but that may be a myth too easily believed. There are various ways in which first-world countries continue to exert dominance and authority over other developing nations, especially non-white nations, whether it be economic power or the continued possession of items of cultural or religious importance.

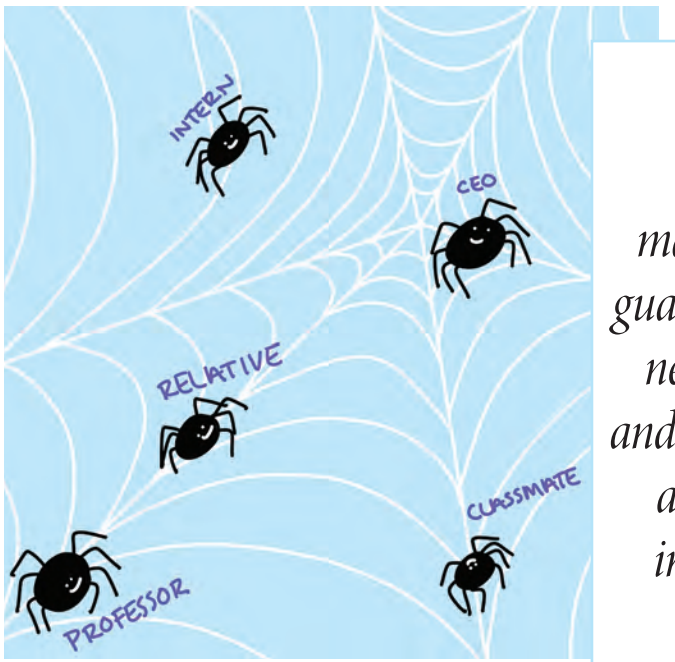
It can be assumed Tarita Alarcon Rapu spoke for many peoples when she said, "We came here, but we are just the body. You, the England people, have our soul." These artifacts can hold priceless value for the origin culture that can never be appreciated or respected by "preserving" them in a museum.

One common argument for allowing these artifacts to stay in the hands of museums and collectors is that they preserve the piece for posterity and can educate the public on the history and culture that it comes from. This claim seems valid, but the British Museum failed to mention in any of the information given about the exhibit how the statue ended up in the museum. By omitting the complicated history of Britain and the many small nations it colonized, such as that of the Rapa Nui people, the museum is only showing its visitors part of the picture.

As to the preservation of this statue, Felipe Ward, Chile's heritage minister, said "The best place for this moai is where it was created, Rapa Nui is an open air museum so the conditions for protecting it are perfect." It's often forgotten that where things were originally meant to be may be the best place for them to stay.

If people had to travel to Easter Island to see these magnificent statues, their economy could benefit from increased tourism, and those who traveled there could understand the greater significance of these statues to the native Rapa Nui. It should no longer be up to countries like England, France and the U.S. to decide what should be done with these cultural objects. Steps in international law should be taken to ensure all stolen goods be returned to their origin nations.

Ryann Sheehy is a sophomore theater and media arts and design double major. Contact Ryann at sheehyrl@dukes.jmu.edu.



KAT ELLIS / *THE BREEZE*

College majors don't guarantee jobs; networking and internships are just as important

Outside the major

MEGAN KLEPPER | changing perspective

There are different stigmas associated with each major. Majors such as business, nursing and education seem to employ students directly after college. On the other hand, majors such as film, art and English seem to leave students unemployed and or with lesser incomes when they're employed. However, it's not just the major of a student that secures a job after graduation. It's the credentials, experience and work ethic that puts certain employees at the top of the list. No matter what someone's major is, a job isn't 100 percent guaranteed.

Not only do students get judged after college for having a certain major, there's plenty of judgement during a student's four years at a university. Those who are more likely to be employed or make a higher salary tend to belittle those who are less likely to. It's very easy to judge others seeing the difference in workload. However, the amount and difficulty of workload depends on each professor and ability of the student, not the major itself.

There have been studies to analyze the unemployment rate based on certain majors. For example, one study showed mass media had an unemployment rate of 7.4 percent whereas nursing had an unemployment rate of 2.3 percent. There's a high demand for nurses nationally as well as internationally, which leads to many more job opportunities. In contrary, mass media is a difficult field to be employed in because the jobs are simply not available.

No matter what a student's major is, there are plenty of ways to increase the chance of being employed after college. One of the most helpful steps is completing an internship. Internships can help students make a name for themselves in an industry. They also allow students to figure out exactly what they want to do. Even with a concentration, most majors have a wide variety of jobs. Students can decide what career path to take based on their internship experience. Internships can also lead to job opportunities if the person is hardworking and shows he or she would be a good employee.

Along with internships, students can network with other employees in their field. These employees don't necessarily need to be a big part of the company or business, but simply a stepping stone into the career. Networking can also help keep the student up to date on all the changes going on in their industry. Industries are changing all the time and students who know what's going on currently will show initiative, drive and dedication.

Students must rely on themselves in order to achieve their own personal career goals. Internships and networking, although highly encouraged, might not be required for each major. Furthermore, students can't rely on a high demand for employees to guarantee a job after graduation. There could be a high demand in a certain field, but employers won't hire those who aren't qualified. Simply graduating with a degree isn't enough, especially in a competitive field.

Those with a major that has a fewer job opportunities need to push themselves to work as hard as they can to secure a job after college. Judging someone based on their major or the money they will make post-college is an unnecessary, immature act that doesn't benefit either party.

Megan Klepper is a junior, writing, rhetoric and technical communication major. Contact Megan at kleppemc@dukes.jmu.edu.

War on Christmas

The meaning of the season isn't all about Dec. 25, but rather celebrating community and inclusivity

RICHARD CAREY | richard responds

It's that time again. Friends and families gather together, there are parties and dinners and cheers, great food and better company. It's the most wonderful time of year.

However, the holiday season spanning from Thanksgiving to New Years has fallen victim to the war on Christmas. It's an ongoing battle between consumers and citizens, business and institutions, battling it out for the use of traditional symbols dedicated to the Christian holiday: Santa Claus, Christmas Trees and the words "Merry Christmas." It's caused an uproar.

Every year, more and more businesses, schools and other institutions are moving away from the use of these symbols for more inclusive ones: snowflakes, people coming together, "Happy Holidays." Every year, more and more people are refusing this attempt towards inclusivity. However, before people start the war on Christmas all over again, with fresh criticism and anger for these businesses — stop. There's no war on Christmas.

To hear that there is no actual war on Christmas may be the most absurd phrase for many families across the globe, but it's the reality. Christmas has never and will never be under attack. This culture war has a long history, most recently noted with the Starbucks Holiday Cup scandal. In recent years, Starbucks has refused to put Christmas-themed pictures and doodles onto their cups, instead choosing themes of winter weather or social harmony — the audacity. It's the war on Christmas.

MAIRIN DUFFY / *THE BREEZE*

For many, this is political correctness ruining the joy of the end of the year. What's stunning is the realization that so many people refuse to acknowledge that December isn't fully dedicated to Christmas. In fact, if looking at a calendar, Christmas takes only two days out of the year — including Christmas Eve — whereas Hanukkah takes eight and Kwanzaa is celebrated for five. By being offended by the attempt of others to be inclusive of other religious holidays celebrated in December insinuates Christmas should be the default.

The concept of being offended by "Happy Holidays" is baffling. Nobody is trying to take down Christmas. Like any religious holiday, it should be celebrated, and no one should be barred from celebrating it. Whether a company decides to write "Merry Christmas" in the window display, to-go cup or marketing tool shouldn't limit anyone in their celebration. If the security of their belief rests on the marketing of the holiday, then something else is entirely at fault.

What's more baffling is the refusal to accept that "Happy Holidays" isn't an attack on "Merry Christmas," but an inclusive alternative. "Merry Christmas" isn't offensive, but not everyone celebrates the holiday, possibly celebrating another or none at all. The attempt of "Happy Holidays" is to ensure that nobody feels ostracized for not celebrating Christmas. For a time that celebrates togetherness, community and family, society's phrases should reflect that. It takes the same amount of time and same amount of breath; the only difference is that everyone will be included, something that seems to forgo the minds of many during the holidays.

December isn't solely about trees or Santa Claus. It's neither about presents or discounted prices, but celebrating another year with loved ones. It's about inclusivity, family, togetherness and community. So, before the war on Christmas is restarted again, fueled by anger of a missing tree doodle or "Merry Christmas" stamp — stop, because there isn't one.

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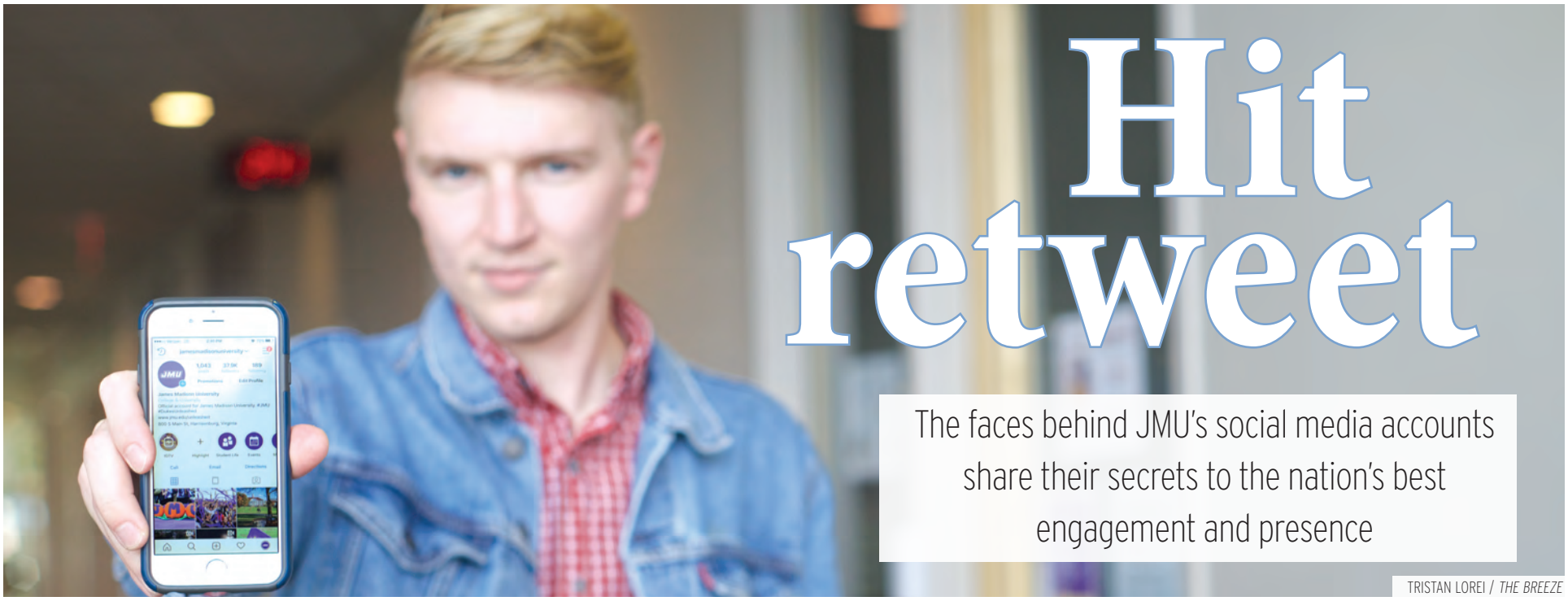

Hit retweet

The faces behind JMU's social media accounts share their secrets to the nation's best engagement and presence

TRISTAN LOREI / *THE BREEZE*

Trey Secrist (pictured) and Nanfei Liu post 98 percent of JMU's social media content.

By JOANNA SOMMER
contributing writer

When scrolling through Instagram and liking pictures that roll across one's timeline, it's likely a picture from JMU's official account will be one that appears. According to its Instagram, JMU's social media accounts were ranked No. 1 in the country for social media engagement and presence out of 338 other Division-I schools.

Caitlyn Read, the associate director of communications and double Duke ('10, '18) says the award looks at the content the account produces based on engagement. Engagers are comprised of who follows the account — for JMU, that includes current students, parents, prospective students, alumni and potential donors.

"It looks at videos we're putting on Twitter or Facebook," Read said. "We're putting up how many of our followers are actually clicking and liking and sharing and engaging with that content. That's a different, more meaningful measurement of how many people saw it."

Read began her career path in advertising and had no original intentions of coming back to work for her alma mater. Though, when the opportunity presented itself, she knew she had to go for it.

"I had such an awesome experience as an undergrad, I was excited to see what it looked like on the administrative side, and it [has] been a great decision," Read said.

University Communications and Marketing, located in the Ice House in Downtown Harrisonburg, is run by a team of people dedicated to fulfilling not only JMU's official Instagram account but all other official JMU social media pages, such as Twitter and Snapchat.

Read oversees social media and media-relations functions, such as news and other forms of press. She works alongside two other JMU alumni: Nanfei Liu ('17), social media manager, and Trey Secrist ('05), digital content coordinator.

"My job is to help guide them with the vision, the reporting and making sure our efforts are laddering up to university goals," Read said. "They are rockstars, they produce awesome content, they have amazing vision. So helping to make sure that all comes together and that we have the support we need to do that."

Liu and Secrist post 98 percent of the content across the official social media pages. Secrist has found working for his school rewarding because he engergizes the JMU community through posting content and observing user interactions with that content.

Secrist's main focus is gathering graphics, videos and photos, and works alongside a team of people he regularly meets with who uphold further responsibilities.

"We have a branded content team that produces photos and videos, we have a group of interns that helps us out and we have a magazine team that's creating written content that is typically paired with some of the visuals that branded content is making," Secrist said.

Together, Liu and Secrist are in charge of producing and creating content on the social media pages and routinely posting on JMU's main social media accounts.

"We work together to decide what kind of posts are going out there," Liu said. "Then we'll decide what kind of visual assets we'll pair with it."

Liu's focuses are creating social strategies for the university, creating campaigns, coming up with strategies to help advance JMU's outreach and being the resource for campus communicators. She is responsible for reporting, working with metrics and geo-targeting to decide what kind of content is needed.

"I get to remind people why they love coming here or why they want to come here. My favorite part is being the person who's able to see everything around campus," Liu said. "Whether it's athletics or academics, they come to us with really great news and accomplishments and I get to enjoy it myself then share it to a wider community."

Secrist says there's a strategy to posting content. Since there's so much coming in at once, the content goes through a funnel.

"A lot of it is understanding the audience you have on social media, and really trying to match the content that audience is looking for," Secrist said.

The team is responsible for both keeping its followers up to date on the JMU accounts and reaching out to other clubs and groups on campus who run their own social media, Read says. They make sure those managing the accounts are comfortable with handling the page and assist them in any way that's needed.

"Something I really enjoy is sharing those scenic photos of campus," Secrist said. "When you're here on campus, obviously you get used to it, but it doesn't take long after you leave and leaving for even a couple hours to be like, 'Wow, what special place, I'm so glad I get to spend time here or got to spend time here.'"

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The beat

This weekend's best in arts and entertainment

COURTESY OF TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

It's a big week for Coldplay. Its live album "Head Full of Dreams" comes out Friday.

Tragic star

"Vox Lux" starring Natalie Portman comes out tomorrow. After two sisters survive tragedy, they compose a song about the experience, which makes one sister famous. Down the road, she finds herself in the face of another tragedy.

And we're live

Coldplay has a new album coming out called "Head Full of Dreams," which is accompanied by a film. The movie was originally released this past November and filmed over 20 years. Both will be released this Friday.

Editor's pick

Golden Pony is well known for its status as a venue, but did you kow it has bomb brunch? Take a break from finals and go try out the Golden Horseshoe. This dish has everything, including a waffle, homefries, sausage and eggs. Down it with a cup of coffee.

Knack for musicality

JMU freshman self-creates own extended play

Gentry's EP "Jewel Tones" came out Nov. 16. BJ BECKWITH / *THE BREEZE*

By VANESSA NIKOLIC
contributing writer

After writing a variety of songs over the years and going through the production process, freshman English major Emma Gentry released her first EP on Nov. 16, which can be found on platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music. Some of Gentry's songs highlight fictional stories that she created, while others are inspired by real-life experiences she went through in high school.

"I really like certain concepts and make them into a lot of my songs," Gentry said. "I really like the idea of stars and the nighttime and stuff like that. I just make up stories and kind of try to turn non-poetic things into potentially poetic things. Some of them are rooted from real experiences and just become sort of something else and some of them are kind of more legitimate experiences."

Gentry began writing her own music when she was a sophomore in high school. Along with songwriting on her own, she decided to join a program in Richmond, Virginia, called Passion Academy. This music and arts school focuses on music excellence and has an artist development program that students can join. After auditioning for the program, students are paired up with a mentor and are taken through the process of developing their songs, producing a good recording and learning how to be an artist.

One of the artist development mentors at Passion Academy is Nick Henretty, who served as Gentry's mentor throughout this year. He focused more on the recording and production side of her process while creating the EP. Henretty also helped her figure out how to take basic song recordings or demos, emphasize the best part of the songs and then turn it into something greater.

"I love seeing what students develop especially when there's a concept that they never really knew about before, but as soon as they learn it and it clicks with them, just they get that sort of light in their eyes," Henretty said. "As a musician, I would say she is one of the best vocal recorders that I have ever worked with. She's got such a natural knack for hearing what she needs to do as well as just producing these almost flawless recordings in just a few takes."

Henretty is also featured on one of the songs from Gentry's EP called "Switzerland." When Gentry played the song for him for the first time, Henretty knew she had a great song on her hands, but told her he felt the song wasn't done. She went home and wrote an extra minute and a half of lyrics in the span of two hours and sent the new version back to Henretty.

"I tend to listen to 'Switzerland' the most because I just really like the way it was produced," Gentry said. "It was really small starting out and then when we were producing, it just became a lot bigger and I really like that."

She wrote the songs on her EP throughout high school and finished recording this past summer. Gentry and Henretty set the deadline for the album to be finished by the middle of August, because that's when she was going off to JMU to start her freshman year. Henretty wouldn't have much of a way to work with her while she's at school.

Gentry's family has been supporting her throughout her musical journey. Not only do they provide her with financial support, they support her emotionally and always encourage her to continue to challenge herself and write more. Once the EP was released, her family shared her music on Facebook and Instagram and has been playing it on repeat.

Jay Gentry, Emma's father, is proud of the work his daughter has done with her EP. His favorite song is also "Switzerland," since he thinks it's mature and well-developed.

"We're just happy that she's doing something that she loves," Jay said. "Hopefully she will continue to do that, challenge herself and hopefully find other avenues that fulfill her. If it's in music that's wonderful, if it's in something else that's great. We're just really happy that she's put her music out there to be judged."

Emma hopes to continue to write new songs and release more music in the future. She looks forward to the change of one day performing her music on stage.

"I'm proud of the EP and I'm proud of myself," Emma said. "I like the songs that I write so it's cool to be able to just listen to it on Spotify whenever I want and it's cool to have something that will exist forever."

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Back to the start

COURTESY OF SAMIA'S PHOTOGRAPHY

From living in Shenandoah Hall their freshman year to getting married in the arboretum, alumni couple has kept JMU close to heart

By TALIA DAVIS
The Breeze

Before coming to college, JMU alumni Julie Stern and Thomas Harner had never dated anyone else. That all changed their freshman year.

Stern and Harner met during August 1787 Orientation in 2010 and both lived on the second floor of Shenandoah Hall, where they became a part of the same friend group.

"I had the challenge of breaking away to date Julie while still being part of our group," Harner said. "The first time I asked her on a date was at E-Hall and I had to clarify that it was just the two of us."

Once they started dating, they took the relationship slow. After three months, Harner said "I love you" to Stern and received an unexpected response.

"I said 'thank you,'" Stern said. "I was an awkward person, so I wasn't going to say 'I love you' back since I wanted to be real. Even after that, we talked for a couple of hours so everything was fine in the end."

At the beginning of their relationship, they faced the challenge of spending so much time together since they were only three doors down from each other. Once sophomore year came, Stern moved off campus and Harner stayed in Shenandoah, which meant rebalancing their relationship.

For Harner, it was great since it allowed them to establish their own friend groups and become independent. Since this was their first relationship, they had to learn how to adjust to the other person's personality. Stern enjoys going out and trying new things while Harner is more reluctant when it comes to new activities.

"Julie helped me because she is a lot more open-minded about things and even just down to trying new food and activities whereas my initial reaction would be 'I wouldn't like that, it's not interesting,'" Harner said.

Although they may not be on the same page when it comes to trying new things, they still enjoy being spontaneous. While in college and even the present day, when they aren't watching shows together, they always find some activity to do, whether it be driving out to the mountains and hiking or going to wineries and breweries.

"When we went to JMU, we would drive down Route 33 and see what we saw, like the caverns and the potato chip factory," Stern said. "Sometimes we would stop on the side of the road and try new restaurants we found."

When it came time to graduate in 2015, both had to face the decision of what they were going to do. Although they each had an idea of their goals after graduation, they managed to find a location in Burke, Virginia, that worked for both of their careers.

"You want to do what's right for you because you have to since you've spent your entire life getting to this point," Stern said. "But now you have another person in the equation you still want to be with so you have to learn how to make your lives work together."

When it came time to propose to Stern, Harner asked her to go on a walk on the lake behind their house. Because it was around dinner time and Stern was hungry, she said "no" to his suggestion. After she didn't budge, Harner ended up giving her the ring box and proposed.

From living in the same hall to being married to each other years later, both are happy with how they approached the relationship. The emphasis on getting to know each other while being their own person has helped them become more confident in the relationship.

Harner and Stern hope to move to Charlottesville, where they say the proximity to family and friends as well as the mountains, have won them over.

