



SPECTATOR

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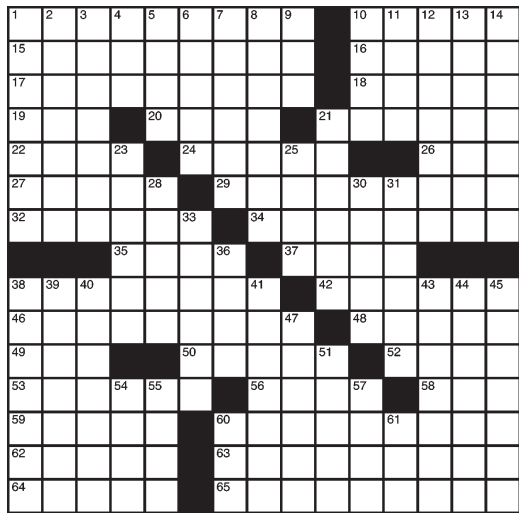
Can you guess the new SGA Executive Board?

Find the answers inside.



See Page 3





- 33 Large pigs
- 36 Shot contents
- 38 Babysitter's reading, at times
- 39 Therapist's asset often do
- 41 The "th" in "rhapsody," e.g.
- 43 Wrapping words?
- 44 Cloud function
- 45 Cool cat
- 47 Tube
- 51 Italian town with a biannual horse race
- 54 Give stars to, say
- 55 Salt Lake City team
- 57 Dash
- 60 wiki : collection of online manuals
- 61 Jaw

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NEWS

The big question: Will enough students pay to see 2 Chainz?

Tiarra Bell
STAFF WRITER
tcbell@valdosta.edu

There is only one day left until rapper 2 Chainz hits the stage to perform live at VSU.

This is the first time VSU has brought a national headliner to perform, as well as the first time students have been charged in recent years. In order to secure the Atlanta rapper, VSU will pay the price of \$87,500.

For the past few years, spring concerts have been free for students. However, this year's concert is different. The tickets for students are \$20, and \$50 for the public. On the day of the concert, tickets are \$60 at the door.

2 Chainz is a widely known artist from College Park, Georgia. Premiering his debut album, "Based on a T.R.U. Story," in 2012, 2 Chainz took off in his career. He spawned three successful songs off of the album, including "No Lie," "I'm Different," and "Birthday Song."

Some in the community are not sure about VSU bringing in 2 Chainz.

At a press conference with VSU journalism students last week, Valdosta Mayor John Gayle expressed his opinion about 2 Chainz performing at VSU.

"We have somewhat of a suspect group coming to Valdosta State, April 15, called 2 Chainz. That's not a positive influence for the college or the city," said Gayle.

According to Gayle, some feel that 2 Chainz should be welcomed since presidential candidate Donald Trump's appearance was accepted in February.

"Well, yeah. Maybe that was kind of a saying OK, we are going to offer somebody on the other side of the spectrum," Gayle said.

Gayle noted that 2 Chainz and other members affiliated with him got arrested at other institutions for illegal activity.

"Those kinds of things with Valdosta State being in the center of Valdosta, of course it effects our reputation as a city and it