"In my mind, when we were graduating from JMU I was like, 'I'm ready to [marry her], I know she's the one,'" Harner said. "But living together for a couple years confirmed everything and was a more mature approach of going into post-grad life."

On Sept. 14, their ceremony was held at the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum. After spending four years in the area and moving to Northern Virginia after graduation, they felt it was a good fit to come back to Harrisonburg for the wedding.

"I guess it would have been the same anywhere else, but the whole thing was to be able to show where we come from to our friends and family," Stern said. "It was nice to have it in Harrisonburg and be in an area we were familiar with. It added a little sentimental value to it."

Photographer Samia Jrab, a senior computer information systems major, had the chance to bond with not only the couple, but also their family. For her, it made the photography experience more meaningful.

"Both of their families were so sweet and made me feel like I was a guest and not just a photographer," Jrab said. "They're very genuine and sweet and I just loved getting to know them."

One thing the couple is looking forward to in the future is having a JMU family.

While at JMU, they weren't interested in football. Now, they want to share the spirit with their future children.

Both also hope to move to a new city. Although Northern Virginia has all the jobs and stores, there's still one characteristic from JMU that they miss. From waking up every day on East Campus and walking outside to see the mountains, they want to be able to relive that experience while being in a location that fulfills all their needs.

"Our dream right now is to go to Charlottesville," Stern said. "We really like it because you have the mountains and you have wineries, breweries. It has a nice running culture and we both like to run and be outdoors."

The wedding experience was full circle for the couple. Jrab said she felt that this wedding put a different spin on how locations are picked.

"Usually, you craft the wedding experience in a new place and you go somewhere you've never been to have this important ceremony," Jrab said. "I thought it was cool that they were aware of how comfortable they are at JMU."

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF SAMIA'S PHOTOGRAPHY

Stern, above, was excited to show guests where her and Harner started their relationship in 2010.

EDITORS Catie Harper & Blake Pace **EMAIL** breezesports@gmail.com

THOMAS ROBERTSON / *THE BREEZE*

During Houston's three years coaching the Dukes, he collected a 37-6 record while making the playoffs each season. He brought the team to two FCS National Championships – winning the title in 2016.

The final farewell

Members of the JMU football program reflect on Houston's legacy and time at JMU with his departure for ECU

By CATIE HARPER
The Breeze

The chapter was short, lasting only two years and 10 months — 1,049 days to be exact. It was, however, a chapter written like no other.

The series of pages came together to form a highlight reel made up of a national championship, deep playoff runs and players who etched their names into the record books. While it only lasted 43 games, much of what happened won't be easily forgotten in the coming years.

The Mike Houston chapter of the JMU football history book officially came to an end Sunday when he departed the program for the head coaching job at East Carolina University. He left behind a program that posed a constant threat to teams across the FCS.

It was mid-January of 2016 when Houston and his family arrived in Harrisonburg, Virginia. The Franklin, North Carolina, native took over a team that hadn't won a playoff game in five years and was left without a coach after Everett Withers' departure.

"Mike Houston, when he took the role here, was exactly what we needed as a head football coach," JMU Director of Athletics Jeff Bourne said in a press conference Monday. "Not just because of wins and national championships and things of that nature, but how he fit the culture of JMU, how he cared about the well-being of the student athletes, how he grew a family culture here within athletics and ultimately what he did to help shape our young men into winners."

Houston's impact on the program was almost immediate. The team he acquired was one that had already tasted success after claiming a share of the CAA regular-season title in 2015, but under Houston, the team was elevated to a new level. From the time he entered the facilities at JMU, he instilled a tight-knit culture throughout the locker room.

"I transferred in Coach Withers' first year, so [getting a new coach] was kind of stressful for me because it added another coach and that's the guy that recruited me there to come to James Madison in the first place," former wide receiver Ishmael Hyman ('18) said. "But it was no dropoff. Coach Houston came in and he did everything that we expected him to do."

Houston's personality was more than what could be seen on the sidelines. While fans often only witnessed the Houston who walked up and down the field, gave exuberant speeches and occasionally got in the ear of a ref or two, those who played for him saw a different side of his demeanor.

"I think the biggest difference you see from being with him everyday vs watching him in the stands is that he is very analytical," former JMU quarterback Bryan Schor ('18) said in a message. "People see his passionate speeches before games and might think he just shoots from the hip as a coach but everything he does has a purpose. If he didn't believe it would make his team more [successful] whether it be winning more games or getting more players to graduate on time then he wouldn't do it."

When it came to what Houston taught his players both about the game of football and in life, things varied among them. For Hyman, Houston made it known that a player's focus can't only be on the game.

It's easy to get caught up in a passion, to let it become the main focus of someone's time. However, Houston instilled in his players the desire to work hard not only on the field or in the weightroom, but in everything they were tasked to do.

"You can't be full-in with football and not 100 percent in with school work too," Hyman said. "If you're 100 percent in football, you're working out and your preparation for football, but you're not going to class, you're not studying hard, your life won't be good because you're not giving 100 percent in everything."

TREVOR COCKBURN / *THE BREEZE*

Houston brought the team to the playoffs each season he was at JMU.

Houston's departure from JMU has been difficult for many people connected to the program. However, some of the people impacted the most are the players he's leaving behind. JMU safety Adam Smith won't have Houston on the sidelines during his senior campaign, but his mom, Gretchen, is appreciative of the time her son shared with the head coach.

When Adam was coming out of high school, the offers he wanted weren't there. He spent time traveling to different schools, making a stop at The Citadel along the way to meet with Houston at his former job. The meeting between the two didn't draw Adam in — his mom said the military wasn't for him. However, that wasn't the last time Adam encountered Houston on the recruiting trail. Not long after the visit to Charleston, South Carolina, Houston was named the head coach for JMU and made a call to Adam — one that changed his playing career.

Adam's time didn't come right away. Behind safety Raven Greene for his first two seasons, Adam didn't see many minutes on defense until this season. But along the way, Houston made the effort to let Adam know his time was coming.

"My son would tell me that Coach Houston would just talk to him," Gretchen said. "[Houston would] tell him that he has the ability that he just has to wait his time … [Houston] always let my son know, 'You have great talent, you have great ability [to] just hang in there and learn.'"

Houston didn't only bring in players as true freshmen during his time in Harrisonburg. Defensive lineman Darrious Carter didn't start his career wearing the purple and gold. The three-star recruit out of high school began his college days 56 miles away from JMU at U. Va.

Carter's time with the Cavaliers wasn't easy, and after a few hiccups, he was informed that he was losing his scholarship. While still presented with the opportunity to play there, he parted with the school, looking for another shot — one that Houston gave him.

"He only played in one game at Virginia and he stayed there three years," Darrious' father Carl Carter said. "Just to see my son play, I mean, the big sack in North Dakota State, [Houston] believed in my son … Not only did he bring him there, he actually used him … He changed him into a man. My boy is a totally different person."

Houston's willingness to bring players in and coach them not only in football but in life, brought the program to the top of the FCS. A national title in his first year and appearance in the game a year later, coupled with a record of 37-6, drew the eyes of bigger schools.

FBS programs took notice of the 47-year-old coach who'd quickly taken the JMU program to national prominence. There were rumors that often surrounded Houston during his time with the Dukes, and while many wished this year's rumors would fall by the wayside, that wasn't the case.

"My son really helped me to understand that it's a business," Gretchen said. "Every year the discussion was always had by parents, fans, players that we could lose him … I really had thought that we made it through … He has to do what's best for him and his career and his family."

Houston has moved on to a bigger program, and while he'll no longer lead the Dukes out of the tunnel at Bridgeforth Stadium, the impact he had in the three short seasons he was here is one that can't be erased. Houston has permanently inscribed his name into the JMU football program.

"He was down to earth with his boys," Carl said. "He walked them through the process, he walked them through it just as much as he walked himself through it … Trust is the key thing, they trusted him and I hope ECU uses him very well because he has a gift."

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"People see his passionate speeches before games and might think he just shoots from the hip as a coach but everything he does has a purpose."

Bryan Schor

Former JMU quarterback, 2014-2017

BREEZE FILE PHOTOS

Deep purple

Harrisonburg rallies around JMU Athletics to incorporate it into the community

PHOTOS BY TREVOR COCKBURN / *THE BREEZE*

JMU fans and the Duke Dog thrive in the welcoming environment at Bridgeforth Stadium.

By JORDAN SIMAL
The Breeze

When taking that first trip to Harrisonburg, one may not think much of the town. As traffic heads north on I-81 through the rocks and fog, there's barely any road signs for Harrisonburg until making the exit for Staunton. To a degree, it makes sense.

But to Harrisonburg's local residents who live in the Shenandoah Valley, it's a different state of mind and more than an average college town. In their eyes, this small town isn't caught between two major cities, but rather draws people from Richmond and Washington, D.C., on its own merit. Its population isn't noticeably large, but the community of 54,215 who call the 'Burg their home is strong, thriving and rapidly growing every year.

"We're not small and we're not in the middle of nowhere anymore," JMU Media Arts and Design professor Joe Loyacano said.

Harrisonburg may be the home of three colleges, but only one of those schools draws over 20,000 screaming fans into Bridgeforth Stadium. Every Saturday in the fall, students, residents and alumni come together to bleed purple and cheer on JMU's dominant football team.

Beyond the football team, James Madison has defending national champions in lacrosse, regular-season champions in both women's and men's soccer and numerous accolades across the board. There's no denying it — JMU Athletics has roots in the town of Harrisonburg as deep as the Dukes' winning tradition.

This season, Bridgeforth Stadium averaged 23,634 attendees at regular-season home games.

PHOTOS BY TREVOR COCKBURN / *THE BREEZE*

Sophomore cross country runner Madelynn Knight is one of the hundreds of student athletes proud of her team, school and town. She noticed the JMU fandom, in some cases, starts early at home.

"I have a few professors who have talked about how their kids are growing up close to JMU sporting events and cheering for the teams," Knight said. "It's cool how the kids will grow up bleeding purple starting just from where they live."

Harrisonburg seems to only be growing with the evolution of its collegiate athletics and success of multiple teams. The town's population grew by 4.3 percent in the past year alone and is projected to expand rapidly in the next decade. Loyacano has personally seen this growth as both a student in the '90s and a teacher 20 years later. To him, the growth in both JMU's sports scene and the town is astounding. He's seen the impact the Dukes have had to help Harrisonburg, as well as the school, grow.

"We used to use the football stadium to cut through campus during the football games; no one was in the stands," Loyacano said. "I was certain I would never see 'College GameDay' here, but having seen it twice in three years has been incredible. Sports have taken over the campus and our teams have been a great indicator to both the growth of the campus and the town."

Success from the Dukes has also affected local businesses. JMU's dominance has attracted new businesses from all over the country. This includes Tommy Urglavitch, who, along with his brother Steven, moved from Philadelphia to establish Urgie's Cheesesteaks in Harrisonburg. Tommy was amazed at the atmosphere created by the Dukes' sports upon becoming part of the community.

"My brother and I actually wanted to open up here because we knew what was going on down at JMU," Tommy said. "Being guys from Philadelphia with our locally-based product, we know about 20 percent of the school's population is from New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania and Maryland. A lot of people also follow James Madison up in our neck of the woods."

The impact JMU Athletics has had on the once-small — and still growing — town of Harrisonburg is undeniable. The school, fans, town and community bleeds purple as one in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley.

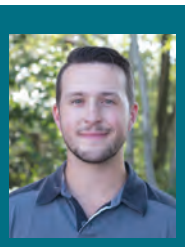
"The town is a big reason why we're so successful and why we love it so much here," Knight said. "To Harrisonburg, thank you so much for pouring into JMU and being there for us."

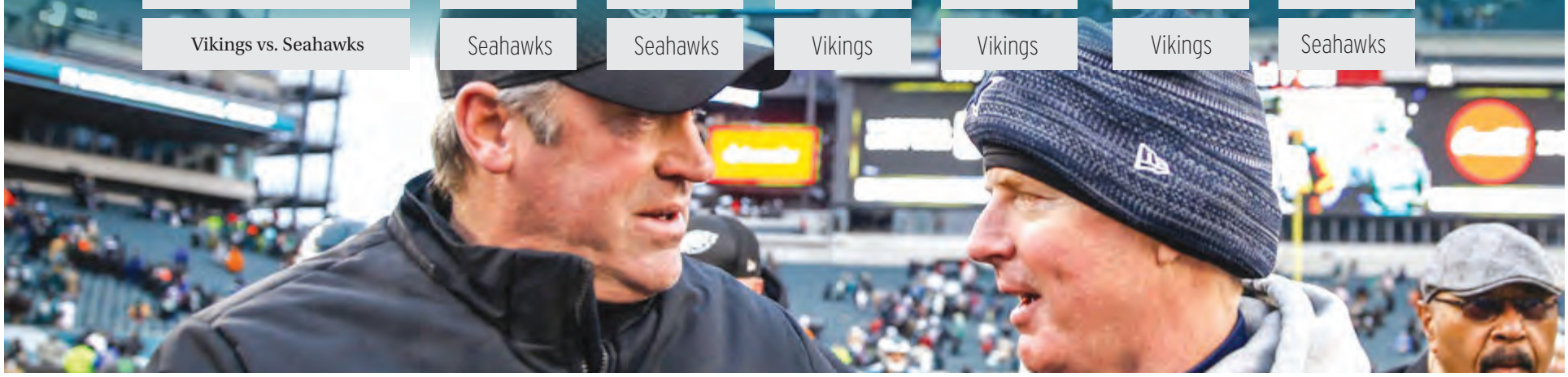
The success of JMU sports and the community is linked in a sense that when the Dukes win, the town wins. A JMU victory in Harrisonburg means families go home happy, businesses boom and the Dukes are only motivated to win more.

A victory for the Dukes also means Harrisonburg is there to celebrate. The town welcomes its athletes into a local restaurant for a well-earned meal or to simply say, "Well done," like a family does at the day's conclusion. As for I-81 and that trip here, the way things have been going, one would expect to see more road signs soon. With luck, they'll be as purple as the town itself.

CONTACT Jordan Simal at simaljg@dukes.jmu.edu. For more sports coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.

THE BREEZE PICKS OF THE WEEK

	 Catie Harper Sports Editor	 Blake Pace Sports Editor	 Thomas Robertson News Editor	 Kevin Haswell Managing Editor	 Alexis Miller Managing Editor	 Matt Weyrich Editor-in-Chief
Editor's record	41-31	43-29	40-32	36-36	41-31	39-33
UC Davis vs. Eastern WA	EWU	EWU	UC Davis	EWU	UC Davis	EWU
Army vs. Navy	Army	Army	Army	Army	Navy	Army
Giants vs. Redskins	Giants	Giants	Redskins	Giants	Giants	Giants
Falcons vs. Packers	Falcons	Packers	Falcons	Packers	Falcons	Packers
Eagles vs. Cowboys	Eagles	Cowboys	Eagles	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys
Vikings vs. Seahawks	Seahawks	Seahawks	Vikings	Vikings	Vikings	Seahawks

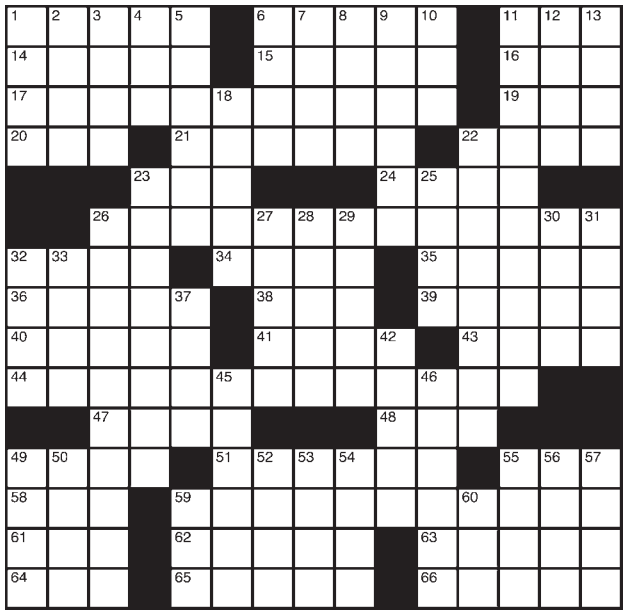


COURTESY OF TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

FOR RELEASE DECEMBER 5, 2018

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Lewis



By Mark McClain

12/5/18

ACROSS

1 Insurance submission
6 Spars on the briny
11 Spanish I verb
14 Vital body vessel
15 Choristers who are usually women
16 Young bloke
17 Get increasingly steamed
19 "Diary of a Wimpy __": Jeff Kinney book series
20 Home of the NHL's Blues
21 Scrape off
22 Radio hobbyists
23 Rickie Fowler's org.
24 One way to travel
26 Provocative social media tactic
32 Old Italian bread?
34 Jai __
35 Forearm-related
36 Wee hr.
38 Approves
39 Disciple's query
40 "Am not!" retort
41 Spa treatment
43 Bullet __: list highlight
44 Battlefield order
47 __ Mode, designer voiced by Brad Bird in "Incredibles 2"
48 Strive
49 Skinny
51 Sleeping bag closer
55 Getting stuff done, initially
58 "Who, me?"
59 Striking white stripe between a horse's eyes
61 From A to Z
62 Venue with skyboxes
63 Expected
64 Animation frame
65 Venomous snake
66 Hindu spiritual writing

DOWN

1 Despicable dudes
2 Ransack
3 Depleted sea
4 "__ Quiet Uptown": "Hamilton" song
5 Spanish dessert wine
6 Bryn __ College
7 Goya's "Duchess of __"
8 It may be ear-piercing
9 Bullfight figure
10 ID gradually being omitted from Medicare cards
11 Water's capability to neutralize acid
12 Injure badly
13 Track ratios
18 President who appointed two women to the Supreme Court
22 Sledding spot
23 "Yes, fine by me"
25 Pierre's "his"
26 Second cup at a diner, e.g.
27 Unite on the sly
28 Spoken for
29 Stairway element
30 Statistician Silver
31 Dire
32 Bakery unit
33 Cross inscription
37 Like harvested hay
42 Video game stage
45 Black ice, e.g.
46 Boeing rival
49 All-in-one Apple
50 Florida State player, familiarly
52 Secured, as a win
53 Source of cones
54 Early late-night TV host
55 Lacking slack
56 Business magnate
57 Olympics coach Karolyi
59 Tower authority: Abbr.
60 The SEC's Tigers

Find answers to crossword online at breezejmu.org

SUDOKU

THE SAMURAI OF PUZZLES By The Mepham Group

Level 1 2 **3** 4

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

12/6/18

MADISON MARKETPLACE

Madison Marketplace is open for business, and all text-only listings are **FREE**! Post job listings, announcements, rentals and more using our online placement tool. Ads run two weeks online and in two print editions.

BreezeJMU.org/classifieds

FOR SALE

Violins & Violas For Sale
A few orchestra-quality violins and violas for sale. I am selling my collection of instruments. These instruments will serve a young and talented musician well. Serious inquiries text 540-842-2444.

COMMUNITY

DANCE NIGHT AT DAVES
Dave's Taverna Dance night! Thursdays from 8 until. BlockHeadz entertainment will be playing latest hip hop dance tunes; taking requests.

JOBS

Van/Car Driver with Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation
Do you have an excellent driving record and desire to utilize your experience of operating medium-sized passenger vehicles to ensure students arrive to school safely? If so, apply for the Van/Car Driver in the Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation! Find out more and apply online at: https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/employment. EOE.

Yard Work Needed
Looking for someone to do GENERAL YARD WORK. Very flexible hours. Very good pay. Located in Penn Laird. Call (540)289-6181.

HOUSING

1 bed fully furnished, 1/2 a block away from JMU
$850 mo. Looking for 1 person for large one bedroom fully furnished (if needed.) 2 closets, full kitchen w/ ss appliances. Full laundry and full bath. Private entrance. Pool Privileges. One Car off-street parking. ½ block to JMU's North Entrance. $850 a month plus deposit. A must see! Contact (540)820-7653 or rodney@820sold.com.

SERVICES

Ballroom and Latin Dance Lessons
Just 4 U. Ballroom and Latin dance classes. College students only. Dance for fun or learn to compete. Second Sunday each month 4:00- 5:00 PM at Dancing With Karen studio 77 E Market St. $5 student cost. 2nd Sunday swing follows this class each month. No sign up- walk in!

Escapes Spa JMU Specials
Escapes Spa in Harrisonburg is offering $20 gel manicures and $20 pedicures for JMU students. Also, show your JMU Access Card for 25% off all massages and facials! Try this month's pumpkin facial for a relaxing treat. Visit escapesspa.com or call 540-830-0483.