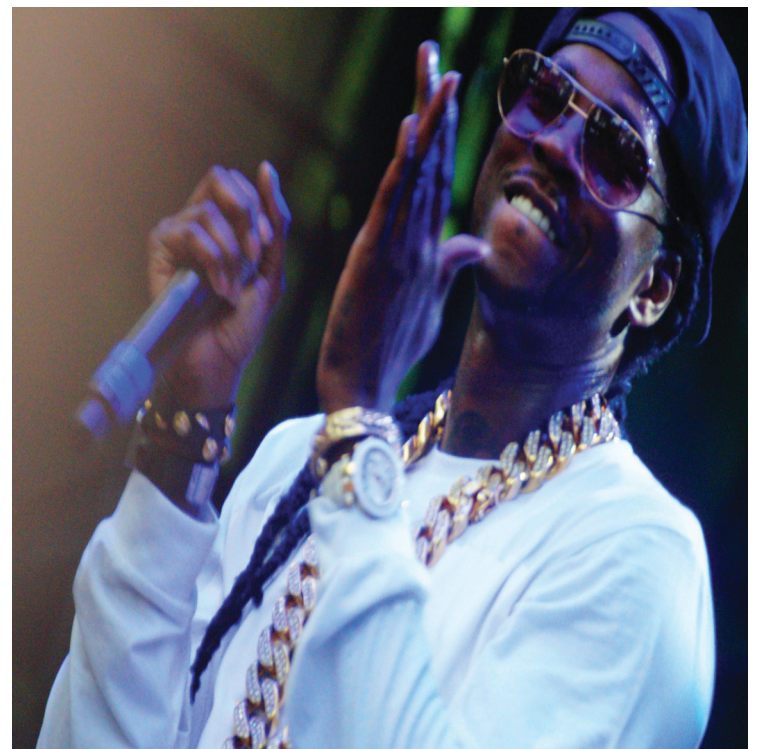


Photo courtesy of Google

2Chainz will perform at VSU this Friday.

also effects the reputation of the school," he said.

Although Gayle doesn't agree with the artist that has been chosen to perform at VSU's spring concert, he said he is tempted to buy a ticket.

There have been questions raised about the level of ticket sales for the concert.

VSU President Cecil Staton said he was concerned about the amount of support for the show, and said if ticket sales aren't strong enough, "this will be a one-time experiment."

Some students have had a positive response to 2 Chainz coming to VSU.

"I feel good about 2 Chainz coming," freshman Santresia Johns said. "2 Chainz is 2 Chainz. I like 2 Chainz."

Freshman Malasia Casson thinks the concert will bring out positivity for VSU.

"I feel it's a breakthrough because of everything that has been happening in Valdosta State. I'm excited. I can't go, but I'm still excited," she said.

"I'm excited he's coming," said freshman Ronya Nelson. "I think it's a great price for him to be a celebrity and cost 20 bucks, I like that."

According to student

Brandon C Preston, 2 Chainz was booked before the Donald Trump rally.

"I know about all the things that went on in the past, but they always have a person that comes here," Preston said. "It's my last year, I'm about to graduate. I'm going to have fun."

Other student such as Mason Elmore will not be attending the concert.

"I stopped listening to rap in high school, so I don't really follow him," he said.

Similarly to Elmore, senior Parker Clements isn't familiar with the rapper.

"I don't really know much about him," Clements said. "I don't have a problem with him coming. I don't really listen to the style of his music much, so I don't keep up with it."

Regardless of how students feel with past concerts being free, freshman Mia Phillips feels that "it's not a bad thing they are charging. It's 2 Chainz. I'm sure it's expensive for him to come. For the fans, it's cool that they're doing something. I don't know about it being \$20, but I don't think it's a bad thing they are charging."

Spectator Classifieds

The *Spectator* prints free classifieds for current students of Valdosta State University only. These must be no more than 40 words, or a \$13.90 charge will apply. Classifieds for faculty, staff, student organizations, student-owned businesses and the general public cost \$13.90 for up to 40 words.

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Health Tip of the week

“Students who feel connected to their school are also more likely to have better academic achievement, including higher grades and test scores, have better school attendance, and stay in school longer.”
www.cdc.gov

The results are in: Q&A with the 2016-2017 SGA Exec Board



Maya Mapp
President

1. How do you feel about your win?

I am very grateful and very blessed. I'm super excited that the student body saw something in me as a candidate to represent them to the faculty and administration. I do wish the best to Ms. Belinda. I spoke to her and said, "I really hope you join the Senate" because we definitely need more senators. There are 50 senator seats and we had 20 senators come in this year so we need to rebuild our senate. We need more diversity all in all so you can see more diversity. I'm excited and grateful and ready to work.