Student Ambassadors Presents

The 19th Annual Operation Santa Claus

How the Grinch Stole Wilson

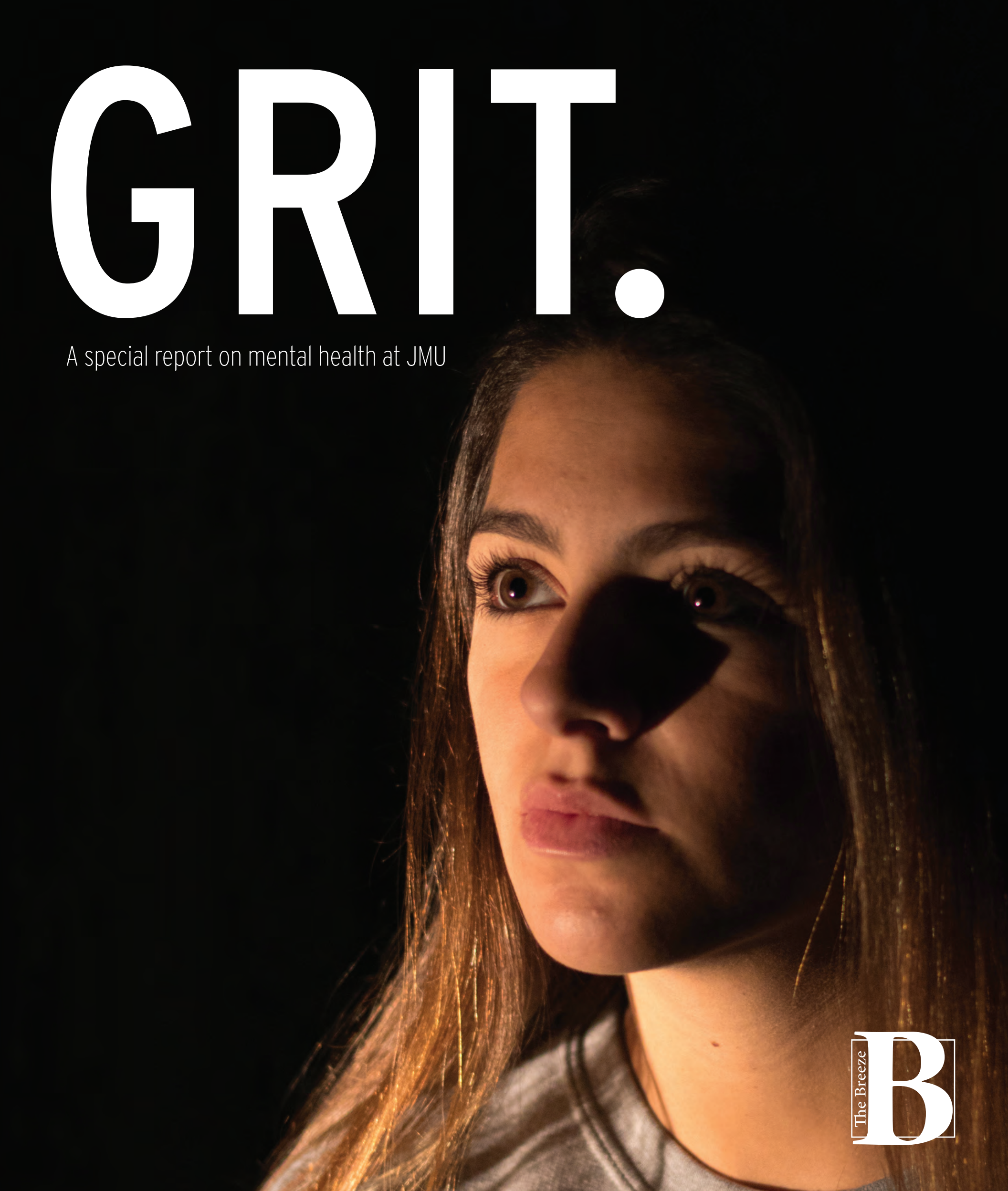
Memorial Auditorium
December 6th, 2018 at 7 p.m.
Benefitting Mercy House

Suggested $5 donation at the door

Questions? Contact JMUOSC@gmail.com

GRIT.

A special report on mental health at JMU



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CONTENTS

Editors' Note: The aim of this magazine is to relay experiences people have had with mental health-related topics. Some articles have sensitive material regarding suicide, sexual assault, substance abuse and emotional abuse. Consult page 44 for resources and contacts regarding these issues.

Why GRIT?

Alexis Miller
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

They call us snowflakes. The generation that was coddled by helicopter and snowplow parents. They say we're lazy, fragile, selfish and entitled — that we feel like we deserve participation trophies.

But we're more than their labels.

We are the generation who stands up for what we believe — the generation that speaks out against hate and dishonesty. We follow our passions, recognize our problems and address them accordingly.

We need to have grit.

In the words of Angela Lee Duckworth, a psychologist who studies grit and self-control, "Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future day in, day out, not just for the week, not just for the month but for years and working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it is a marathon, not a sprint."

The stigma around mental health is breaking. We're addressing our problems, both large and small, and trying to find ways to overcome them. In the face of our personal stressors, we stand up to help ourselves and help others lead the lives they want to live.

We've created this special report so you can learn from the struggles people live through daily. These stories not only shed light on the challenges of this generation, but show the people living with them who try to lead meaningful lives that extend beyond a diagnosis.

There's no better time to talk about mental health than right now.

Let's erase the stigma.

Staff

MANAGING EDITORS Sabrina Moreno, Thomas Robertson

SENIOR WRITERS Hannah Dodd, Jamie Graeff

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ARTICLES EDITORS Ingrid Basheda, Maddelynne Parker, Anna Stackhouse

ADVISER Brad Jenkins

ANONYMOUS SOURCES

GRIT. covers sensitive topics some individuals don't feel comfortable speaking about out loud. To give these individuals anonymity, we've granted the use of a pseudonym in certain stories.

The editors, who know their true identities, have worked to confirm they are sharing real stories. The reader will be told who is anonymous early on in each case.

Photo on the Front: Alexis Miller

GRIT. is a collaborative project between SMAD 421 and The Breeze. It was produced over the course of the fall 2018 semester. For more online, go to BreezeJMU.org/grit

RECOVERY.

Abbey Armbrecht | GRIT.

How did you overcome the biggest setback in your life?

Aubrey Broxson

"I just hang out with friends, then listen to music and my friends helped me a lot to go through hard times."

Drema Mines

"I collected myself back up and got back up and tried it again. I had to do a flip on stage and I had fell. But I just got back and tried it again because it was for an audition."

Joey Konrad

"I was failing a bunch of my papers when I was initially a political science major and then I switched to communication and I don't know, everything just kind of clicked. It's just about perspective."

Aleni Zamalis

"Probably just a lot of family support and just trying not to get too down about it and just keep moving forward not dwell on it too hard."

Linh Vo

"It's really just like surrounding yourself with people that are really positive and that care about you, because if you can't get through it by yourself, they're there for you."

Will Rodriguez

"I think my biggest failure I overcame it with hope in something greater than myself. So for me, that was finding it in the Lord and Jesus Christ, so finding hope in that shows me that even when I'm not enough, I'm still loved."

Victoria Arce

"I didn't get into this fraternity that I rushed my freshman semester, so as soon as I didn't get in, I joined another club that I really found my place in."

Cintia Samaha

"I had to write this 10-page research paper and I worked really hard on it. I spent months on it and I got a 'D' on the paper ... I went to my professor and talked it out with her and she actually let me rewrite it. So, I ended up getting a B on it. I feel like if you really want something changed, you gotta go change it for yourself."

Alec Bellis

"When I switched from a different kind of debate that I do now that I did in high school coming to college debate ... [it]took a long time and a lot of hours of practice to kind of get the hang of. I think I probably failed every time I tried to give a debate speech every week for a couple semesters until I got a hang of it."

Tyler Nolan

"Best advice: learn what your failure is and just keep practicing to make it better."

Growing mental health conc

THOMAS ROBERTSON
GRIT.

Operating as the "air traffic controller," Wendy Gerlach sifted through incoming counseling center client information on dual computer monitors, simultaneously answering calls and trying to bring order to the chaos occurring on the figurative tarmac.

On this particular day, Gerlach, a licensed professional counselor, and the rest of the JMU Counseling Center staff were in a constant state of multitasking. At one point, a co-worker stopped by with a piece of chocolate for Gerlach to ease the stress of what was shaping up to be a long day. While Gerlach was appreciative, she didn't even have time to say thank you.

It was only Aug. 27, the first day of classes, and it was one of the busiest days the center had ever seen.

"I went home pretty exhausted," Gerlach said. "There's an emotional drain to needing to think that quickly, multitasking consecutive hours in a row."

Increasingly, this is the atmosphere at JMU's counseling center, where the number of clients has grown 191 percent since 2000, far outpacing JMU's student growth rate of 39 percent during the same time period. The number of staff at the center hasn't kept up with demand, growing 66 percent during that span.

Experts attribute the growth, which is happening at JMU and nationally, to multiple factors ranging from a decrease in stigma surrounding mental health treatment to a change in parenting styles. The influx of students has led to major changes in how many clients the center can see for longterm issues. To keep up with demand, the center has had to find new ways to use the staff's limited resources.

The center overhauled its approach during the 2017-18 academic year when it switched from an appointment-based model to a walk-in one. The change required more staff to be allocated to assessing first-time clients during the center's 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. walk-in hours. With this approach, the center has been able to see more clients and practically eliminate wait times, but with more counselors devoted to conducting initial triage assessments, there are fewer staff members left to conduct the scheduled appointments that follow.

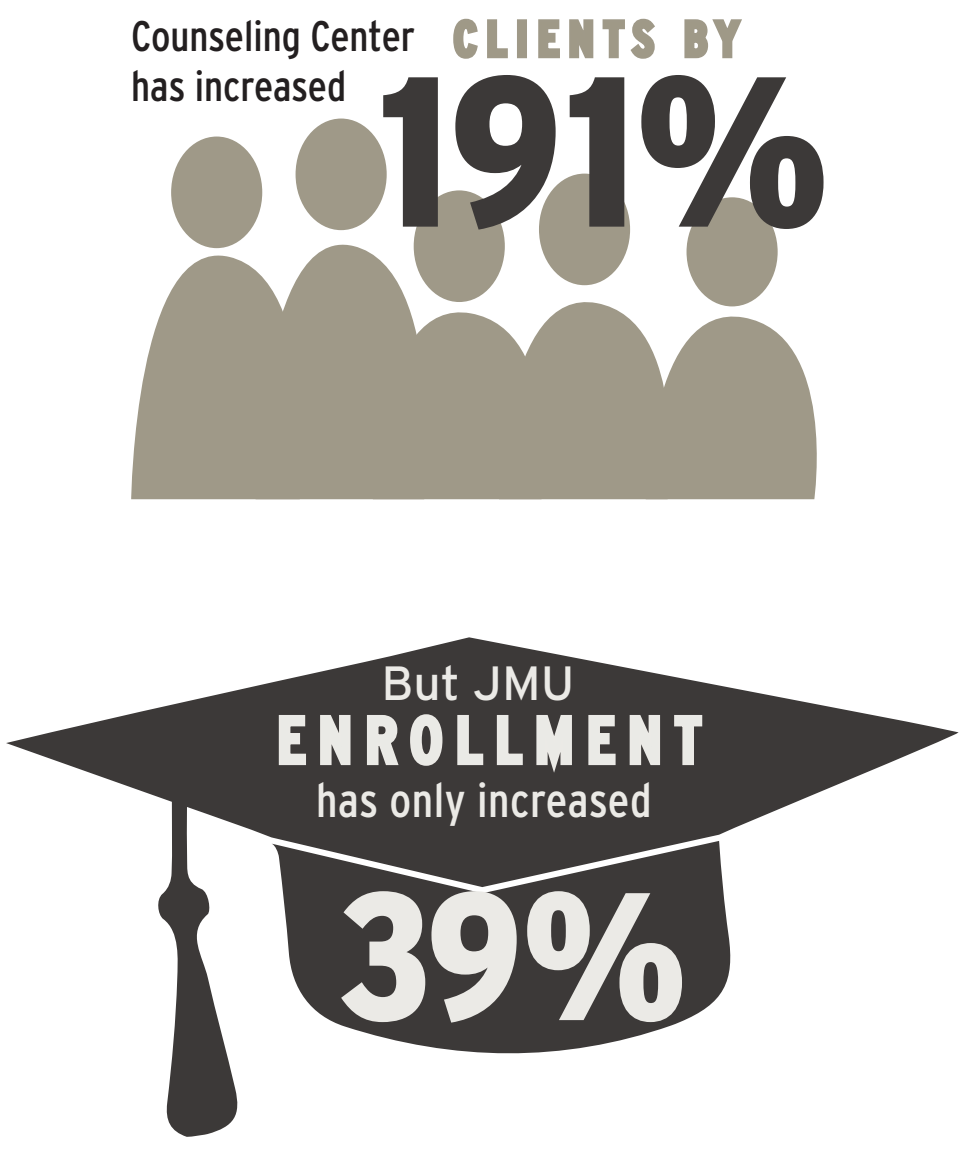
The reallocation of staff means the center now refers over 25 percent of clients to off-campus facilities for treatment, nearly double the percentage of referrals from past years. While David Onestak, the center's director, said the center is fortunate to have a number of off-campus options within walking distance or accessible by bus, he'd rather be able to treat more students at the on-campus site.

"I view this now as a math problem," Onestak said. "There is a capacity that the center has, and once that's exceeded, the only option is [off-campus referrals]. That's the pressure-release valve."

Still, he believes the new focus on the most urgent cases optimizes the center's staff, which includes 13 therapists. Onestak said he's noticed an increase in cases at JMU that require an urgent need, whether they involve suicidal intent or experience of a traumatic event. According to the center's records, crisis appointments have increased 856 percent since 2005. The 2017 Annual Report by the Center for Collegiate Mental Health proves this is the case on a national level, showing a 10.2-percent increase since 2010-11 in the number of students seeking treatment who seriously considered attempting suicide. The same study showed a five-percent increase in the number of students seeking treatment after experiencing a traumatic event.

The number of total students seeking treatment is up nationwide. Since 2010-11, the Center for Collegiate Mental Health report shows a 6.7-percent increase in students attending counseling for mental health concerns.

"It's really important to see students quickly for this initial assessment because we don't know what that student is dealing with, and their appearance at the front desk doesn't necessarily indicate how serious it is," Onestak said. "I've seen students come up, pretty stoic, looking pretty happy even, and then when we look at their paperwork we think 'My goodness, it's good that you got in here when you did.' So you want to be really available to students in that way."



The root of the problem

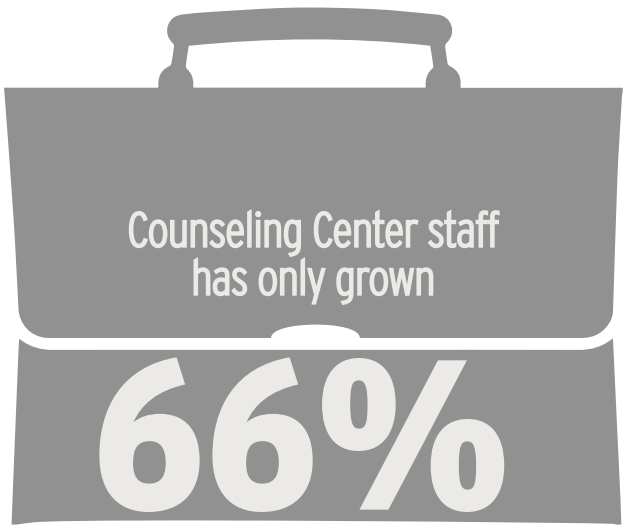
While the reason for the growth could have many factors, both Onestak and JMU graduate psychology professor Gregg Henriques agree two societal trends — the reduction of stigma around mental health and a more hands-on parenting style than in past generations — play the biggest roles.

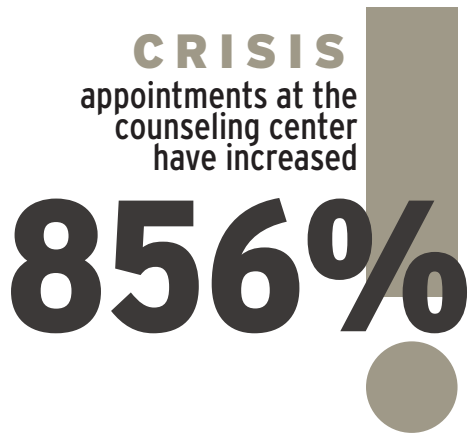
The decreasing stigma surrounding mental health, which both agree is a positive step, has naturally caused the number of students getting treatment to rise. Media coverage revealing the mental health struggles of high-profile celebrities and athletes, such as professional basketball players DeMar DeRozan and Kevin Love, has helped people realize it's OK to face mental health challenges.

Ben Locke, executive director of the Center for Collegiate Mental Health at Pennsylvania State University, went even

erns stretch JMU resources

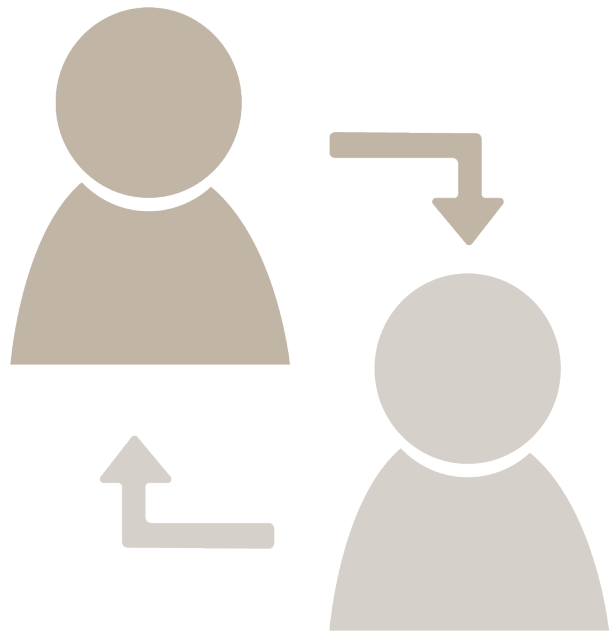
University counseling centers are forced to adapt as number of students seeking treatment rises due to growing discussion surrounding mental health





The Counseling Center switched to a **WALK-IN MODEL** from

10 a.m. - 3 p.m.



25%

of Counseling Center clients get referred to **OFF-CAMPUS FACILITIES**

ABBEY ARMBRECHT / GRIT.

further, saying the increase in students seeking treatment is a result of about 15 years of national interventions explicitly focused on increasing the rate at which people seek mental health services. Initiatives such as the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act and the Jed Foundation, both of which were founded in the early 2000s and aim to prevent suicide in young adults through funding or education, are examples of this trend.

However, the shift toward overly involved parenting styles is most troubling, Henriques and Onestak said.

Due to an increased emphasis on safety in parenting, both Henriques and Onestak have seen a decrease in the ability of incoming students to understand and relate to negative emotions in a way that fosters resilience. In this style of parenting, which both professionals see as predominant today, the parent either takes care of the child's problems, avoids them or blames them on the child's environment, which instills fragility in the child.

"If you feel shame or if you have failed, yeah, OK, you feel shame and you failed," Henriques said. "Part of the deal, then, is realizing that the emotion of shame and failure, at least in situations, is OK. Life sometimes serves you blows, and how do you sit with that feeling?"

Henriques said the cause of this trend begins as far back as the Great Depression, when parents didn't have the resources or energy to invest in a good life for their children. Those children grew up learning the harsh realities of life to an extreme and carried that into their adult life and World War II. After experiencing trauma, generations began to pledge a better life for their children, resulting in an overcorrection that led to what Henriques calls "Self-Esteem Nation," when in the 1980s, psychological researchers studied the idea of self-esteem and worked to promote the idea that self-esteem in children should be protected.

Parents have since been implementing an increasingly hands-on style of parenting, leaving students unequipped to deal with problems presented by college life, Henriques said.

The most striking trend that Locke said the Center for Collegiate Mental Health has found is an increase in students seeking services who have "threat to self characteristics" — students who have a history of non-suicidal self-injury, are seriously considering suicide or have attempted suicide. For Locke, this finding suggests the 15-plus years of national interventions focused on suicide prevention have achieved their intended outcome.

"We just can't ignore 15 years of national interventions," Locke said. "Certainly safety concerns by parents represent an important area of impact, but I think you'd have to start at the source."

While Locke said it's possible there's been an increase in the complexity and rate of mental health problems, that isn't illustrated by the data. However, Onestak said he sees the effect the shift in parenting styles has had on student mental health frequently.

"For the first probably 15 years of my practice, I was soliciting parent input, like I want parents involved in the work that we were doing with their students. Sometimes they needed that support," Onestak said. "For the last 10 years, it's been more like, it'd be really good if parents would give these students some room. Let them fail, let them struggle, let them learn how to solve problems."

Facing anxiety and depression head on

Coincidentally, anxiety overtook depression in 2010 as the leading reason students seek treatment at counseling centers, according to survey data from the Association of University and College Counseling Center Directors. Jerrod Koon, a licensed clinical psychologist at the JMU Counseling Center, sees how over-involved parenting could lead to anxiety in college students.

"I think if students haven't had a chance to face challenges and difficulties and overcome them on their own, it leads to a lot of dread and worry and fears of failure, and so if a parenting strategy has tried to smooth the way and prevent obstacles and prevent problems, that can lead someone in a position where they've never had to do that before," Koon said.

Koon specializes in treating anxiety and leads a five-week treatment program called "Tackling Anxiety." The program is similar to a class, with students completing exercises without having to share their experiences.

"We know that there are certain ways of thinking, for example, that tend to produce anxiety and there are certain ways to address that pretty directly with those thoughts," Onestak said.

One of the other treatment programs offered by the center deals with social anxiety specifically. "Tackling Society" involves students creating a hierarchy of stressful situations and then helping them work through them from the least threatening to the most threatening.

According to Koon, social anxiety is a particularly prevalent problem at JMU. As one of the top party schools in the state according to Niche and one of the top 30 schools with the "hottest girls, guys and nightlife" in 2011 according to Bloomberg, there's a certain standard or mold that JMU students may be expected to fit in.

"I know our No. 1 symptom on our assessment is social anxiety," Koon said. "So among students who present at the center, they're very sensitive to what other people think about them — how they're being judged, how they're being accepted, rejected, falling short. That's a big worry."

Social media and substance abuse can contribute to, and be coping mechanisms for, social anxiety, too. Alcohol and marijuana are often used as coping mechanisms in the beginning stages to help sleep, feel more comfortable in a social setting or cope with stress, Koon said. Typically, when students get to him in the center, those strategies aren't working anymore and those substances are becoming a source of other mental health symptoms.

Onestak has seen the effects parenting styles have had on JMU students as director of the counseling center. He says the reduction of stigma around mental health plays a large role in the increase of students seeking treatment.

COURTESY OF GREGG HENRIQUES

Henriques has researched how parenting styles affects student mental health, and said overly involved parenting can lead to a lack of resilience in children.

"We know our numbers are higher than other schools in terms of alcohol consumption," Koon said. "I think students are surprised when we're concerned about it and they're not."

Aside from treatment programs for anxiety, JMU's counseling center offers group sessions for more complex issues that don't lend themselves to a class-centered structure. The center has frequently offered groups for things like depression, eating disorders, LGBT-related mental health problems and grief.

The center provides individual work, too, with the average student needing three to five sessions. For students more comfortable in an online counseling space, the center offers Therapist Assisted Online, or TAO, an online resource that provides a similar experience to the center's treatment programs.

"We're trying to find the most efficient placement of students based upon what their needs appear to be," Onestak said. "It's got to be a flexible system."

THOMAS ROBERTSON / GRIT.

The case for more funding

While more people are coming in for treatment, experts say that doesn't necessarily mean there are more mental health problems among college students and that this increase could actually be a good thing. The challenge: having enough resources and growing treatment services to accommodate the increase.

Onestak said the center has improved vastly in its ability to treat people quicker, but there's room for improvement and more things the center could do with additional employees and resources.

While JMU's center has virtually eliminated wait times for counseling services, its psychiatric resources are more limited. The center has just one psychiatrist and one psychiatric nurse, so it can only provide short-term services. Once a one-time prescription is issued, students are referred to one of the few private practices in Harrisonburg and may have to wait as long as four months for a psychiatric appointment, Koon and Onestak said. Without more psychiatric staff, both professionals said referrals are unavoidable.

But hiring more staff requires a larger budget. According to The Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors Annual Survey, JMU, at approximately 22,000 undergraduate and graduate students, is already better funded than schools of a similar size. The average counseling center budget of schools with a population of 20,001-25,000 is $1.6 million, while JMU's counseling center budget is $2.1 million. Still, the highest budget for schools of that size doubles JMU's.

Until the increase in funding matches the increase in students seeking treatment, the counseling center will inevitably struggle. The number of students seeking treatment has only grown over the past decade, and Onestak doesn't see an end to the growth.

"I'm looking for the time when you see the trend reverse. This trend has to reverse," Onestak said. "But I've been waiting for 10 years at least and we're not seeing a change."

Thomas Robertson is a senior media arts and design major. Contact Thomas at rober3tl@dukes.jmu.edu.

Missing out? Yo

Students with multiple obligations feel left out of leisure activities

KATELYN MERRIMAN
GRIT.

The fear of missing out has become so ingrained in our society that it has its own entry in the dictionary.

Merriam-Webster defines FOMO as "fear of not being included in something (such as an interesting or enjoyable activity) that others are experiencing."

The phrase has become popular among college students and is commonly heard on extroverted campuses such as JMU's. Social media is a popular platform for students to share their experiences at social events, which may lead friends who aren't as social or who have obligations to think they're missing out. According to a study conducted in 2013 by Harris Interactive and MyLife, 56 percent of social media users experience FOMO.

"I will look at my phone and see them all having fun and I can't because I have to work," Ffion Ayre, a senior media arts and design major, said.

Ayre said because everyone at JMU is so friendly and inclusive, it causes her to constantly want to be surrounded by that environment. When she isn't able to because of studying or having to work, it causes her levels of FOMO to increase.

She never experienced FOMO before coming to college — she never even knew what it was. Other students experienced the effects long before freshman year. For senior media arts and design major, Conor Wylock it was all because of social media.

"When I was a sophomore in high school, I wanted to go over to my friend's home but my mom was against it," Wylock said. "She was going out to dinner so she didn't know how I was going to get back. Then I saw all of my friends hanging out and I got so fed up and so frustrated that I just rode my bike over."

Checking social media isn't the only way that people can experience FOMO.

"Last night I was writing a paper and one of my roommates had all of her friends over and I had to go downstairs to finish my paper because they were distracting me and I wanted to just stop writing," Ayre said.

One of the most prominent messages directed toward JMU freshmen is to "Be Involved." While some students have no problem absorbing this message and finding their niche, others who are nervous about getting involved immediately — or just can't find the right fit — may feel left out.

Jewel Hurt, SGA president and a senior double major in political science and public policy and administration, has been devoted to this mission statement since her first day on campus. She began the sorority recruitment process and joined SGA and Madison Society but quickly realized she was spreading herself thin due to the commitments she made to her organizations. She wanted to focus on one that was most significant and important to her future goals.

"You do have to step away when you get too stressed out," Hurt said. "You have academics to focus on, your social life, your personal life. So you don't want to ever get too heavily involved."

People who experience FOMO say their levels of anxiety have increased due to not being able to be involved in the events they are missing.

Seventy-five percent of all individuals with an anxiety disorder will experience symptoms before age 22, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Gregg Henriques, a psychology professor and mental health researcher at JMU, began his research when he discovered there had been a dramatic increase in the number of students at the university requesting therapy — nearly 200 percent from 2000-17.

"People are entering into therapy with anxiety-related causes more than before," Henriques said.

He says the issues of "missing out" have been present for years. It's such a prevalent concept now because of not just social media, but how people choose to handle the situation.

"It's like peer pressure," Wylock said. "If everybody else is studying on a Thursday night and not going out, then I'm studying on a Thursday and not going out."

The emergence of social media platforms that emphasize photos and videos, such as Snapchat and Instagram, have made it even easier to share users' social experiences. Naturally, FOMO has followed.

"FOMO is real and it's usually just that I don't want to miss out on activities and events that my friends are doing that usually are more fun," Hurt said. "But you have to prioritize those organizations when you are in those leadership roles."

By budgeting time and creating a schedule, students can allot specific days to join in on the fun.

"I honestly feel like I have been turned into an introvert since my time at JMU," Hurt said. "And when I just get too overwhelmed in so many events or things pulling me in every which direction I like to just be by myself and decompress."

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ou're not alone

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXIS MILLER / GRIT.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXIS MILLER / GRIT.

Party of **ONE**

Reserved students feel pressured to be extroverted to avoid being left behind

JAMIE GRAEFF | Perspective

Katarina Saxton has always been reserved.

"I won't just go up to strangers and talk to them about literally anything," Saxton, a senior industrial design major, said. "I've honestly been on the receiving end of that a lot of the time, especially since I have two older sisters who are extroverts. They'll come up to me and use me to process externally, and I don't do that. I usually journal or write a song or think it through a little bit before I tell my best friend."

As Laurie Helgoe describes in her 2008 book, "Introverted Power: Why Your Inner Life is Your Hidden Strength," introverts shut down when there's too much stimulation. A red light flashes: "OVERLOAD" and they know it's time to pull back and think. The problem is introverts are rarely given the right to retreat.

Take the high-school-to-college transition, for example. It can be difficult for reserved freshmen — who feel like they're on a time-crunch to make friends — to actually develop a sense of belonging.

During the early hours of 1787 August Orientation, freshmen are thrown into ice breakers, and at night, hallmates may push the party scene. If the party scene isn't of interest, then they have just a few weeks to join a club or make friends before everyone else starts to develop their own "group." Essentially, the introverted freshman is given one of two options: sacrifice one's comfort and resort to extroversion or get left behind.

Getting left behind isn't really an option for the freshmen trying desperately to make JMU feel like home. Introverts often have to pass themselves off as being extroverted, David Onestak, director of the JMU Counseling Center, said. They're made to feel like their quiet and reserved nature doesn't belong. In JMU's river of extroversion, introverts' only option is to grab a life jacket and hope to survive.

"I was pretty uncomfortable during FrOG week," Joe Gaboury, a senior geographic science major, said. "I didn't really want to participate in some of the activities, but I felt pressured to do so."

Students learn about different personality types but fail to accommodate the needs of both. JMU Student Activities and Involvement echoes a consistent theme of "Be Involved!" It encourages students to join clubs or apply for executive positions to enhance their experience. While introverts may be interested and qualify for leadership positions, they hesitate to apply due to a fear that their leadership potential will be overlooked and their introversion will be perceived as a weakness.

"Introverts aren't the loudest people or the first to talk, but they have complex ideas," Onestak said.

According to The Association of Indonesian Scholars of English Education's 2017 study examining correlation between creativity and personality types, it was revealed that there's a significant relationship between introversion and creativity: the higher the level of introversion in an individual, the higher their creativity and vice versa. A possible explanation may be the fact that instead of just blurting out words, introverts think before expressing any idea or any feeling they have. In essence, solitude is a key element for creativity.

This recurring behavior of introverts processing and replaying ideas in their head can be conversationally limiting. Introverts may feel silenced while conversing with extroverted individuals, because by the time an introvert has constructed a point they wish to vocalize, the conversation has already moved on to another topic. "Public speaking isn't the issue," Saxton said. "It's more on-the-spot speaking, and that's because I have to take more time to process things."

In Saxton's junior year of high school, she joined a speech and debate club.

"I seemed to do really well at debate," she said. "Because you could actually plan out your debate and briefs and you had six points — and you knew every sub point — and you had points to refer back to."

However, no amount of planning could prepare her for the impromptu section of the debate. Saxton was given two minutes to prepare a five-minute speech.

"I went up there and I just cried," Saxton said. "But there aren't too many times when that skill is directly applied to real life."

Saxton does well with work interviews because she's passionate about what she does, so she's able to talk about it easily.

"But when you're thrown something out of like, a trivia deck, you're just like 'I can't talk about that for 5 minutes, I barely know the answer,'" Saxton said.

Another instance of the introverted nightmare of impromptu speaking comes from junior math major, Emily Eberhard: "One time during my freshman year communications class, I had to give a speech that I wasn't prepared for because one of my group members didn't show up. I had to learn a part of the speech in less than five minutes and I was super uncomfortable doing it."

According to Susan Cain, author of the 2012 book "Quiet," our most important institutions, schools and workplaces are designed mostly for extroverts and for extroverts' need for lots of stimulation.

Here at JMU, the campus layout and construction of buildings aligns with this belief. Onestak says that introverts can feel alienated on campus because of its extroverted culture, and with one-third of the nation identifying as introverted, that's a sizeable percentage of the student body feeling disenfranchised.

The Student Success Center is a prime example, with its first floor being practically an extroverted haven. Group spaces in SSC are enclosed with glass walls, and the overall openness of the first floor promotes connection and collaboration amongst students. For the introverted student, forced collaboration can stand in the way of innovation.

The staff in SSC began to notice that some students were finding their own little nooks in the third and fourth floor hallways, often sitting on the ground near the elevators. Society has almost been conditioned form birth to view these people as "outliers," when the reality is that these people thrive in secluded environments and require that alone time to recharge.

"This does not mean that we should all stop collaborating," Cain said in a TED Talk, "The Power of Introverts." "But it does mean that solitude matters and for some people, it is the air that they breathe."

What's needed most here is balance — the yin and the yang of introversion and extroversion.

"Know that introverts really value extroverts," Saxton said. The gregarious, quick-witted nature of extroverts can arguably spark conceptualization in introverts. Instead of pushing for group work as the only means of collaboration, allow some time for autonomy. It's easy to mistake the loudest voice in a room as the most sensible. Instead, allow time for processing — for introverts to chime in. They may carry insights that would have otherwise gone unspoken.

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Unrealistic standards

Changing societal expectations fueled by social media create risk of body image issues for women

MADELENE WHITFIELD
GRIT.

For freshman hospitality management major Madison Parmiter, it all started in spring 2015. She started counting every calorie she consumed and eventually stopped eating. Her mother took her to a doctor who instructed her to gain five pounds to improve her health. She was fine until March 2016, when a fellow classmate came up to her in her high school hallway and asked to talk to her about something before others started noticing.

"She then leaned over to me and tells me that I look like I have gained 10 pounds," Parmiter said. "And that I look unhealthy and should seek help from a doctor to lose the weight so that people don't start making fun of me."

Parmiter is one of many women on college campuses struggling with body image. According to the American College Health Association's spring 2014 National College Health Assessment, nearly 30 percent of college women rated personal appearance as "traumatic or very difficult to handle." If not healthily mindful and educated, a person can develop an eating disorder or other body image issues such as body dysmorphia, which can lead to anxiety and depression.

Jordan McCann, a health education coordinator specializing in sexuality, body empowerment and eating disorder awareness at The Well in the Student Success Center said being unhappy with your body can start as early as five or six years old. Those issues can progress in the teenage years.

"If someone is to develop an eating disorder, it usually starts around age 18," McCann said. "So body dissatisfaction is starting way earlier before college."

Balancing school, extracurriculars, mental and physical health as well as a social life can get tedious at JMU. With unspoken beauty standards comes a female population striving to meet them. Sophomore music major Sarah Zotian believes these standards come from being involved in certain groups and organizations.

"Without recognizing it, they make their own standards and feel pressured to look the same," Zotian said. "Exclusion is a big aspect because nobody wants to be left out. When you're excluded from a friend group, the world and society puts girls in a certain mental state and they feel like they don't belong, so you can either do what you want or adapt to what society looks like to fit in."

In regards to who sets these standards, both McCann and Zotian feel people have social media to thank. For them, it's a giant competition of who can be the funniest, the prettiest and the most popular. Social media sites such as Instagram, Facebook, and Tumblr are main sources for women to set their ideas of the perfect "IT" girl.

"Social media has exacerbated it so much more because of its immediate access to the comparison," McCann said. "It used to be models in the magazines, but now it's all on Instagram and Facebook and Tumblr so it's instant and you just scroll and it's images and images of Instagram models."

Reality Educators Advocating Campus Health, a JMU organization that aims to provide a safe, non-judgmental atmosphere to foster discussion and cultivate positive body image, added a segment to its program that covers body image and beauty standards on social media.

For a while, the ideal woman was a tall blonde with long legs, skinny, tan, and natural but pretty with perfect white teeth, according to McCann. Though the societal outlook evolves depending on who's currently idolized in Hollywood.

"It's changed," McCann said, "Like now, it's about having the Kim K butt. Everyone wants butts. They want thick because that's the new ideal … It's gotta be the right proportion of fat in the butt and boobs and thighs but you still have the skinny waist."

Now, some social media campaigns have begun promoting different body types and beauty standards. The Aerie campaign expands upon this with its use of unedited models of all sizes, cultures and backgrounds.

While recovering from her eating disorder, Parmiter is also an advocate for raising awareness on the idea of there not being one "perfect body."

"Everyone is created differently, and just because some stupid advertisers tell you that you need to look a certain way, doesn't mean you have to," Parmiter said.

McCann believes it's important for women to acknowledge that everyone is different and the way people look is sometimes out of their control due to their biological makeup or being more susceptible to certain physical traits over others.

Groups such as REACH and The HOPE Team, who strive to educate students with eating disorders and exercise behaviors, not only provide resources for students who have body image issues but also promote the practice of reforming negative thoughts into positive ones as a way of healing. They encourage complimenting yourself rather than criticizing.

"We praise being unique in so many ways, and in college students, want themselves to stand out. So why can't we apply that to our looks and our bodies and be your own person? Because there's truly no one else out there like you," McCann said.

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ALEXIS MILLER / GRIT.

While society encourages men to hide their emotions and participate in activities that will show off how "manly" they are, dance majors Jordan Foster (right) and Matt Haskett go against the grain in their choice of major.

ETHAN PELINO / GRIT.

Man up

Toxic masculinity can be a barrier to healthy relationships and self-image among college men

MADELENE WHITFIELD
GRIT.

Tony Shoukas can get ready in five minutes unless he has to shave that day — a benefit of being a male. He goes to the gym once a day for an hour and while he acknowledges it's a pressure to do so, he doesn't feel it. Despite this, Shoukas, a senior JMU student, recognizes the pressure stems from hegemonic masculinity, better known as "toxic masculinity."

During Shoukas' freshman year, a female friend in his dorm was sexually assaulted by a male in the same dorm. He said the victim didn't do anything about it.

"Toxic masculinity is ingrained in violence," Arianna Sessoms, JMU's prevention coordinator and survivor advocate at The Well said, "It's a social construct. Toxic masculinity is the rejection of femininity."

The causes of it can range from person to person. Shoukas believes that who you look to as a role model is one of the primary causes.

"Depending on the male figure, it can shape the kid and how he strives to be more masculine by being physically fit or being demeaning to women," Shoukas said.

According to Sessoms, these behaviors are primarily introduced and cultivated from figures seen on social media, television, movies and video games as well as family and friends.

"Men need role models who are willing to switch that script and to get away from toxic masculinity," Sessoms said, "The people who project these norms onto them — like 'this is how you should be, you shouldn't cry, you need to man up' — things like that, they learn that from parents, older brothers, siblings or cousins that they're interacting with,"

For Shoukas, his role model is his uncle Joe who he described as a hardworking family man. He said he owns his own business and works hard every day to support his family. He also treats everyone with respect and dignity, traits that Shoukas said he admires.

Though, sometimes it's difficult to exhibit those traits when the issue of fitting it is ever-present.

With everyone trying to fit in at college, straying from the norm isn't ideal. Sessoms believes navigating college in general is already hard enough, but it's even worse when you feel like you have to put on a certain front to fit in with everyone else.

These behaviors are typically seen when men are involved on sports teams, fraternities or other male-dominated organizations. Sessoms says it's important for men in these groups to have conversations about what toxic masculinity is and to have them with other people they can relate to so it feels more genuine and natural.

"Men don't want to express their true feelings," Shoukas said. "They want to be more reserved because there's always that fear of judgment. Some guys just bottle that shit up and then will take it out on their girlfriend or friends. Verbal aggression is real and prevalent. I have seen this when a close friend of mine was continuously being ridiculed and belittled by her significant other over her attire. She called her a slut and other various names."

Some men attempt to numb their feelings through alcohol and other substances. According to a study conducted by Clark University, "When men drink excessively, become angry or violent because feelings of depression are intolerable, or refuse to seek help for an anxiety disorder because they believe they should be able to control their emotions.

Increasing awarewenn on the effect of these experience and mental health problems can benefit women, children and men themselves according to the study.

"I don't think that men at JMU look at women as less than them," senior Rob DuBois said. "I think that they're equal to us in academics and in work. Being a real man means being respectful, honoring people and hearing people out when they have something to say. Being a good man is the same thing."

Despite this, there's still is the looming idea that anyone can be subject to toxic masculinity.

JMU provides those opportunities for men through the Counseling Center with spring program, "Men in Power Panel," which bring men of different backgrounds and sexual orientations to facilitate a conversation among college students about sexual, domestic and gun violence and how men can be agents of change in society.

"There's nothing wrong with being masculine just like there's nothing wrong with being feminine. It's just this idea that your masculinity should reject everything that's feminine doesn't really make sense because as humans we are complex." Sessoms said. "We have different feelings and emotions. We have nurturing abilities and different ways in seeing the world."

Sessoms encourages men to embrace their emotions and warns that if they reject part of themselves for the sake of maintaining masculinity, it has the ability to hurt them in the long run. She believes that it's important for men to get in touch with who they are as a person and get comfortable with that instead of trying to aspire to this idea of what they think they should be.

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What lies **beneath**

Emotional abuse in college relationships and its longterm effects on victims

SABRINA MORENO
GRIT.

Sophomore Megan Davis hadn't expected to feel like a slut that night. She'd done nothing wrong. She'd danced alone — sometimes with her friends, but alone nonetheless. Her doubt crept in as she realized she'd worn a shirt with a keyhole cut-out in the front, a detail her long-distance boyfriend wouldn't approve of. Her choice to go out often became an argument, especially if she'd call him once back at home.

"He would say that I was a dumb bitch for getting drunk and to not call him when I'm like that," Davis, using a pseudonym to protect her identity, said. "And he would say 'I bet you're calling me because you feel guilty and you were a slut and did things that you weren't supposed to do.'"

Other times, she'd FaceTime him before a night out to see how he was doing. If he disliked her outfit, he'd begin to cry and say she needed to change. Dressing like that would embarrass him and embarrass their relationship. Everything wrong in the relationship was her fault. It was always her fault. These were the times in which she felt the most lonely.

He'd then apologize the next day, swearing it'd never happen again — but it always did. This is a common cycle in emotionally abusive relationships.

Abusers aim to control, punish or humiliate through verbal assaults. Over time, they can remove a victim's sense of self and ultimately drive them to agree with the abuser, especially in instances of gaslighting.

Gaslighting has become a popular form of emotional abuse, according to Arianna Sessoms, JMU's prevention coordinator and survivor advocate. Through manipulative means, abused people begin to question their perception of reality and sanity. For Davis, this came in the form of her mentioning issues she had in the relationship and her boyfriend — who she no longer dates — projecting his own insecurities on her.

"He's told me before that he's insecure. That's why he's telling me I'm a slut. He's insecure. He just needs reassurance," Davis said she'd tell herself. "He knew I was the type of person to make excuses for people and see that other side. He took advantage of that."

In a particular case, when his phone died at a female friend's house and he didn't respond for 24 hours, she asked what had happened and if she should be worried. Immediately defensive, he made her believe she was crazy and accusatory despite her never being so.

"He just went off and was like 'Are you really going to accuse me of cheating when I know you go out all the time and make out with guys and hook up with guys but I can't have female friends?'" Davis said. "He'd then tell me I knew nothing of loyalty. Only he did. He'd tell me I was immature and to fuck off."

Sessoms says this form of projecting insecurities and jealousy is a primary indicator of a toxic relationship, but since it's romanticized in the media with movies such as Twilight, people lose sight of what a healthy relationship is. It's also not discussed enough to counteract popular culture.

With the Red Flag Campaign, Sessoms hopes the conversation of dating violence — which one in five college students experience — and positive relationships will be pushed to the forefront. The campaign aims to establish the signs so a friend or family member can help prevent unhealthy relationships in others.