2. What is the first thing you plan on changing with SGA?

The biggest would be reestablishing communication with the faculty and administration. I plan on setting up meetings as soon as possible. This summer I will be here serving as an orientation leader, so that will be the perfect time to use not only that platform but this platform as well to really connect with the interim president of our university, Cecil Station, as well as our interim provost, Dr. Gerber. I really just want to reestablish that communication so when we come back in the fall students know what SGA is. We are well respected on campus, and we can really snag in those freshman and those students who don't really know about SGA so we can rebuild the senate.

3. What other goals do you have in mind for SGA?

After rebuilding the senate, making us more visible and vocal on campus. Throughout this entire campaign I learned that 70-75% of students don't know what SGA is or they had no interest in SGA, so the second biggest thing is making sure students know there is an SGA because, in my opinion, this is an essential tool and if we are not using it, what's the purpose? I want to make sure that we are reconnecting with our organizations, and that's another big thing, since we didn't have a lot of support from organizations on campus, its keeping those connections and keeping those connections we had during the campaign and to keep reestablishing those and keep using those throughout this entire year. Again, that will be the direct connection with any organization on campus.

4. What's one thing you want students to know about SGA?

That we can be used. I think a lot of people just view SGA as the governing body, but the purpose of our organization is to be the voice of the students, so use us. If you have a concern, come to our meetings. They are always open every Monday at 8 p.m. We can be used as an organization to get stuff done. Make sure to know that we are here for you. Please use us and become a part of it.



Othellious Cato
Vice President

1. How do you feel about your win?

I am completely honored that the student body chose me to be their next SGA Vice President. Now I'm just excited to begin working to really do the things I promised.

2. What is the first thing you plan on changing with SGA?

The first thing I plan on doing is having a meeting with all of the new elected executive board so we can plan our view of the future and our goal for the next year.

3. What other goals do you have in mind for SGA?

My major goals is to ensure that we have a senate that is rebuilding and working for all of our students. We want all of our students to be represented to make sure all of our students know that there is someone who is working for them. We want every single student to have confidence in us and know we are here for them.

4. What's one thing you want students to know about SGA?

I want the students to know that the new SGA exec board will be one that works in cohesion to ensure that all of our students are represented and that we are exemplifying Blazer pride.



Jasmine Jackson
Secretary

1. How do you feel about your win?

I'm super excited and I'm so happy. I'm ready to work for VSU. This is a moment of truth for me right now. I'm so excited.

2. What is the first thing you plan on changing with SGA?

I definitely plan on rebuilding the senate during this next year. We are going to try to give a lot of incentive out for students to join because we want to make sure SGA is representing with [all] 50 seats full and not just 22 or 10. We want to make sure it's full so we can have a full Senate representing the entire student body.

Jordan Barela
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
jlbarela@valdosta.edu

The results of the 2016-2017 SGA Executive Board was announced Monday afternoon in the Student Union. Current SGA President David Burdette announced the results of the elections of the executive board. Erin Shaw won the Comptroller position with 956 votes. Jasmine Jackson won the Secretary position with 993 votes. Maya Mapp won SGA President with 989 votes. Shaw, Jackson and Mapp were part of the Momentum campaign. Othellious Cato, who ran independently, won the Vice President position with 875 votes.



Erin Shaw
Comptroller

1. How do you feel about your win?

I feel really exhilarated. It's just such a wonderful feeling that the student body actually voiced their opinion and but in their votes and made history by choosing who they really wanted, so it's a good feeling.

2. What is the first thing you plan on changing with SGA?

One thing I want to change is making sure SGA is more here for the students. We want to be sure that the transparency we talked about throughout this entire campaign season is actually built and students actually see it. Making sure that we do our part and that the students can believe in us

3. What other goals do you have in mind for SGA?

Another thing I probably want to accomplish is bringing back school pride and school spirit and bringing the campus back together. Bring back that Blazer pride and having that culture once again.