"The mental, emotional triggers — whether it be fear or paranoia — it really does impact a person on all different levels," Sessoms said. "It's why it's important to educate and prevent ahead of time and not get stuck in the cycle and deal with the after effects of it too."

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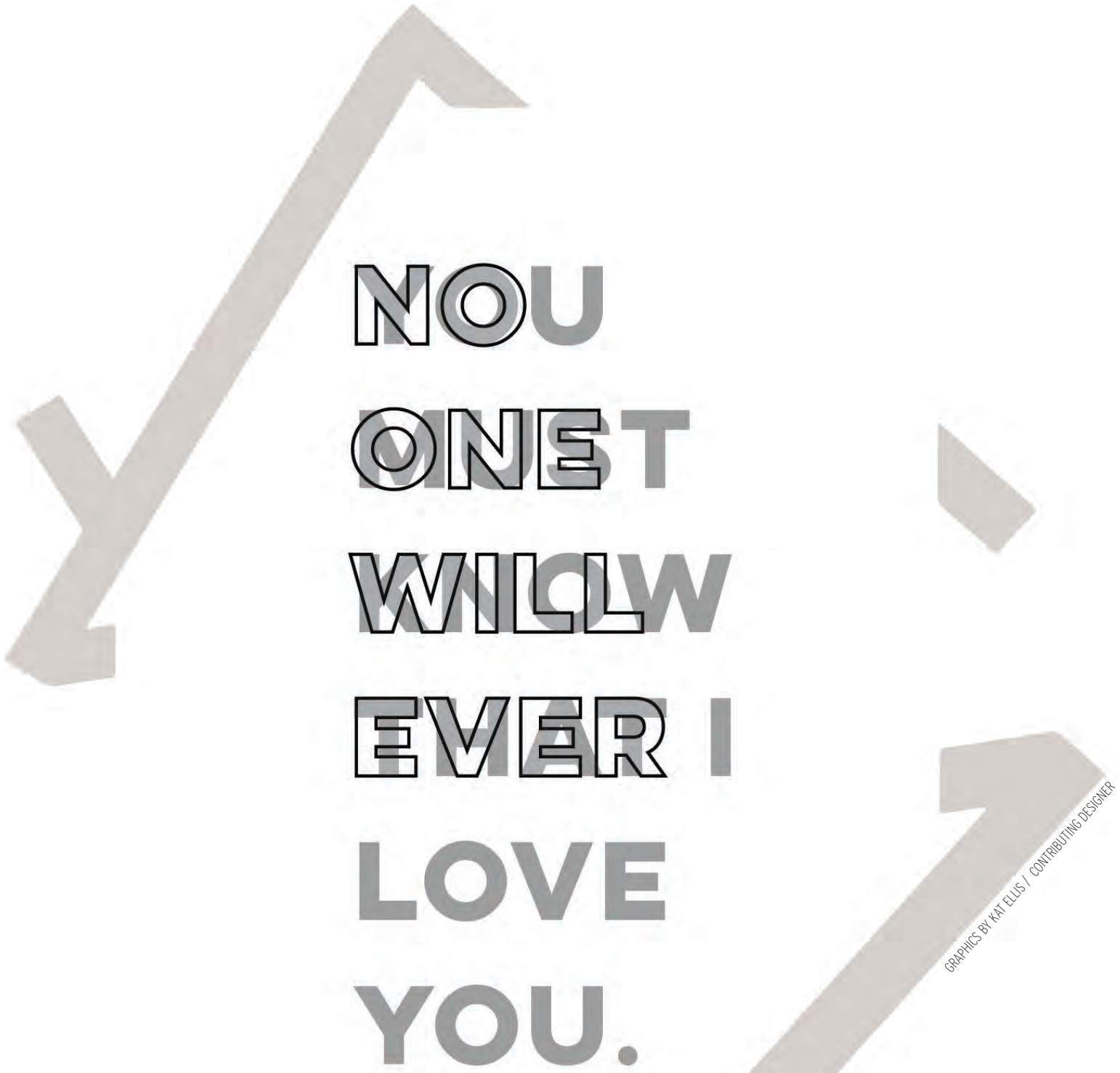
WORTHLESS
YOU'RE CRAZY
NO ONE WILL BELIEVE YOU



GRAPHICS BY KAT ELLIS / CONTRIBUTING DESIGNER

While bruises are tangible and physical violence is the most detectable form of abuse, emotional or psychological abuse is just as prominent. With difficulties in measuring patterns and its prevalence, the physical effects of emotional abuse, such as chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia and loneliness, are overlooked according to HealthLine.

Similarly, because emotional abuse is subtle, 57 percent of college students say it's difficult to distinguish the signs, even though emotional abuse targets a person's psychological well-being. Forty-three percent of college women in relationships also report experiencing abusive dating behavior.

Women from the ages of 18-25 are the most susceptible to this form of abuse, which often serves as the precursor to physical and sexual abuse according to a 2013 study done by Gunnur Karakurt, an assistant professor for family medicine and health at Case Western Reserve University.

Sessoms attributes this to the excitement of one's first relationship. Between the comfort of a new relationship and a societal shame against being alone, red flags can be overpowered by emotion and a desire to fit in.

She reiterates reaching out to someone you know and recognizing trust is vital in these situations. For those who may not have those resources, the advocates at The Well in the Student Success Center are there to talk and be a support system.

"Sometimes people need that reassurance that 'No, you're not crazy, and what you're experiencing is absolutely valid and it's absolutely not OK,'" Sessoms said.

It's common for victims to get stuck in a cycle in which they can't get out, especially when the relationship started out healthy, according to Sessoms. When abusers don't always seem like an abuser or the victims don't realize the severity of a situation, unhealthy relationships easily take root.

In Davis' case, he was 24 and she was 18, a fact she'd initially overlooked. Now she says there's no reason someone that age should've gone for her.

He gave her an ultimatum in the early stages: Either they date or they couldn't be friends and ever speak again. It's that level of manipulation Davis feels is a red flag, whether it be forcing a relationship quickly or portraying possessive qualities.

Along with this, came shame.

"You think about it in a textbook way and you can imagine that and say 'Yeah, that would be obvious to me,'" Davis said. "But it's different when you're in it. It's different when it's a real person and you care about them."

Despite her friends urging her to get out of the relationship because of its toxicity, Davis didn't listen to her gut. She says feeling like you're in love with a person changes your perspective and regardless of how much training you've received about the topic, you'll continue to justify the other person's actions. Davis wishes she could tell others experiencing similar situations that it doesn't mean they're crazy.

"People ask me 'Why did you love him?' But there were many, many good times. If a relationship was all bad, no one would stay," Davis said. "That's something people overlook. There are good times. And if anyone feels like they've been in an emotionally abusive relationship or are in one, they're not stupid people. It's not your fault."

Feelings of inadequacy and insignificance can take over at times, according to Davis. She says choosing to be above the voice putting you down isn't easy, but with the reliance of good friends, it can at least be a first step.

"I always felt like I had to be something more than myself. But just know that you will be enough for somebody," Davis said. "The person who will treat you right, you will be more than enough for that person."

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Sexual

"I didn't realize it was assault until seven months later"

MADDELYNNE PARKER & HANNAH DODD
GRIT.

At 3 a.m., Isabella Green received a text from her ex-boyfriend telling her he was at her house. He said he needed her because he felt sad and depressed. She agreed to hang out in her garage, and after some time, he began to kiss her and aggressively rip her clothes off.

The 17-year-old didn't know how to react after except to cry. Before he left, he looked at her and said, "I didn't mean anything I said. I just wanted to get off."

She went back to her room and noticed cuts and bruises begin to take shape on her body.

"I didn't realize that it was assault until seven months later," she said.

Green, using a pseudonym to protect her identity, decided to report her assaulter and speak up about him to help herself and other women.

One in five women will experience sexual assault while in college, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center. More than 90 percent of sexual assault victims don't report their assault to the police or school. Any form of sexual aggression can lead a victim to experience numerous mental health effects such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder without even realizing it.

Green broke up with her assaulter after realizing he was manipulative and emotionally abusive. She's been prescribed antidepressants and had a history of mental health issues since she was 15 years old. Her assault only intensified the depression, resulting in an inability to build relationships and trust when she arrived at JMU.

"There was definitely a change [in me] and I couldn't figure out why," Green said.

After the assault, she relied on her antidepressants and began to take other pills to cope. She could feel herself becoming more depressed and she tried Xanax to relax and Adderall to give her the energy to do school work. She noticed her grades falling and during her free time, Green would find herself asleep in her bed for hours on end.

"I really was just, like, super numb," Green said.

Green attended a small art school where news spread fast. Rumors made it to the teachers who asked her if it was just "rough sex gone wrong." She had to go on for the next year knowing that the boy who raped her would also be in her school.

"I was just so ashamed all the time going to school and having to face people," Green said. "I was like, 'OK, well, this is what they think of me.'"

Later in the year, Green found out that her abuser had raped another girl, aged 14, when he was 18. This news drove her to take action against him during her senior year in high school.

The sexual violence resource center reported that "about 63 percent of men at one university who self-reported acts qualifying as rape or attempted rape admitted to committing repeat rapes."

Green reported her assault to the police the following April and her assaulter was expelled from school.

"Thank God my principal was a woman and a mom," Green said. "She was very understanding."

As her case drew on, she began to lose the support of her friends and some teachers. People she had known her whole life stood up for her abuser.

The court settled with Green and her assaulter — ordering two years probation, community service and a class on sexual assault for the case to be cleared from his permanent record. This upset Green because she felt her assaulter got away with the crime.

In the case of JMU addressing sexual assault on campus, assaulters have rarely been expelled and are often left free to continue their education, sometimes following a suspension.

Every university in the U.S. must report the category and number of criminal offenses it receives that year to the Department of Education. In 2015, JMU reported 12 rapes occurring in on-campus student housing and none off-campus. The university then reported three rapes occurring in on-campus housing and two rapes off campus in 2016.

These are official cases that have been reported, investigated and potentially held the perpetrator accountable.

Abigail Gainsforth, a junior biology and justice studies double major, was assaulted in February of her freshman year in 2017. She lived in Gifford Hall on the Quad, the same dorm as her assaulter; he was just a floor below her. She planned to stay home and study one Friday night while the rest of her dorm went out.

Her assaulter had previously asked Gainsforth out several times and showed interest in her. As freshmen, students are encouraged to keep their dorm room doors open when home to welcome other hallmates and friends into their space. This led Gainsforth's floor to habitually keep their dorm room doors unlocked at all times. While originally meant to create a sense of community, one night, Gainsforth received an unwelcome visitor.

"I was asleep when he came in," Gainsforth said. "He smelled very strong of alcohol."

He forced himself on her bed and trapped her underneath him. She felt like she couldn't scream or speak during the attack because her voice had escaped her.

"Your brain kind of shuts down when trauma's happened," Gainsforth said.

agg

She managed to escape his embrace and ran into her suite bathroom. Gainsforth felt the immediate need to shower and locked the door behind her.

"He popped the lock and came in," Gainsforth said. "That's when I started screaming. Before I could not make any noise. It was like my voice had been taken away."

Gainsforth's assaulter ran from the scene, leaving a letter and multiple text messages behind to apologize. She kept quiet about the incident until the following March, when a friend encouraged her to speak up after noticing Gainsforth's behaviors change.

"I wasn't eating," Gainsforth said. "I lost probably 15 pounds in this process just living in the dorm with this person."

This was just one of the many effects of her increased levels of anxiety and PTSD. She lost friends, academic motivation and her drive to do anything she'd previously loved.

She reported her assault at the end of March to JMU's Title IX coordinator, Amy Sirocky-Meck, which led to a disciplinary process. Gainsforth kept all the texts he sent, texts from friends telling her to keep quiet and the letter he left after the assault.

The process lasted months, including the entire summer before her sophomore year, which was originally pushed back so her assaulter could make the hearing date. He was found responsible on Sept. 12, 2017, and suspended the following month until fall 2019, Gainsforth said.

Gainsforth must face her senior year with her perpetrator back on campus.

"They couldn't even wait until I was graduated," Gainsforth said.

College students are at the highest risk of experiencing sexual aggression during the "red zone," which is the first six weeks of the fall semester, according to the Centre County Women's Resource Center in Pennsylvania. This includes the start of the football season and before classes begin to take a toll on a student's free time. JMU has groups and resources available to help fight this trend.

Support is something Green lacked in high school when her friends faded away in the midst of a difficult court case. After coming to JMU, she got the fresh start and new friends she needed to continue in the healing process. She's seen her experiences as "clearing out the dirt."

Though Green makes every effort to heal daily, the effects of her aggressor remain. She still faces difficulty in navigating romantic relationships and building trust with others. Gainsforth faces similar struggles, but is also speaking out about her assault to bring change to the way that JMU handles sexual assault cases. Each one identifies themselves as a survivor of sexual assault and in their own way found ways to grow from their experiences.

"I learned a lot about what is important to me," Gainsforth said. "Making sure there's trust and friendship and boundaries, but then also like being able to rely on people. I didn't have that when I was reporting."

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gression

Resources

JMU has multiple resources for students who experience a sexual assault. On the back of every JAC card is the C.A.R.E. phone number — a student volunteer organization that works a hotline for anyone who wants to talk or make sense of their sexual assault experience. It's available 24/7 while JMU classes are in session.

"Sometimes people just want you to listen," Alexis Schneider, C.A.R.E.'s president and a junior biology major, said. "Sometimes people want to know, 'How do I get to the counseling center' or 'What is the OSARP process?'"

They also give presentations in classes and to other campus organizations on sexual aggression and assault to help students identify what constitutes as assault and how to stop it.

#JMUBelievesYou is another student-run organization on campus dedicated to addressing sexual aggression. The group of roughly 30 members was founded by Aaron PeeksMease, adjunct assistant professor of sociology, two years ago in collaboration with a few of his students. Since then, the group has worked to create a culture of resistance through campaigns and educational programs.

"If you're affected by something directly you're more likely to get involved in it," PeeksMease said.

His former fiancé and former girlfriend were both raped, which is why he feels so passionately about addressing sexual aggression.

"You gotta show people how they are directly impacted," PeeksMease said. "Because there's so much silence especially regarding this issue that you don't realize how many people are impacted."

A key issue addressed by #JMUBelievesYou is educating students in how to be a bystander. The problem is that "people have these voices but very rarely do they use them," because they don't know what to do. This group of students works to educate others in learning what it means to be a bystander, and how they can help others when something seems off.

"We don't challenge each other enough," PeeksMease said. "Not even that, we don't support each other enough."

For anyone who has experienced sexual aggression or assault, JMU's Title IX office is located in Madison Hall and will be the resource to start a school investigation. If an assault has occurred, one can visit the Health Center at JMU or Sentara RMH Hospital to get a physical exam. The JMU Police Department can also be notified for criminal investigations at 540-568-6912 and the Harrisonburg police at 540-434-4436.

Finding purpose in life

College students can find meaning using Frankl's three conditions

ALEXIS MILLER
GRIT.

In an assessment done by the American College Health Association in 2017, 51.7 percent of college students reported feeling hopeless. College is all about finding your purpose and passion. Getting a degree in your desired field is rarely easy and the roadblocks along the way can make people feel as though they have failed at finding the meaning they desire.

In the preface of his book, "A Man's Search for Meaning," Viktor Frankl, a psychiatrist who studied purpose in life, asserts, "If hundreds of thousands of people reach out for a book whose very title promises to deal with the question of a meaning to life, it must be a question that burns under their fingernails."

College students are told to constantly question the world around them. The hope is that they will be able to graduate having learned a lot about a variety of subjects but ultimately getting a degree in a field that they find fulfilling. Frankl offers a system that could potentially help those that are lost find their way.

Frankl was a doctor in Vienna, Austria, who started researching meaning in life while interacting with his patients. He would later be sent to multiple concentration camps during the Holocaust. He survived this historic tragedy and continued to pass on his teachings through his work and writing until he passed away in September 1997.

JMU psychology professor Bill Evans was introduced to Frankl's philosophies when he was in grad school at Duke University. At the time, his father had been diagnosed with terminal cancer and his mother, who had bipolar disorder, went into a deep depressive episode following the diagnosis.

His girlfriend at the time had lost her father to cancer and had read Frankl's book, "A Man's Search for Meaning." She recommended the book to Evans and it ended up helping him and his parents prepare for what was to come. Evans is now a member of the board of the directors for the Viktor Frankl Institute and is helping spread his findings to students and the world.

The conditions Frankl speaks about can be applied to young adults since this time in life is a pivotal moment where individuals find out who they want to be and what they want to do. College students, in particular, have to assess their career path nearly every day.

1. Finding someone to love who will love you in return

An important way to gain meaning in life is by fostering connections with the people around you. These relationships can include any familial, romantic or platonic connections you can rely on throughout your life and hardships. Ultimately, the best way to fulfill this condition is by learning how to relate to others.

"Frankl often talked about what we tend to get back from people is what we send out to people," Evans said. "So, if we're better at giving love we'll be better at receiving it, too."

At one point in his book, Frankl discusses how just the memory of his wife got him through a tough time at work in the concentration camps. To him, it didn't matter if your beloved was actually physically there — the feeling the person gives an individual and the meaning they hold in their life can be enough to help push them forward through hardship and help them enjoy their hopeful moments more fully.

College students have a number of opportunities to make connection with others through social events, organizations and finding roommates that they connect with. It is important to build relationships to learn how to work well with others and have a social support system to lean on during hard times. Senior kinesiology major, Lauren Kelly feels this condition applies most to college students who are searching for meaning in their lives.

"Having people to love and feeling loved from other people is so rewarding and getting to share experiences with other people I think is really important," Kelly said.

Evans suggests that relationships with other people are typically what enriches life the most.

2. Finding something to do that fulfills one's passion

When he was spending time in concentration camps during the Holocaust, Frankl found that prisoners were always better off if they could picture a future for themselves that they felt was attainable.

"Finding a good place to live out in the world of work, your best skills, gifts and abilities," Evans said.

A main concern for college students is finding out what career path they want to pursue after they get their degree. It's important that they follow their passions, since that will yield a more meaningful life.

This condition doesn't always have to be about career goals. According to Evans, students can find meaning in life by being passionate about helping others. He often points students who are searching for meaning in the direction of community service initiatives and makes them a requirement in his classes. JMU also advocates for involvement in clubs and organizations the moment students step foot on campus.

"I joined every club that I could and I just wanted to invest my time in something meaningful and have purpose in the time that I spent here," Kelly said. "I kind of went from 10 clubs to 2 that I could really invest my time and efforts in."

By helping others with their skills and abilities, students are also helping themselves. Fulfillment and meaning can be gained by serving the community to the best of one's abilities and finding things that compliment one's passions.

3. Overcoming suffering with courage and dignity

This condition started while Frankl was a doctor. He was constantly around patients who were suffering and often found their stories and lifestyles to be filled with meaning even though they were in desolate situations. It was furthered by his time in the concentration camps where he got to witness prisoners struggle with adversity up close.

> 'So, if we're better at giving love we'll be better at receiving it, too.'
>
> **Bill Evans**

The struggle, however, doesn't have to be something as major as an illness or imprisonment. Suffering is dealt to everyone in a variety of ways and occurs at different times.

"We'll all have our share," Evans said.

While everyone is dealt a different amount and variety of suffering, these factors don't matter in the grand scheme. One of the major points in this condition is that life has meaning during times of happiness but it also has meaning during times of sadness and suffering. Finding meaning in those times of suffering will help people feel better about where they are and what is to come.

College students juggle any number of stressors throughout the semester: exams, ten-page essays, presentations and the unknown future beyond college. However, there's a possibility for more complicated challenges to arise in families and friend groups that may affect morale.

The reaction to the obstacles faced by students are more important than the situations themselves. The meaning of life is developed by how an individual approaches the suffering they are given rather than the situation itself.

"The people who suffered greatly were also people that other people admired, but also had a higher level of meaning and purpose," Evans said.

Frankl's philosophy provides a system that endorses surrounding yourself with loving people, following your dreams and passions and facing every challenge with courage. Students often change friend groups and majors without realizing that ultimately they're trying to obtain a more meaningful life.

While there are many philosophies that try to encompass what creates a purposeful life, Frankl's research takes a personal approach and can also be readily applied to any individual in any circumstance. It all boils down to finding a passion, relating to others and facing obstacles with dignity.

Alexis Miller is a senior media arts and design major. Contact Alexis at mille2af@dukes.jmu.edu.

Lessons learned from **Viktor Frankl**

1. Finding someone to love who will love you in return
2. Finding something to do that fulfills one's passion
3. Overcoming suffering with courage and dignity

79 percent
of college students who obtain stimulants for non-medical use get them from a friend.
See page 30.

51.7 percent
of college students reported feeling hopeless in an assessment done by the American College Health Association in 2017.
See page 22.

Nearly 30 percent
of college women rated personal appearance as "traumatic or very difficult to handle."
See page 15.

Brain bites

From suicide to substance abuse, these are the statistics behind student mental health struggles

5,000

Number of calls made daily to the National Suicide Prevention Hotline.
See breezejmu.org.

56 percent

of social media users experience FOMO.
See page 15.

Art therapy's client base is mostly adults.
See page 40.

Solitude is a key element for creativity.
See page 12.

1 in 6

American adults take at least one psychiatric drug over the course of the year.
See page 36.

43 percent

of dating college women experience abusive dating behavior.
See page 17.

1 in 5

women will experience a sexual assault.
See page 20.

191 percent

increase in JMU counseling center clients from 2000-2017.
See page 6.

10th

Suicide placed 10th among the most common causes of death in the year 2016.
See page 35.

39 percent

of all students have used marijuana at least once in the past year.
See page 26.

Users and abusers

MADDELYNNE PARKER
GRIT

Before Charles Miller got into the car he quickly popped a small tab of 25i — fake acid. It seemed that during the first eight holes of golf everything would be normal, but it wasn't until after the ninth hole that yardsticks started moving out of nowhere and the fairway turned into a waving ocean. This was an uncomfortable high for Miller that led him to experience severe anxiety for months after, and he coped by drinking alcohol and popping Xanax for a year of his college life.

"I didn't know if I was going to make it," Miller, using a pseudonym to protect his identity, said.

The use of alcohol and illicit drugs is more common among young adults than any other age group, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Illicit drugs originally focused on the use of marijuana among college students, but has recently incorporated the use and misuse of prescription, over-the-counter drugs and harder drugs such as LSD. The administration found that 1 in 17 full-time college students aged 18-22 met the criteria for a substance use disorder in 2015.

The use of substances also has a direct relation to one's mental health. SAMHSA reported in 2015 that "37 percent of students reported feeling so depressed within the last 12 months that it was difficult to function, and 21 percent felt overwhelming anxiety." It goes on to say that adults 18 and older with mental health issues in the past year were more likely to use illicit drugs or alcohol in the past month than other adults.

Alcohol

The most worrisome category of substance use among college students is alcohol.

In 2016, the National Institute on Drug Abuse surveyed college campuses to find that about 40 percent of students "have been drunk in the past month" and about 32 percent took part in binge drinking within the past two weeks. On top of this, just by googling "Virginia party schools," JMU is marked as the second top party school by Niche.

Miller noticed himself change drastically during the end of his sophomore year. He never had any anxiety problems previously. He describes the effects of his bad trip as a "direct shaking of my soul."

During the day Miller would still feel as though he were tripping. His anxiety would spike because he knew he was only hungover, but still couldn't shake off that feeling of worry. Two weeks after his trip Miller experienced his first anxiety attack. This led him to find a friend that sold Xanax and he took those pills during the day.

At night, when Miller thought is was most appropriate, he'd drink. He'd then continue to drink until he could no longer notice the constant anxiety he was feeling. Miller recognized that his new behaviors were a direct response to his anxiety.

"When you drink and take all that [stuff] it just hides it and puts it back on a backburner for even longer," Miller said.

Miller often found himself awake and unable to rest his mind late in the evening. Anxiety was what was causing him to lose sleep and in reaction he began to run sprints. At 3 a.m. one could see a drunk Miller sprinting up and down his street for almost three hours in order to exhaust himself.

"I just had to keep doing that," Miller said. "And then I was just like, 'I can't take this ... anymore.'"

Miller tried to quit drinking solely on his own with only his roommates knowing how bad his addictions were. This eventually led him to Sentara RMH Medical Center because he began to experience alcohol withdrawal.

"It kind of felt good being in the hospital," Miller said.

In response to Miller's condition, the hospital urged him to reach out to medical professionals in the Harrisonburg area. He refused and wanted to achieve sobriety through his own strength. He could see that he wasn't the only one going through this and that people were there to help him.

If Miller were to have chosen to be prescribed medication for his anxiety, he may have had an issue with being prescribed the correct drug. The use of alcohol and Xanax could've been the cause of Miller's worsening mental health.

According to Colleen Tennyson, a psychiatrist for the counseling center, alcohol and other drugs can minimize the effects of a prescribed drug to treat a mental health concern. In turn, they can also enhance certain risks that come with taking medication.

An example of this is mixing alcohol and a sedative. Too much of each can lead one to a heavy sedation, coma and even death.

Miller relapsed a few times while fighting his

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXIS MILLER / GRIT.

Substance use for coping can lead to mental health issues

PHOTO COURTESY OF PIXABAY

addictions and has since continued to stay sober. The week he turned 21, Miller only had three drinks.

"After having gone through that, I have a much better respect for who I am and life," Miller said.

Miller is one of many students who might choose to treat their mental health with alcohol. SAMHSA reported that 1 in 8 full-time college students were heavy drinkers in 2015. Like Miller's addictions, many other students might choose to use marijuana. A majority of these students might not describe themselves as addicted to it, but instead severely dependent on the drug.

Marijuana

The daily use of marijuana has hit an all time high since the '80s — almost five percent of students in 2016, according to the University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future study. Thirty-nine percent of all students have used the drug at least once in the past year.

Lucy Brown, using a pseudonym to protect her identity, used weed to cope with the stresses of college life. She felt so overwhelmed and stressed out that an evening with a blunt was the perfect ending to her busy days.

These are not smokers who feel anxious and paranoid when high — which can be caused from the marijuana — but are people that use this drug to help them relax and feel less stressed.

"At the end of a long day you just want to relax," Brown said. "Some people will go have a beer or something to relax. My thing is I just roll a blunt."

Often times Brown felt that she could do better on her projects and homework, but just didn't have the energy to.

She's a graphic design major, which requires her to almost instantly be able to turn on her creativity and create a perfect piece for her class. These expectations of her major were the biggest sources of her stress.

"For the most part it's been a stress release," Brown said.

In 2015, almost 22 percent of college students used marijuana more than any other illicit drug, according to SAMHSA. Tennyson believes that mainstream marijuana has become more potent now, which can be credited to higher THC levels in weed.

"Marijuana use can impair cognitive functions, particularly in people who have not achieved full brain development, which occurs in the mid-20s," Tennyson said in an email.

Although weed's popularity on college campuses has increased, along with perspectives looking to legalize the drug, it still has proven in past studies to have serious negative effects on the young mind.

"I think the medical and scientific studies showing concern are not always considered," Tennyson said.

Annie Johnson, using a pseudonym to protect her identity, is a daily smoker and has been for three years now. She smokes on average about a quarter of an ounce of weed a week, and has begun to buy it in high quantities to get it cheaper, considering her tolerance increases every time.

"I smoke every single day so I'm really relaxed all the time," Johnson said. "Then when things happen while I'm not high, being upset is more upsetting."

Johnson relies on weed to also "numb out" the stomach pain she gets when she feels anxious. She's been diagnosed with situational anxiety, but also feels she might have other types of anxiety and depression.

She originally planned to take this semester off, her first of her senior year, but has now had to drop out for financial reasons. In her junior year, Johnson found that she had no energy to do anything while sober. Going to class and work were two of many things that she became reliant on marijuana to even think about doing.

"That's when I really started to come to terms with the fact that I was addicted to it or had a dependency on it," Johnson said. "I'll wake up the next morning and the first thing my, like, that my body, my brain tells me to do is smoke."

Weed is known to influence one's appetite and ability to fall asleep at night. Johnson and Brown both found themselves dependent on it to eat or sleep well.

Although Johnson still continues to smoke every day, she tries to keep it from interrupting her busy days. She has devoted an hour or so a day to smoking, which usually occurs in the evening after she's done what she's needed to do that day.

Johnson and Brown represent the many students that have come to rely on marijuana to take a break from the world around them, and even as a way of separating one's energy and emotional investment from a situation by using the drug to numb themselves. But as Miller has shown, other drugs, rather than weed, have become normalized while in college to use to cope with one's mental health. Prescription drugs, cocaine and psychedelic drugs continue to find a home on campuses across the country.

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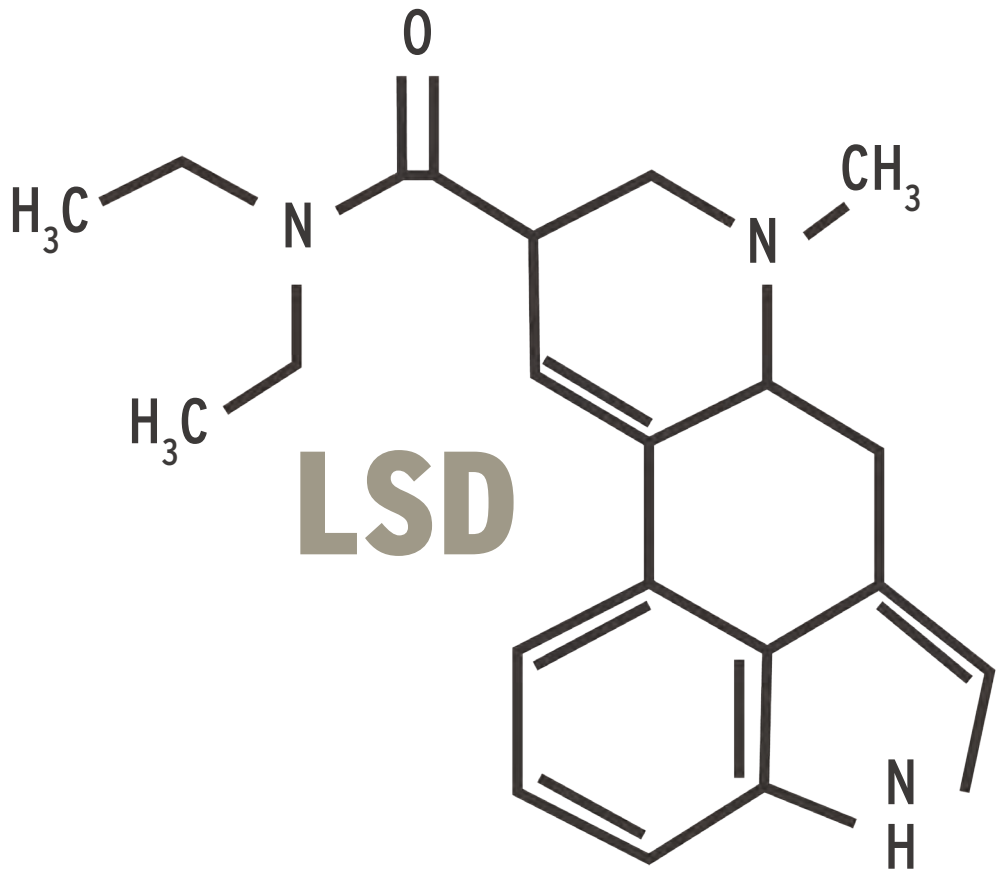

PSYCHEDELICS

Miller wasn't the only student to have used LSD, 25i or magic mushrooms during his college career. Brown microdosed on LSD her entire junior year to gain similar effects of Adderall. This practice has gained popularity among non-Adderall users, but has yet to be properly studied.

Microdosing is ingesting about a tenth of a regular dosage of a hallucinogenic drug that has found to help people deal with anxiety and stress by giving them the energy to take on busy days. Since there are no official studies and hallucinogens are illegal drugs, microdosing can be dangerous.

Brown first tried microdosing with mushrooms, but decided that LSD gave her the effect she was looking for. It gave her the energy and focus she needed to get school work done.

"That would really just get my brain going at a higher rate," Brown said.

She would take a fifth or a seventh of a single tab of LSD every three days. All of this was done after her own research and self-interest in trying to see if microdosing could help her. Microdosing became a way for Brown to cope with the expectations she felt she had to reach in classes but didn't feel like she had the capability to while sober or just high off marijuana.

"I feel like that's a slippery slope to feeling dependent on it," Brown said. She claimed that she never became fully dependent on LSD and was able to quit on her own. Brown also recognized that the frequency she was taking LSD could potentially lead her to develop an addiction.

In terms of school-related stress, Tennyson said in an email, "We all experience emotions and might range between good to bad. But even times of feeling overwhelmed or stressed might be appropriate reactions to a stressful situation."

Not all stressful situations and reactions need an outside source of relief. This can include the common stresses one might feel from class expectations, overbearing parents and the need to feel included in social situations.

"Alcohol or other abuse will have the same effect as a stressor on the brain," Tennyson said. "For others, alcohol or other drugs will actually make the person more sensitive to stress or mental health issues."

Brown decided that after her junior year, microdosing wasn't giving her the help she originally thought it would. There were times she claimed it did help, but sitting in class while microdosing was hard. She would have to put her head down and couldn't participate in class if she thought she was tripping too hard in the middle of the day.

"It got to a point where I'm like, 'Why am I taking this? Why am I doing this?" Brown said.

Today, Brown no longer microdoses and is trying to stop smoking marijuana. Every now and then she gives in to the temptation of smoking, but isn't nearly the smoker she used to be.

"It's almost better to just smoke. Only smoke a little bit and move on," Brown said. "And then try to go longer next time."

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Stimulated studies

Students with ADHD depend on Adderall, but unprescribed students are taking the drug to increase academic performance

See full story on page 30

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KATELYN MERRIMAN / GRIT.

INGRID BASHEDA
GRIT.

It was hard for her to focus on one thing. Her mind was constantly absorbing everything at once, making it feel like it needed to be happening right now.

Her friends noticed it, too. They were getting annoyed when they studied together in the library because she couldn't seem to stay quiet. This is when they suggested Kelsey Druggan see a doctor.

The doctor diagnosed her with ADHD her sophomore year in college. After being prescribed Adderall, Druggan, a senior hospitality management major, became a more reliable texter, is on time to her obligations and went from below a 2.0 to a 4.0 GPA the next semester — all things she couldn't do consistently before.

"[ADHD] didn't just affect my school life, it also affected my relationships," Druggan said. "There was no delayed gratification. Everything was like 'I need it right now.'"

Senior Joanna Smith, using a pseudonym to protect her identity, discovered she could compartmentalize her thoughts and emotions when she took Adderall for the first time — a change from her normally scattered brain.

"I really like how it makes me feel emotionally because it can be really frustrating when you have ADHD and I think, with this, you're just allowed to be happy," Smith said.

This inability to focus is an everyday occurrence for people with ADHD.

The prevalence of ADHD diagnoses have caused controversy with some saying the diagnosis has become too generalized and easy to obtain. Gregg Henriques, a licensed clinical psychologist and JMU professor, diagnoses college students with ADHD.

He feels that over the past several decades, ADHD has become a "fad diagnosis." Decades earlier, our society hadn't been nearly as aware of ADHD as people are today due to the condition not being extensively researched until the 1970s.

Similar to some cases involving depression and anxiety, people might generalize concepts and apply them to themselves. This has the possibility of leading to false conclusions, such as medication being the solution to their problems. Diagnosing conditions and determining the appropriate outlet is a convoluted process. Cases differ person to person, and even professionals can differ in their philosophies, criteria and time put in to giving a diagnosis.

With the increase in ADHD diagnoses comes the increase in Adderall prescriptions, which has lead to another problem: the drug has become widely available for unprescribed students who purchase it from friends during high-stress times.

Out of the roughly 19,500 students from 26 U.S. institutions who responded to a college prescription drug study, 79 percent of the students who reported misusing stimulants said they typically obtain them from friends. This study was done by The Ohio State University in spring 2018.

The study also found that of the students who misuse stimulants, 79 percent used them to study or improve grades. Sixty percent claimed positive impacts on academics.

After being prescribed a new dose of Adderall, Smith sells her previous dose to her friends — and is looking to expand her customer base — for $5 a pill. Around finals, she'll increase the price by a few dollars.

"I don't have a job right now, so why not sell it and make some money?" Smith said.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KATELYN MERRIMAN / GRIT.

Senior Courtney Johnson, using a pseudonym to protect her identity, was diagnosed with ADHD when she was nine. She enjoys the benefits of Adderall when she needs to focus on her impending tasks.

However, because of the way Adderall affects her mood, she chooses not to take it during times she doesn't need to intensely focus, such as on the weekend or during the summer. Due to her excess amount of pills, she sells her Adderall to some friends every now and again when they need a quick fix.

Not only do Johnson and Smith sell their pills to friends who need to cram for a test, but to those who believe that they have ADHD, such as senior Lindsey Allen.

Allen, also using a pseudonym to protect her identity, was told by her pediatrician at a young age that she showed signs of ADHD. Though because her parents "don't really believe in mental illness," she was never prescribed medication.

She started buying Adderall during her freshman year in college when she realized she was falling behind in classes. Because she felt like she should have been prescribed Adderall, she started to buy it.

At first, she only took Adderall during finals week. Now, as the semesters get harder, she takes it every day she has a test.

Since Allen had been feeling ADHD symptoms for several years, she instantly felt the difference the first time she took Adderall.

"I was just able to finish a sentence after one time of reading it," Allen said. "It just made me so productive and I would spend half the time at the library and get almost twice as much done on the first try."

Since turning 18, she's been going through the insurance process to get an appointment for an ADHD diagnosis. She's now been referred to a practice in Harrisonburg after getting a policy that prevents her parents from seeing appointments being made on their insurance.

If one falls in the category of having severe ADHD symptoms, Henriques highly recommends exploring medication. But because he believes society has a tendency to look toward pills as a quick fix for their problems, he suggests those on the milder side of the spectrum try the behavioral system first. This involves treatment through enhancing organizational and memorization skills, prioritizing tasks and improving time management.

However, Henriques is also not surprised that students are searching for easy remedies. Adderall's burst of energy is beneficial for studying, which makes sense for why unprescribed students find ways to cheat the system. It's also more convenient than the alternative. The ADHD diagnosis process, which is comprised of 12-hour long assessments, costs hundreds to thousands of dollars, depending on a person's insurance.

To Allen, buying and selling Adderall is a common practice, and she claims "more people that buy it than are not on it at all." Compared to misusing non-prescription drugs, she doesn't consider the misuse of prescription drugs like Adderall to be a form of drug abuse.

"I think that some people have a really difficult time getting these meds and stuff so they just start to buy it," Allen said. "And some people abuse it, but I feel like it's better for the people that should be having it to have it than it is worse for the people that shouldn't have it to have it."

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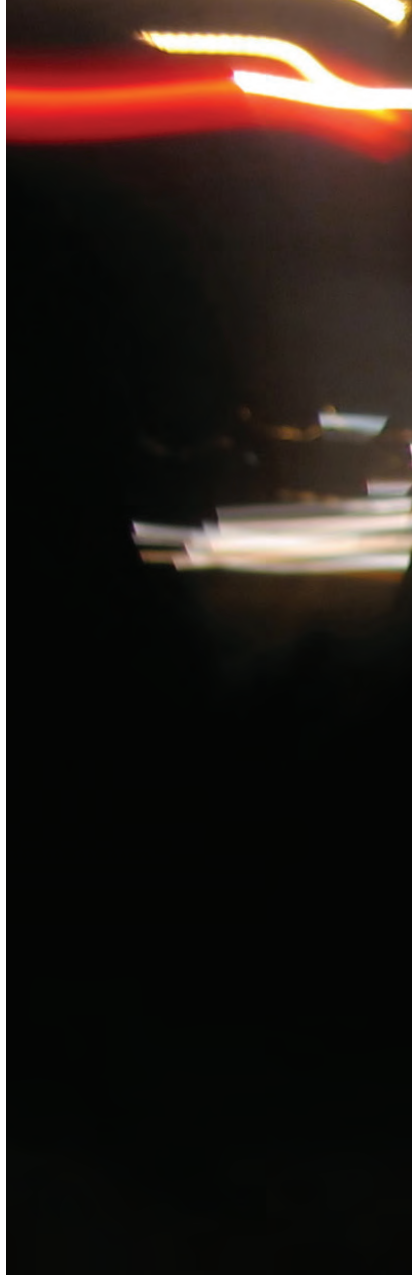
Road to sobriety

Student struggles to overcome past addiction through rehabilitation groups



ABBEY ARMBRECHT
GRIT.

On Jan. 5, 2018, 20-year-old JMU junior Jarrod Kidd was drinking alone. He left his parents' home in Boydton, Virginia, and got into his Jeep Liberty at 3:30 a.m. All he could think about was his intent to crash.

He took another sip of vodka to lose what little rationale he had. His depression had warped his thoughts into an inescapable spiral of negativity. Without hope, he was planning to end his life.

With intoxication clouding his thoughts, Kidd pressed harder on the accelerator and slammed into a guardrail. His car flipped and came to a halt when it crashed into a tree. When the local fire department found Kidd, he was alive with few bruises.

His social drinking habits — which began at 15 — turned into a coping mechanism after the unexpected death of four of his high school classmates. Alcohol became Kidd's therapy and was how he dealt with his inability to process his grief. Once Kidd started his first year at JMU, his behaviors only worsened.

Kidd became a member of a fraternity for students who play percussion instruments, Phi Boota Roota (PBr), during his fall semester in 2016. Having played drums since high school, it was a comforting feeling to find a group that would eventually become his family.

"The fraternity didn't force us to drink, but it was always there and was always a part of things," Kidd said. For Kidd, the constant social functions only provoked his unhealthy habits.

"Hey, are you alive?" The too-familiar wake-up call woke up 19-year-old Jarrod Kidd after a night out. Kidd had consumed too much alcohol the previous night and caused him to "black-out" or not remember his actions — a consistent outcome when Kidd chose to attend social events.

The memory of waking up in a cinder block cell on a metal bench after a fraternity event in what's known as the "drunk tank" still upsets him almost a year and a half later. Kidd was unable to recall the night of his arrest for public intoxication and underage possession but admits this was the first sign of a problem.

"This can't happen again," Kidd's father said upon learning of his arrest. "You're going to be paying for the lawyer."

The college freshman's attitude didn't change. The stress of his parents telling him how his permanent record would be affected just made him want to drink and detach himself. The constant attempts from his mom to discuss his depression only pushed him further. Something in Kidd however, pushed him to not drink for the following two months. But his depression returned and his habits continued.

"Whenever I was stressed I would turn to [alcohol], when I couldn't sleep I would turn to it, and that's when it got really bad," Kidd said.

His mind was empty when he began drinking alone to cope with anything that altered his mood negatively.

At the beginning of his sophomore year, Kidd had joined JMU's SafeRides, an organization that gives intoxicated students a ride home. Bethany Bowman, SafeRides Member Recruitment Director, served as a mentor to Kidd and others who joined in fall 2017.

"I definitely had concerns in his actions, and I had expressed those to Emma [Leonard, his "big"], to which she replied that she knew and was trying to work with him and get him at a better place," Bowman said.

Anxiety accompanied Kidd's loneliness. His constant panic attacks lead up to his first accident. With a video game controller in hand, Kidd washed one too many Xanax down his throat with vodka. He chased that feeling of enjoying the moment but had no memory of what happened shortly after. He didn't know if he would wake up.