4. What's one thing you want students to know about SGA?

Just knowing that SGA is really truly going to do what they say they are going to do. We will work really hard for you guys.

2016-2017 Senators

540 Silas David
249 Shayla Slappy
204 Tiffany Clark
156 Kiarah Woodard
140 Breanna Drummond
137 Daria Thomas
128 Dillon Rountree
116 Adam Slaton
115 Damon Brown
90 Richard Brito
82 Brittany Transou
60 Danyell Peaks

Court date set in Sheppard trial

Jada Duker
STAFF WRITER
jldukes@valdosta.edu

Months after his indictment, Eric Sheppard's court date has now been set for the week of May 2.

The former VSU student was arrested on a firearm charge last year after a gun was found on campus days after his infamous flag demonstration. VSU police and the Valdosta police department say that they linked the weapon to Sheppard through pawn shop receipts.

Sheppard made quite the commotion on campus after he and two other students held a protest on VSU's main campus during which Sheppard proceeded to walk on the American flag as a sign of resistance towards white supremacy and racism. This angered many Valdosta residents so much so that a resident even tried to take the flag away from Sheppard and also resulted in a student led flag rally in support of American nationalism.

Since his arrest, Sheppard has been allowed bond at \$25,000 on the strict requirements that he is not allowed post on social media, must stay within Cobb County limits, and must be in his house from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Although Sheppard is banned from returning to VSU's campus his presence is still felt throughout the community. Recently, an on-campus organization hosted an event in which Sheppard was present via FaceTime and discussed racial issues with current VSU students.

Head to vsuspectator.com

for Web Exclusive content this week.

We will have new content throughout the week!

Also check our social media for the content.
@vsuspectator

NEWS

Renovated herbarium unveiled today

Biology department ready to show off new plant specimen storage facility

Tiarra Bell
STAFF WRITER
tcbell@valdosta.edu

The \$100,000 renovation of a storage facility that houses more than 71,000 plant specimens will be unveiled today at 4 p.m. by VSU's biology department.

The facility, known as the herbarium, is a collection of specimens documenting biodiversity in Georgia's coastal plain.

"We're going to have an open house," Dr. Richard Carter, curator of the herbarium, said. "I've invited retired colleagues who are still in the area, people in the community, and VSU faculty and students are invited."

A public-lecture highlighting the herbarium will be at 4 p.m. in Powell Hall Auditorium. A tour and an open-house celebration of the herbarium will follow at 5 p.m. at the east end of the atrium of the Bailey Science Center.

The purpose of the open house is to promote the herbarium and show the renovations completed with support from the National Science Foundation.

The renovation was able to provide more usable cabinet storage space. This involved the removal of all existing cabinets. There were approximately 76 cabinets.

"We purchased new cabinets and generally enhance the herbarium to some extent," Dr. Carter said. "By digitization, we built a database based upon the data on the specimen labels."

They took all of the cabinets out in the atrium, cleared the floor and installed tracks. The tracks were installed on steel carriages. Then an elevated platform was built underneath so the cabinets could be placed on the carriages and moved along the tracks. This eliminated all but one aisle.

"Rather than having four or five aisles, we have one aisle that we call it a movable aisle because we can move the cabinets on the tracks to create aisles as we need them," Dr. Carter said.

By doing that, the storage capacity increased by 35 percent. Forty-three new cabinets were also purchased.

"We surplused 16 cabinets," Dr. Carter said. "Fourteen of them went to Columbus State for their herbarium and two of them a professor used."

Dr. Carter partnered with Michael Holt from the VSU library. They were given a computer code used by Florida State University to serve its image and data online for their virtual herbarium. Holt took

that computer code and adapted it to VSU's necessities.

"We're now serving locally and through local funding and partnership with the Odum Library, which is serving images and data in the form of the VSU virtual herbarium," Dr. Carter said.

This is Dr. Carter's second large National Science Foundation grant. The first, Dr. Carter says, was a collaborative grant with the University of Georgia herbarium funded in 2011.