A dozen phone calls lit up Bowman's phone at 6 a.m. the morning after. A pit formed in her stomach as she tried to process what had happened while she tried to remain calm for Leonard. Time stood still during the ride to the hospital.

"I just remember looking at him in the back seat and hoping he would be able to make it, and we had no idea what would happen," Bowman said.

Nothing was comforting about the psychiatric ward Kidd was admitted to following his accident. During that three-day period, the treatment he received only addressed the symptoms of his issue and didn't target the source. He didn't see his behavior as a problem and refused to take initiative to change anything. Friends tried to help and came up to him more frequently, but his habits continued throughout the end of the semester.

Over JMU's winter break, Kidd went back home to Boydton for three weeks to celebrate the holiday with family. His constant drinking went unnoticed, which only encouraged his bad habits.

The loneliness, emptiness and helplessness resurfaced, and that's when Kidd decided to crash his car and attempt

PHOTO COURTESY OF GRAPHICSTOCK

to end his life in January. No thoughts were going through his head when he came to. He was just empty.

Kidd felt enraged when his lawyer told him "you should go to a rehabilitation center." He thought about how much he hated institutions especially since he had just gotten out of one. His depression and suicidal thoughts didn't allow him to see the positive outcome that would come from going to a rehabilitation center.

"I thought it was pointless since I was going to end up dead anyway," Kidd said. "It was just delaying the inevitable."

Two weeks later, Kidd was admitted to the Life Center of Galax. The cloudy and chilly day fit the mood. He was surprised to smell cigarettes instead of the typical hospital antiseptic he was expecting in the two-story building. His eyes darted every which way to take in as much detail as possible, trying to learn his whereabouts. Anxiety set in being in an unfamiliar environment. He quickly learned both floors mirrored each other making it difficult to become accustomed to his temporary home.

"It felt like a maze, but patients made things very clear to me and that was helpful," Kidd said. Compared to the other institutions he's been in, however, this place still felt homier.

Two patients approached Kidd his first day, inviting him to sit with them. The friendly gesture helped his nerves settle and let his guard down. He credits them with getting him accustomed to his new lifestyle. Hearing their stories changed the way Kidd viewed his lifestyle choices.

The contagious positivity of the current patients and staff rubbed off on Kidd while he attended three to four group meetings a day. He attended Alcoholics Anonymous, dual diagnosis meetings to address both his depression and alcoholism, as well as psychological rehabilitation classes. Kidd participated but wasn't taking advantage of the resource at hand.

"Seeing [the patients] on drugs that I had never done and how they actually seem like a normal person in society, it really opened my eyes to what my idea of what an addict was and actually is," Kidd said.

Ten days into his treatment at an AA meeting, he saw everything differently. That particular meeting talked about a higher power and how to use that belief to help with struggles and not turn to alcohol. It was refreshing to hear religion and spirituality weren't synonymous.

"They taught us that a higher power of your understanding can be whatever you want it to be, as long as you have a reason that makes sense," Kidd said. "My higher power is the idea that my future is a happy one filled with joy and a family."

The comparisons to others stopped. His focus switched to himself and his recovery. He began to tackle his depression and alcoholism one step at a time. Future plans of his longterm goals filled his mind as he left that meeting on Jan. 28. Feeling refreshed from taking steps toward a better life motivated Kidd to do more.

"I realized it doesn't matter if you're as bad as other people or not," Kidd said. "Everyone is just as bad, and everyone has to figure out a way to cope with it."

Kidd left the facility on Feb. 18, 2018. Not long after, he attended a gathering for a family friend. A thought of sneaking alcohol away from his family popped into his head — he knew he could get away with it. Kidd remembered his treatment, refocused and decided to play card games instead.

After he realized his triggers were stress and sleepless nights, Kidd knew he could handle a spring break trip to New Orleans with friends. It helped to know his fraternity brothers volunteered to take turns staying sober with him to make sure he stayed on track.

"Everything was the same, but I just wasn't drinking," Kidd said. "I used to think that I couldn't have fun without drinking, but having that experience, I felt like [sobriety] was OK."

He now wants to pursue a degree in psychology, hoping to focus on clinical psychology or substance abuse. Kidd currently attends four AA meetings per week and is in the process of finding resources in Harrisonburg to continue his healing. He practices what he learns in meetings every day.

"They taught us in rehab and AA to not think about tomorrow and don't think about yesterday. All you have to promise yourself is that you're not going to take that drink today," Kidd said.

AA rewards people with chips that mark ascending milestones of time spent sober. Unparalleled support is given to everyone for receiving their new chip at the beginning of meetings. Kidd is changing his current treatment and finding a new therapist and psychiatrists.

"Having people that you don't even know supporting you like that, seeing in their eyes how proud and hopeful they are of a complete stranger is so rewarding," Kidd said.

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What's your PARENTS' style?

Parenting styles play a role in the development of children and their outlook on the world and the future

1 **Oops! You are late for curfew. Your parents would:**

A. IMMEDIATELY ground you

B. Say, "It's okay, glad you're home safe!"

C. Trust you and talk it out

D. Wait for you at the door for your return and are worried about your safety

2 **You fail a huge exam and your parents just found out:**

A. Enforce new rules and punishments

B. Say, "You'll get it next time!"

C. Figure out what went wrong and help you prepare for the next one

D. Ask for your Canvas info to better track your grades and possibly hire a tutor

3 **Parents are away so the children will play. You throw a rager but your parents return home early:**

A. Kiss your social life goodbye. Your BFF is the window in your room

B. Breathe and want you to enjoy yourself

C. You already mentioned having a party while they were out. It's fine!

D. Possibly test you for substance use and you would receive serious consequences

4 **Your crush asks you to make it official and you say yes. How would your parents respond?**

A. They have strict dating rules and want to enforce them before you begin dating

B. Be so happy for you and wish you well

C. Want to meet your significant other and hang out

D. Need their entire background information, history and details about their life

5 **You are contemplating your career choices. Your parents' advice would be:**

A. Think through all the logistics and rationale

B. Do what you love and make that your career

C. Be there for you and help determine where you would fit best

D. Want you to choose a place close to home no matter what the career happens to be

6 **You are planning to go on a trip with people your parents don't know. How would they react?**

A. Create guidelines for the trip and must be able to talk to you if you need

B. Be happy that you are enjoying your life and the world around you

C. Tell you to update them during the trip to make sure you are safe

D. Need to have contact information of everyone you will be going with and details of the trip

MOSTLY A'S
TIGER PARENT

Your parent is strict and by-the-book. What they say goes and there is no compromise.

MOSTLY B'S
FREE-RANGE PARENT

Your parent is very "go with the flow" type of style. They want everything to be happy, calm and collective.

MOSTLY C'S
HELICOPTER PARENT

Your parent pays close attention to what you are doing and are considered to be "overprotective."

MOSTLY D'S
ATTACHMENT PARENT

Your parent is secure in the bond and relationship they have created with you.

If you're having suicidal thoughts or ideations reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or text "HOME" to 741741 to reach a representative at the Crisis Text Line.

For more information on these resources, see "Comfort in crisis" on BreezeJMU.org/grit

One day at a time

JMU Facilities Management worker reflects on 30-year experience with being a suicide survivor

SABRINA MORENO
GRIT.

He twiddled his fingers as he spoke, overlapping his right thumb with the left and then reversing the order. His "racing thoughts" made him pause every few seconds to make sure he properly formulated his sentences, folding over the creases of his light wash denim jeans as he apologized for his inability to regain focus.

As Terry Lindsey, a night shift supervisor for the JMU housekeeping department, began to mention how it's a common effect of living with bipolar disorder for more than 30 years, he got up excitedly. He glanced toward the door and caught sight of an old friend — a student who'd lived in Potomac Hall during Lindsey's first few years at facilities management.

"Well hello, sweetie pie," Lindsey said. "How are you?"

Though she hadn't seen him since then, she's never forgotten his spirit. These encounters with students are commonplace for Lindsey, who says at 60 years old, he finally enjoys his life.

By treating students as young adults rather than kids, he's noticed they often confide in him despite not personally knowing him. He calls it the trust factor.

"I think God put me here for a reason," Lindsey said. "I don't know why, what the purpose of it is, but many students respect me and come to me with stories you wouldn't tell a stranger."

Working in freshman dorms, he quickly recognized the prominence of anxiety and suicidal thoughts among some students. One told him she'd just lost her best friend from high school to suicide and didn't know how to deal with her depression. Other times, students have come to him about tough breakups, which Lindsey said shouldn't be trivialized.

Students also mentioned how attempts to trust parents with their mental health struggles have resulted in parents disregarding it with a "that doesn't happen in our family." Lindsey said it's difficult for people who don't go through it to understand.

"What people don't understand is our thoughts are so different from everyone else," Lindsey said. "They're racing thoughts and they're usually negative. They want to tear you down. People talk about having demons in your life? This is an amazing demon that won't let go and you struggle with every day."

Lindsey knows these demons well.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S. for all ages, with depression affecting 20 to 25 percent of Americans over the age of 18. For ages 15-24, suicide is the second most common cause of death according to the American College Health Association.

Suicide rates among college students is a growing concern. While Lindsey said the dorms are a way to know the students at their best or worst and when they're depressed or excited, it also makes students susceptible to the addictive personality the college environment fosters.

"People who first go through it, it's hard to talk about because we think we're the only ones going through it and it's not normal," Lindsey said. "Some kids can't talk to their parents about it or can't talk to families about it so they reach out to strangers about it or they reach into drugs, they reach into alcohol, they reach into sex. Whatever will relieve 10 minutes of that."

When Lindsey was 25 years old, his brother shot himself with a firearm, a method that accounted for 51 percent of suicides in 2016 according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. He didn't understand why until he turned 27 and began showcasing similar symptoms.

He remembers having severe depression, a panic disorder so aggressive his skin felt as if it was being pulled off him layer by layer and suicidal thoughts that overpowered any sense of wanting to live for his family and friends.

After recognizing the signs and admitting himself into a mental hospital in Virginia for the required 10 days, he was misdiagnosed with depression. Because he wasn't being treated for bipolar disorder, which back then was referred to as manic depression, the bouncing back and forth between emotions persisted. At one point, a doctor told him what he was going through wasn't real.

After weeks of planning his suicide attempt 30 years ago, he stayed up for as many hours as he could without rest. He then took multiple bottles of pills — from antidepressants to other prescribed medication — at the same time in hopes of never waking up.

"Would you believe it didn't kill me? It should have," Lindsey said. "I never told a doctor I tried to commit suicide because then they would've locked me up and I needed my freedom. I needed it in case I ever needed to try again."

Now, he thinks God didn't want him dead at that time. Though when his relationships struggled and his marriage was destroyed — due to his mental health diagnosis and suicidal thoughts — he found it difficult to continue thinking it'd get better. Sometimes, it felt as if it'd be easier to give up than hope.

"I got to be honest with you, even today, with the medication, the thoughts are still there," Lindsey said. "There were days I prayed to God that he would take me because I didn't want to be like my brother and do that to myself but I couldn't take it anymore."

After visits with several doctors following his original depression diagnosis three years prior, one finally listened to what he was saying.

"He said 'You've got bipolar.' And that's when it kicked in," Lindsey said. "I didn't put it on myself, it's just one of those things that happened. Being bipolar wasn't my fault."

Even now, it's difficult for Lindsey to get into any kind of relationship, fearing that with a new relationship comes the inevitable rise of the thoughts he's worked to calm down. Since he refuses to subject anyone to that pain, he avoids those connections completely.

The void that comes along with the loneliness is replaced by JMU students, according to Lindsey, who says it's those students who saved him by providing him with purpose. After packing up his truck, selling his house in Pennsylvania and driving to Virginia with $6,500 to his name to help his sister in Harrisonburg, he found an ad for a position with JMU's facilities management five years ago.

Now as a supervisor working the third shift from 10:30 p.m. to 7 a.m. in buildings like D-Hall and Showker Hall, he's determined this is where he's going to retire. He hopes to make the best of it and continue the close friendships that he jokes he has with 500 students on Facebook.

"I tell them I have 1,000 children," Lindsey said. "I'm just glad I don't have to feed them all."

Lindsey uses his interactions with students as a resource when they need advice or someone to talk to, joking that his presence comes with a "come to talk to me" neon sign.

"It's probably the best relationships I have ever built in my life. I feel safe here," Lindsey said. "I feel like this disease is not going to control every aspect of my life anymore and that's what keeps me going. One day at a time."

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Survived

JMU student embraces mental health challenges and finds meaning after living through suicide attempt

HANNAH DODD & JAMIE GRAEFF
GRIT.

Claire Bennett sat in the shower fully clothed, the water running and a razor blade in her hand. The Village bathroom was dirty and cramped. She pushed herself into the dark corner of a space no more than three feet wide. She was alone. Bennett always felt alone.

"I want to die," she said. "I want to die." Said over and over, those four words eventually led her roommates to call 911 after they ran into the bathroom and saw her.

Bennett, using a pseudonym to protect her identity, has struggled with suicidal thoughts since high school but never knew why. After attempting to take her own life during her freshman year at JMU, she was forced to face the reality of childhood trauma that she'd suppressed for years.

From her first semester at JMU, Bennett felt isolated. While many students seemed to be having the time of their lives during 1787 August Orientation, she stayed in her dorm. Orientation week events were filled with hundreds of unfamiliar faces. Bennett felt overwhelmed and unnoticed. The thought of being around so many people at once made her tense up with fear and anxiety.

"Everyone I went to high school with immediately dove into the party scene," Bennett said. "I had no time to adjust."

When Formal Sorority Recruitment rolled around she felt a new form of isolation.

"I remember seeing all the girls and how incredible and pretty they looked," Bennett said. "I was still just sitting in my bed, like 'How do I get out of my bed? How do I socialize with people?'"

As time passed, she started smoking weed with a group of friends in the Village. The drugs numbed her feelings but didn't fix the underlying problems. She still wanted to escape.

One night in November 2015, Bennett was drinking and smoking with friends in the Village. After one too many hits of weed and sips of alcohol, she ended up heavily under the influence. In the midst of her confused state, she came across an old photo of her and her ex-boyfriend on her phone and broke down. She called him and said she wanted to kill herself. Within minutes, he hung up and immediately called her roommate.

"You need to find [her]. Something is wrong," he said.

She went outside to clear her head, pacing back and forth. When the fog lifted slightly, she found her way to the bathroom and turned on the shower. Her head was still swimming as she stepped inside the stall and let the water rush down her head, her clothes and into the drain. She picked up a razor. She was about to make the first cut when her roommates rushed into the bathroom.

"That was my cry for help," Bennett said.

She was immediately taken to Sentara RMH Medical Center. Despite her initial opposition to treatment, she went through eight hours of intensive therapy every day for two weeks.

"This is literally my worst nightmare," Bennett thought at the time.

Her psychiatrist sent an email to her professors excusing her from class for the next few weeks. As her therapy sessions progressed, the questions started getting more personal.

"Did you have any trauma when you were a child?" her psychiatrist asked.

At first, she didn't think there was anything to tell. She'd never considered a question like this.

"Has anyone in your family ever hurt you or wanted to hurt you?" her psychiatrist asked.

That's when she recalled one instance of childhood sexual abuse brought on by her male cousin while she was sleeping. Struck with disbelief she wondered, *Did this happen to me or did this happen to someone else?* From that point on, memories slowly began to resurface.

Bennett — now having a greater clarity and an acceptance of her past — thought: *Would I be better off not knowing? Not remembering what happened?*

As all of the pieces came together, she began to feel a sense of relief.

"I'm not crazy," Bennett said.

Uncovering these suppressed memories was the only way for her to move on and heal. She was prescribed Zoloft to help with her sleeping patterns and suicidal thoughts. To her surprise, the medication helped tremendously. After taking it for just a few weeks, her anxious and obsessive thoughts were put almost entirely to rest.

A 2016 study done by JAMA Internal medicine found that one in six American adults takes at least one psychiatric drug over the course of a year, with the most commonly prescribed being Sertraline hydrochloride, more commonly known as Zoloft.

During Bennett's two-week release from the hospital, she was immediately thrown back into school and her full-time waitressing job. Faced with piles of make-up work, she considered dropping out.

"I get that I had to finish things, I just wish I could have had a little bit more time," Bennett said. "Then maybe I could have done a little better."

She sought help from the JMU Counseling Center, but the staff was unable to meet her needs due to its short-term care model. At the time, she felt there was no way for her to transition back into school.

Her parents are aware of her suicide attempt but believe it was stress-induced. They downplayed the importance of mental health in her life, thinking because of how she looks on the outside, there's nothing to fix on the inside.

She mentioned to her mom one day that she needed to get her Zoloft prescription refilled. Her mom responded by questioning whether or not she really needed it, saying she's probably just tired from being so busy.

"You're saying that because there's no tangible thing that you can hold that is causing me to feel this way, you think that I cannot possibly feel this way," Bennett said. "The strongest feelings that I've ever had have come from nothing. The worst thoughts that you can have about yourself come out of nowhere. How do you explain that to someone who, one: has never experienced it, and two: doesn't really care to understand?"

At JMU Career and Academic Planning (CAP), Bennett found someone who understood. She receives individual therapy once a week from a JMU graduate student in the process of getting her master's degree.

The therapist is younger and understands college and the stress, according to Bennett. As a result, Bennett was able to open up quickly and at ease.

Bennett's therapist often prints out poems or suggests books she thinks will be helpful. The therapy sessions have given Bennett insight on how she processes emotions and functions mentally.

"I still have suicidal thoughts occasionally, but I can talk myself out of them now. I can rationalize in my head," Bennett said. "Instead of being like, 'Nothing's going to get better. There's no point in living.' Now I can be like, 'No. There are so many good things about my life. There are so many things to live for.'"

Bennett expresses her struggles through art. She writes poetry and often uses Instagram to post meaningful, elaborative updates with her followers on how she's feeling that morning.

"I've found that a lot of times it not only makes me feel better." But I'll have people direct message me and ask things like, 'I'm going through this. How do you deal with it?'" Bennett said. "It's been really cool and makes me feel a lot better knowing that I can help people out."

Aside from Instagram, she decorates her room with earthy tones and uplifting quotes like: "Happiness is homemade" and "You give breath, fresh life begins."

Her room is her sanctuary and the quotes serve as a reminder of how far she's come and where she's headed. Her dream is to move somewhere completely new — anywhere — and work for a nonprofit aimed at ending human trafficking.

While she still faces the reality of acknowledging her lowest point, she's found that embracing it is far more empowering than pushing it away. She said there's no shame in feeling down and that it's essential to listen to your body and let yourself feel everything.

"What happened to me sucks, but it doesn't define me," Bennett said. "It doesn't have to be a negative thing … Don't be ashamed of it. Don't hide from it. Talk about it."

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“Don’t be ashamed of it. Don’t hide from it. Talk about it.”

Claire Bennett

PHOTOS BY THOMAS ROBERTSON / GRIT.

Adapting to **AMERICA**

Adjusting to foreign culture can present mental health challenges for international students

ANNA STACKHOUSE and ABBEY ARMBRECHT
GRIT.

Ke Wang, a junior finance major from China, had his undergraduate career start out just like any other student at JMU. He was excited, feeling comfortable, confident and fulfilled during orientation week while adapting to his new home in America.

Wang decided to come to JMU after he saw the university had one of the top five dining halls in the country. Wang was eager to create new friendships and joined many international organizations as a result. His transition into American culture was, for the most part, smooth. However, the most significant challenge remained: the language barrier.

"When I would go to the dining halls, I wouldn't know what anything was called so I had to just point and say 'I want that and that' instead of saying the words," Wang said.

While Wang now finds himself following the path of others, this was not a characteristic of who he was before coming to America. He considers himself an extrovert, but knows that his time at JMU — where he's experienced a constant language barrier — has had a significant effect on him.

"I want to say a lot of things to a lot of people," said Wang. "But there's a barrier and I don't know how to express it."

When Wang took his annual summer trip back home, his mother noticed a change in his personality. Typically, he stays in his room with the door locked. He doesn't catch up with friends or spend time with family like he used to before coming to JMU. Wang talks to his brother if he needs advice when he goes through something tough, but always lets his parents know he is doing well in the states because he doesn't want them to be worried.

"I think it's because I'm used to doing it here that I do it back home now too," Wang said. "I don't have anyone to talk to here."

As a freshman, Wang spoke almost no English. Two years later, he's carrying conversations without the need for an online translator in his classes and everyday endeavors. While speaking English is something Wang finds easier now, he still struggles to get through his lengthy academic textbooks, so much that it takes almost two to three hours to get through a single chapter. His brain has to translate from English to Chinese while he reads, and while he recognizes most words, Wang still has to stop and look up definitions at times.

Wang is currently enrolled in COB 300, a challenging group-oriented business class that determines admittance into the major. The course involves aspects of marketing, finance, management and operations, where a group of students work together to formulate a business idea.

"A lot of teamwork things can be stressful," Wang said. "I try to engage but they talk too fast that I can't keep up and I end up following their lead."

Wang was recently in a serious relationship that ultimately removed him from his friendships with his roommates and organizational connections on JMU's campus. When he had a girlfriend, Wang spent more time with her than his friends. Now that the relationship has ended, he finds himself being lonely in the midst of JMU's party school reputation.

"When I get a really bad feeling, I just went outside to smoke," Wang said. "And when I sit down just to look around, I just feel so lonely."

He tries to direct the loneliness feeling into feeding his passion for writing songs and playing guitar. Instead of visiting the counseling center or reaching out to the Center for Global Engagement, he finds his peace from his musical talent. He's been playing guitar for just over six years, and when he can't find a way to express what he needs to, he uses music as his outlet.

Today, Wang is trying to overcome his feelings of loneliness by rebuilding his relationships and reconnecting with friends. He hopes to find himself and the person he knew when he first came to America. His love for JMU, passion for music and excitement for a better education in America helps him be optimistic.

"I think that if I wanted to try to be the way that I used to be, I will get there," Wang said.

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Wang's parents gave him a necklace just before he left for America. It represents safety and is one of the few objects he has that reminds him of his home country.

FOLLOW your hands

Student uses art to cope with grandmother's passing

ETHAN PELINO
GRIT.

In the beginning of her freshman year at JMU, senior fine arts major Elise Nardo received a phone call from her father on the way to her morning class that would change her life forever: her grandmother Harriett, who had lung cancer, was in surgery.

Nardo's father was coming to pick her up so she could be with the rest of the family. Harriett, whom Nardo called "Nan," survived the surgery, but remained too sick to interact with anyone for weeks. Nardo never had a chance to say goodbye.

"She was like my second mom," Nardo said. "Her and my dad raised me."

Once Nardo received the news that her grandmother died, she began to use art to escape her emotions. It was something she shared with her sister and father growing up and was a support system for her whenever she needed to relax.

She started to invest herself in her artwork, focusing especially on her photography. She'd go to the sculpture studio in Duke Hall and paint, draw or go out and shoot pictures for hours if she was feeling down.

"I didn't have a focus. I was kind of just all over," Nardo said. "When I go through things, I shut people out and I don't really ever know what to do with myself and that's when I go to my art space."

When Nardo takes pictures, she focuses more on someone else's world and their emotions rather than her own. Whenever she had a difficult time with schoolwork or coping with the loss of her Nan, she took a mental step back to focus on the people in front of her lens.

"I really don't think about whatever's going on while I'm creating. It's actually the complete opposite," Nardo said. "I think about very basic things. I guess it just gets my mind flowing."

Her love for photography started in middle school when her dad gave her a DSLR camera and developed into a passion she took to college. Nardo began to accumulate work and had a portfolio that was strong enough to get her into the art programs at JMU and VCU.

When Nardo was younger, she was more literal with her work and tried to copy what she'd seen. As she got older, she became a more expressive artist and allowed the emotions of her grandmother's passing to bleed into her art.

"It did the opposite of what I expected," Nardo said. "They kind of just naturally molded into each other because I was doing art all the time and I realized it was probably one of the only times I wasn't thinking about other things."

At first, Nardo wanted to keep her art and her emotions separate, saying that art was beautiful and she didn't want to associate beauty and negativity together. As she drew, took pictures, painted or created sculptures, Nardo saw her emotions translate onto the works anyway.

"It felt like I was doing things for her," Nardo said. "But I think that really helped me, especially like freshman year I really found out who I was, and I think a lot of that had to do with my art ... I could look at the wall and pull facts out about myself."

That was when it began to click. Her art was all about the process.

"It's really interesting to think of all of the different steps," Nardo said. "There's something about doing the actual process and seeing the different stages of it. It's not shooting a picture and it's over — there's more layers to it."

In her sculpture class, she completed an eight-foot-long cocoon made of paper pulp and chicken wire. Nardo says tearing the pieces of paper apart was therapeutic for her.

"Hearing everybody else talk about [politics] just irritates me, so I started ripping newspapers," she said.

Nardo created 30 Home Depot buckets of paper pulp for that project. Art became a form of therapy for her to an extent where she felt like she could help others. She got a chance to do that last summer during an internship with the Cultural Arts Center in Glen Allen, Virginia.

This was where she saw the impact that art therapy could have for both her and others around her. She worked in a community outreach program with foster kids, kids in juvenile detention, kids with autism and elderly people with dementia.

"There's not just one thing [about art therapy]," said Laura Tuomisto, a board-certified clinical art therapist from Staunton, Virginia. "The phenomena that I've witnessed being in the profession have happened on so many levels."

From creating little banjos made of toothpicks and rubber bands to photo albums, Nardo has helped children and the elderly realize that art can be a way to get to the center of their problems and start a process of building themselves back up from their previous symptoms or at least ease emotional pain.

For Nardo, it was gratifying to bring something different to the people who needed it most.

Along with the kids at the detention center, Nardo and company worked on a large mural with a local artist. She remembered the kids smiling and contributing in their own special way. Nardo never expected to see these reactions, given the situation many of them were in.

Tuomisto said that when people verbally process trauma, they only do it on one side of the brain. Art and narrative unlocks the entire brain for processing, and since trauma is a full-body experience, the artwork allows people to more fully process what happened and the brain can be relieved from symptoms.

"Bringing art into communities ... people always try to give them things, but art is never usually one of them," Nardo said. "It's a gap that needs to be bridged immediately."

Professor Corinne Diop, an adviser to Nardo, said one of the things that stood out about her after hearing about Nardo's internship is that she wanted to get more funding to do more with foster kids.

Nardo wants the people around her to have the same ability to use art the way she did, so that it helps them express themselves and feel grounded.

"She's imagining the art to be some sort of lifeline of them having a way to process what's going on," said Diop. "She's gonna be alright. She's got a trajectory of knowing what she wants to do."

Nardo took an advanced photography class with Diop as a sophomore. The class is typically filled with upperclassmen, and according to Diop, Nardo's confidence as an artist has gone up since she began in the fine arts program as a freshman.

"She's always a very honest person, so I don't think that's changed so much," Diop said. "But I think maybe her confidence level and that when she has those opinions it's more rounded and it's actually being able to say why ... explain [how] she thinks someone's work can be improved."

As a result of her experience, Nardo hopes to become an art therapist after graduation.

According to Tuomisto, there are myths about art as therapy, with the biggest one being that everyone thinks art therapy is just for kids. Tuomisto's client base is largely adults.

When it comes to mental health, Tuomisto said there are more stressful external influences than when she began practicing art therapy eight years ago.

College students worry in some combination about student loans, homework, the political climate, maintaining social media, financial aid, transportation, work, increased tuition, signing up for classes, family and friend obligations and other factors.

Tuomisto confirmed that there has been a spike in both anxiety and depression cases in recent years, even among college students.

"Something's got to give," Tuomisto said. "But we're here to help them cope."

College students lead busy lives. Tuomisto had some suggestions about what students can do when they are busy but have enough downtime for a quick break to take part in the art process at home.

"One of the gold standards is visual journaling," she says. "We'll recommend art journals or a book with some blank pages and some lined pages and it gives you the opportunity to draw or use whatever feels more comfortable."

For a more guided idea that's more catered to the individual, Tuomisto also suggests seeing a board-certified art therapist at least once for some direction on where to go with art-based therapy. She also said that you don't need art experience to see the benefits.

"Everyone has an art background," Nardo joked.

All people need to do is follow their hands.

Ethan Pelino is a senior media arts and design major. Contact Ethan at pelinoes@dukes.jmu.edu.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXIS MILLER / GRIT.

self-care noun

\self-’ker\

Definition of *self-care*

“The mental, physical and emotional care of yourself.”
Chloe Burnette: sophomore, nursing

“Taking a break from school every once in a while. Trying to relax.”
Jacob Davis: sophomore, justice studies

“Self-care to me means listening to my body and mind and making sure at least once a week I do something to replenish all the taxing things that your body and mind withstand a week whether that be emotionally, mentally, or otherwise.”
Ronne Kent: senior, economics

“Self-discipline. Make betterment of yourself.”
Samuel Yun: junior, accounting, recently returned from serving in military

“Making sure your body is physically and mentally intact and that you’re taking care of yourself.”
Addie Bathurst: freshman, nursing

“Taking care of yourself. Putting yourself first. Your health above everything else.”
Nicole Peterson: freshman, engineering

“Taking care of yourself mentally and physically.”
Isabelle Amato: freshman, business management

“Taking care of yourself mentally and emotionally. You can do that by listening to what your body and your mind is telling you to do. I either have those stress-free nights or hang out with friends.”
Sarah Thatcher: sophomore, marketing

“Eating healthy, working out regularly and also having a support system in place so you can have places to vent.”
Jake Robinson: sophomore, political science

“Keeping yourself in good conditions. Maintaining yourself.”
Clay Martinelli: sophomore, finance

PHOTOS COURTESY OF

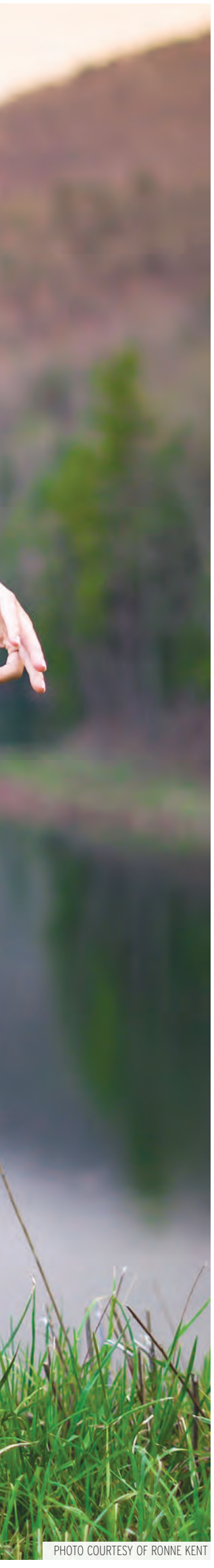


PHOTO COURTESY OF RONNE KENT

Put yourself **first**

ANNA STACKHOUSE
and HANNAH DODD
GRIT.

At JMU, students are often pressured to join clubs or teams while maintaining a healthy balance between extracurriculars, sleep, school and a social life. Being involved on an extroverted campus can be exhausting at times, which is why self-care is so important.

It can be molded to mean something different for each person. Oxford Dictionary defines self care as "the practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, in particular during periods of stress."

It's preferential and boundless in options, such as going to the gym regularly, having a set sleeping schedule or spending time with friends. Self-care can be fun, soothing, reinvigorating or otherwise — it's what you make of it.

Here are some ways to relieve stress at JMU and around Harrisonburg.

Visit The Oasis

Located on the third floor of the Student Success Center in the JMU Counseling Center, this is a great space to unwind. The Oasis has yoga mats, pillows and blankets to get comfortable, iPads loaded with relaxation apps, massage chairs, noise canceling headphones and other calming features. If you're looking for somewhere to take a breath and escape, this is the place.

Go to UREC

When school becomes overwhelming, it's important to balance the stress. Exercise and other physical activities produce endorphins, which in turn reduce anxiety. The body reacts similarly to the way it does in meditation.

For many people, staying in a gym schedule creates a sense of regularity to keep an important balance between life obligations and caring for the body physically. Try setting specific times in the week to workout, leaving plenty of time to go home, finish work and get some rest.

Breathe Harrisonburg

Breathe Harrisonburg is a friendly community for Pilates and fitness. They offer group workout classes and workshops, as well as private training sessions and social events. Next time you're feeling tight and tense, loosen up on your journey of health and strength and book a session with Breathe.

Take a dip in the pool

JMU has two pools equipped with swimming lanes, a hydrotherapy spa and a sauna. You can take a load off by doing laps in the pool, relaxing in the sauna with friends or floating down the lazy river.

Join a club or intramural team

If you enjoy playing a sport or trying new activities, club or intramural teams are a great vehicle to meeting new people and getting involved in an active way. Take a look at UREC's intramural sports and club sports pages to find the best fit for you.

Hiking trails

Harrisonburg is right in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley and right around the corner from Shenandoah National Park. With over 500 miles of trails, there's unlimited places for you to step outside and be one with nature. On your way up Skyline Drive, take the time to look at the views. High Knob. located just over the West Virginia border, is an easy trail students can hike.

RHSPCA

Playing with pets is a well-known stress reliever. As college students, we have to leave our furry friends back at home. The RHSPCA is a fully functional animal shelter that is always looking for volunteers and visitors. If you don't have the time to volunteer, you can always stop by and play with the animals for an extra dose of love.

Take a 100-level KIN class

If you don't have time to make it to UREC on a weekly basis, it's no problem — take a KIN class instead. There are many options for fun and active classes to make a part of your schedule. Here are a few easy one-credit classes to take:

KIN 128: Fencing
KIN 133: Bowling
KIN 139: Basic Paddle Sports (Canoeing or Kayaking)
KIN 156: Scuba and Skin Diving
KIN 157: Self Defense for Women

Downtown Harrisonburg

When you feel like exploring, downtown is an ideal escape. Grab caffeine at an artisan coffee house such as Broad Porch Coffee Co. or Black Sheep Coffee, try some new craft brews at local breweries like Brothers Craft Brewing or Pale Fire, or do some retail therapy at Agora Downtown Market while grabbing a bite to eat.

You can visit the farmer's market on the weekend for crafts, goods and fresh produce from local vendors or go to brunch at The Little Grill Collective. No matter the craving, downtown has something to help you relax and feel at home in the friendly city.

Anna Stackhouse and Hannah Dodd are senior media arts and design majors. Contact Anna at stackhak@dukes.jmu.edu and Hannah at doddhg@dukes.jmu.edu.

Campus resources

Hotlines and lifelines

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-8255

Trevor Lifeline for LGBT Youth
1-866-488-7386

Trans Lifeline
1-877-565-8860

RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline
1-800-656-4673

JMU CARE Sexual Assault Helpline
1-540-568-6411

Crisis Text Line 24/7
Text “Connect” to 741741

Alcoholics Anonymous Toll-Free Hotline
Find an AA group near you: https://www.aa.org/

SAMHSA’s National Helpline (Substance use Disorders)
1-800-662-4357

National Drug Helpline (Drugs and Alcohol)
1-888-633-3239

Title IX at JMU

Location
Madison Hall
100 E. Grace St.
Rooms 4033 and 4035
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22807

Phone
540-568-5219

Email
titleix@jmu.edu

Website
https://www.jmu.edu/access-and-enrollment/titleIX/index.shtml

Title IX Coordinator
Amy Sirocky-Meck
Phone: (540) 568-5214
Email: sirockam@jmu.edu

Title IX Assistant Coordinator
Taylor Morris
Phone: 540-568-5219
Email: morristr@jmu.edu

Harrisonburg local phone numbers

SRMH Emergency Department
540-689-1300

Emerigicare
540-432-9996

MedExpress Urgent Care
540-432-3080

Valley Urgent Care
540-434-5709

On-Campus Emergencies (JMU Police)
540-568-6911

Off-Campus Emergencies
911

University Health Center

Location
Student Success Center
724 S. Mason St.
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Phone
540-568-6178

Email
healthctr@jmu.edu

Website
https://www.jmu.edu/healthcenter/

Law enforcement

JMU Office of Public Safety
Emergency: 540-568-6911
Non-Emergency: 540-568-6912

Harrisonburg Police Department
Emergency: 911
Non-Emergency: 540-434-4436

JMU Counseling Center

Location
Student Success Center
738 S. Mason St.
Room 3100
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Phone
540-568-6552

Walk-Ins are for first visits only

Website
https://www.jmu.edu/counselingctr/

Dean of Students

Location
Student Success Center
738 S. Mason St.
Room 3010
Phone: 540-568-6468

Ashley K. Stovall, Assistant Dean of Students
stovalak@jmu.edu

Gloria Mast, Associate Dean of Students
mastgm@jmu.edu

Dr. Josh Bacon, Dean of Students
baconjj@jmu.edu

Website
http://www.jmu.edu/studentaffairs/departments/deanofstudents/index.shtml

Office of Disability Services

Location
Student Success Center
738 S. Mason St.
Room 1202
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Phone
540-568-6705

E-mail
disability-svcs@jmu.edu

Stronger together

JMU organizations encourage support and inclusivity through celebrating body positivity and raising mental health awareness

KATELYN MERRIMAN
GRIT.

JMU is known for having many organizations that cater to a number of interests, but students may not know of the organizations on campus that were created for mental health awareness.

Each mental health organization was established with the purpose of providing students with a place to talk about how they're feeling. Though each organization has different focuses, they all have one common goal: reassuring their participants that they have a support system.

According to the American College Health Association, more than 45 percent of young adults who stopped attending college because of mental health-related reasons didn't request accommodations and 50 percent of them didn't access mental health services.

The following are JMU organizations that provide these supportive measures.

Barenaked Ladies

Founded in 2012. BNL is a resource that promotes self-love, body positivity and what it calls "a shine theory," which means lifting others up.

"I really wanted a support group that I could really connect with to talk about thing ... anything from breakups to depression and anxiety," Kristen Whitney, president of BNL, said. "That's what we do at our meetings. We just talk."

In a 2017 survey of nearly 48,000 college students, 64 percent said they'd felt "very lonely" in the previous 12 months, according to the ACHA.

"It took me a really long time to participate, but after hearing others participate, I feel like it's the best part because someone else may be going through something and you can feel like 'Oh my gosh, I feel like that, too,'" Whitney said.

Although BNL is an organization geared toward body positivity, that's not the only topic that it covers in its bi-weekly meetings. Whitney creates a presentation of topics related to a variety of mental health issues.

"We are faced with questions constantly that we always feel like we have to answer and I feel like that kind of breeds anxiety for people," Whitney said.

Women are not the only members of the organization. Over the last year, BNL has seen an increase in membership of men.

"Stigma around men not being able to voice their feelings and emotions... I think it's awesome when they just talk because it really crushes that stigma and I'm here to learn and grow, too," Whitney said.

One of the group's long-term goals is to have even more male participation in BNL because it's learning different perspectives with each new participant.

Neurodiversity Celebration Collaborative

A logo competition is underway this semester to give the JMU community the opportunity to get involved with a new mental health organization coming this spring: Neurodiversity Celebration Collaborative.

"The logo design is just one piece of the initiative because we are trying to get a group going," Cathryn Molloy, a JMU writing, rhetoric and technical communication professor, said.

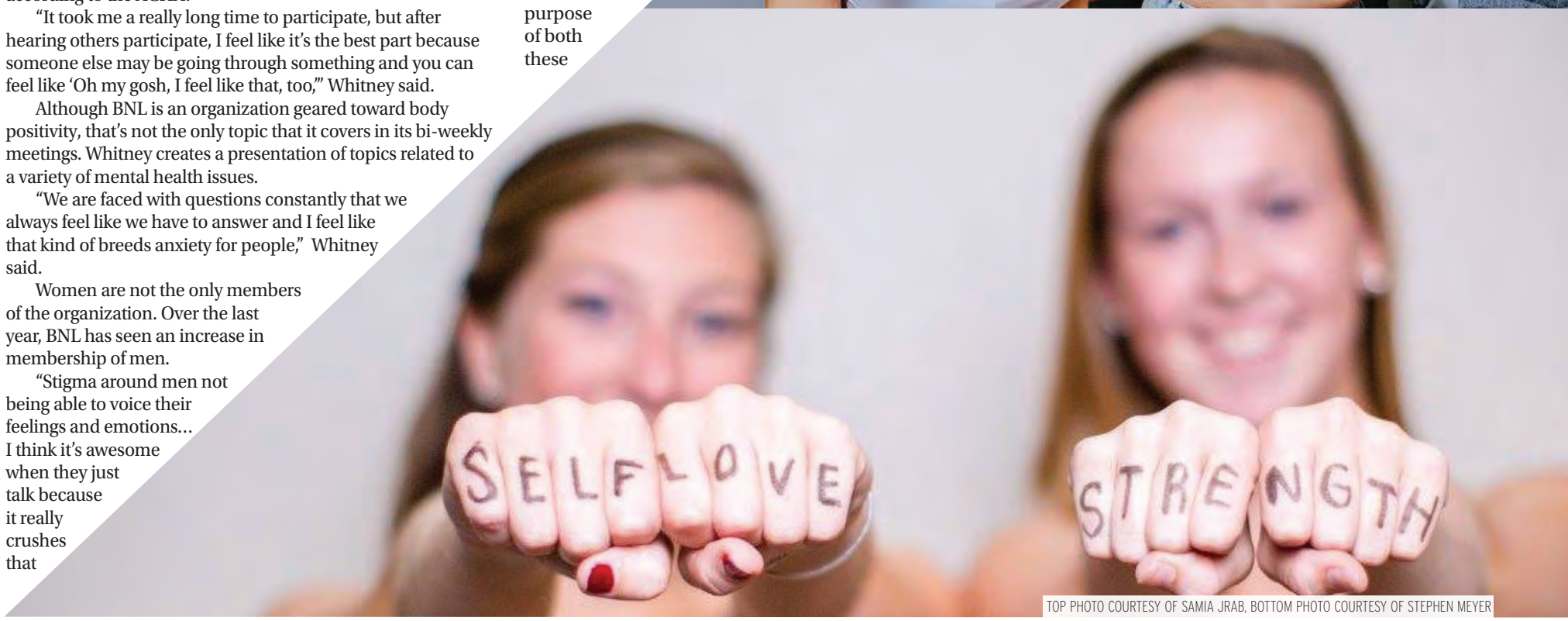
NCC's goal is to gather a group of students to do research on ways to create initiatives to help the community with mental health.

"The activities are to create a visible group on campus that meets once a month to strategically plan an initiative and related public event dedicated to ending stigma for mental health differences and celebrating neuro diversity," Molloy said.

Molloy started with her small classroom to create interest and from there, the idea of the organization grew. Though it's not going to fully come about until the spring, the organization already has plans on how to better the community.

The purpose of both these organizations is to create awareness, that it's OK to have these feelings and to have a place to fall back.

Katelyn Merriman is a senior media arts and design major. Contact Katelyn at merrimke@dukes.jmu.edu.



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Overwhelmed?

TAO is a mobile-friendly, online program that provides treatment for stress, anxiety, and depression. It is available to all JMU students, faculty, and staff for free.

For completely private, 24/7 online counseling resources, sign-up for a Self-Help account with your JMU email: thepath.taoconnect.org

Sign up for Self-Help

Take Self-Assessment

Brought to you by JMU Counseling Center.