"That was a three-year project," Dr. Carter said. "Under that grant, we digitized the entire collection."

Under the first grant, Dr. Carter employed and trained 15 students.

"I had a great time working with them," Carter said. "VSU student's undergraduates and did nearly all of the imaging and data entry. We were very successful with that project. We digitized more than 71,000 specimens under that project."

Building on the success from the first grant, a second grant proposal was written in the summer of 2014 requesting funds from the National Science Foundation to install a high density storage system, purchase additional herbarium cabinets, process back log specimen, and georeferenced data



Tiarra Bell/THE SPECTATOR

The newly renovated herbarium contains more than 71,000 plant specimens, such as the one pictured above.

on nearly 14,000 specimens.

"We're also bringing the Vanderbilt teaching collection to Valdosta state," Dr. Carter said. "That's more than 130 large boxes of specimens. They've been dormant for about 15 years."

Dr. Carter received encouragement from a fellow friend to get

things going.

"My mentor from Vanderbilt has been pushing me for years to bring them here, but I didn't have space," Dr. Carter said. "We now have space because we installed this high-density storage system."

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OPINIONS

Big money ruins democratic process

Our point of view...

Next time, rock the vote Blazers

One of the greatest joys of living in America is getting to have a voice and be involved in the process of electing political officials. As students of VSU, we have this same opportunity when it comes to electing our Student Government Association executive board and senators.

Following Monday's announcement of the new 2016-17 SGA executive board and senators, we at The Spectator would like to congratulate all of the winners. We wish you all good luck and cannot wait to see the wonderful things you do for our community over the next year.

While we are excited about all of the potential this new group will bring to VSU, seeing the election numbers was alarming. On our campus there are approximately 11,302 students, according to the Valdosta State University website. However, only 2,017 votes were cast over the two days the SGA polls were open online, according to the election results sent out by current SGA President David Burdette.

The Student Government Association is supposed to be the voice of the students in regards to communicating with the administration, faculty members, the media and so much more. How can our student body expect this group to accurately complete this daunting task when around 9,285 of the students on this campus did not

vote?

As students on this campus, you have the opportunity to change what you do not like. You have the opportunity to speak up for what you want. You have the opportunity to make this campus your own. All students needed to do to make their voice heard was take five minutes out of their day to vote. In addition to voting, through the school year the doors to the SGA meetings are always open, and the executive board is ready to hear your suggestions and concerns.

While we understand that SGA cannot fix every complaint every student has with our campus, communicating with these senators and executive board members is the best place to start.

At The Spectator we have spent this year working hard to improve our relationship with SGA in order to better serve the student body. If students on this campus would make this same effort, this campus could be whatever we wanted it to be.

Blazers, we hope in the future you will take time to make your voice heard and contribute to your community.

Once again, congratulations to all of SGA's new members. We cannot wait to work with you and watch you set our campus ablaze with a newfound sense of VSU pride.

This editorial was written by a member of the editorial staff and expresses the general opinion of The Spectator.

Head to www.vsuspectator.com to read Carlus Williams' story about drug addiction treatment

Miles Brown

STAFF WRITER

milbrown@valdosta.edu

For decades, the country's wealthiest individuals have been donating money to candidates that will protect their assets and promote their agendas. This mutually beneficial relationship unfortunately affects the country negatively and comes at a cost to the American people.

The country is not on the same page as Washington, D.C., when it comes to what leaders are chosen and what these leaders do once they take office. Big money donations are not in any way benefiting the country. All big money donations do is corrupt and take power away from the people in the United States who want to change it for the better.

The "good" average American won't get the chance to take these important political positions, due to the individual not having as much money as their opponent. The political system in this country is corrupt due to this interaction between money and politics.

According to opensecrets.org, the total cost in elections has risen from \$1 billion to \$7 billion in 14 years from 1998 to 2012. This is only going to get worse,



Virginia Public Radio

Big money in politics has destroyed the democratic process in America.

leaving the country's richest and wealthiest to be in power. Money donations are practically legalized bribery.

The fact that it costs so much money to run in a presidential election means that 95 percent of the population has no chance to dictate the direction they want the country to go. Bribery is rampant in the House and in the Senate, and there are many lawmakers who don't have the American citizen's interest in hand.

In all honesty, politicians and senators care more about getting the most power in the legislative branch than actually legislating bills. The more the American people continue to ignore these issues, the more corrupt our politics

will become.

This type of politics is not new, and it is going to take a lot of work to change it. People who are middle class and pay taxes are the ones who are going to be the front runners for change.

The American people need to start worrying about the local and state government before thinking nationally. The citizens in this country need to elect honest and trustworthy people in office. This way the wealthy are forced to support our choices or just not donate money at all.

Hopefully, we will eventually see a country where our choices for president are not elected strictly because of their wealth but their character as well.

Same-sex couples still facing discrimination

Geneva Crooks

STAFF WRITER

grcrooks@valdosta.edu

With the legalization of same sex marriage, 2015 was an eventful year, especially for those in the LGBT community. The world went into a frenzy when it was announced that no matter your sexual preference, you could get married in the United States. Many people welcomed this change with open arms, while others fumed with hatred and disgust.

Sadly, although there are many laws in place to protect those of the LGBT community, many members are still being discriminated against.

With the arrival of wedding season, in some states, it is legal for wedding vendors to deny same-sex couples the venue because of their sexual orientation. This is a huge deal because getting married is something people dream about and plan for months, even years. Imagine planning an entire wedding at your second option venue because your first discriminated against you and your future spouse.

Gay couples also can be denied the right to adopt

children. According to Cosmopolitan, there are no federal standards that keep states from discriminating against LGBT people when it comes to the process of adopting a child. So, this means people can dream of one day adopting a baby and be denied in the state they live in simply because a judge or a social worker doesn't like the idea of a child having same-sex parents.

For many, college is a part of coming of age. Many of the most prestigious colleges in the United States are Christian. At a Christian college, same-sex couples are in danger of being kicked out simply for being affectionate with one another.

According to Cosmopolitan, several Baptist colleges in the United States have actual clauses in their handbook against gay students being affectionate towards each other. Imagine being homosexual and opening up your student handbook and seeing that.

Regardless of the order in which they come, they are basic human rights: the right to marry, the right to an education, and the right to bear children. But in 2016, although we've come so far, we still have a long way to go.

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Contact Us

VSU Spectator

Hopper Hall, Room 1238

1500 N. Patterson St.

Valdosta, GA 31698

Newsroom

(229) 333-5688

Advertising

(229) 333-5686

Business

(229) 333-5686

Fax

(229) 249-2618

E-mail

spec@valdosta.edu

Adv. email

Spec_Advertising@valdosta.edu

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Did You KNOW?

According to express.uk, in 2004, the number of television sets in the UK overtook the number of people.



Photo Courtesy of ROBOCOPP

New sound grenade device might make college students safer on campus

Kayla Stroud
WEB EDITOR
kistroud@valdosta.edu

One quick pull will set this grenade a ringin'.

An Oakland-based startup company recently released a new portable safety device that is quickly gaining popularity on college campuses nationwide. The ROBOCOPP sound grenade weighs less than an ounce, and when the black pin is pulled the device emits an ear-piercing sound that is as loud as an ambulance at 120 decibels in hopes of deterring possible thefts and attacks.

"It's really popular for college students for a lot of reasons, it was born on a college campus," said ROBOCOPP spokesperson Jill Turner. "The device has a two-pronged

purpose: to deter someone and to attract attention."

Turner believes that the device is a good fit for a college environment.

"When you're on a college campus you obviously already have that built in sense of community who are all looking out for themselves and each other," said Turner. "People on college campuses are way more likely to keep up if something is going on."

VSU currently has several blue light alert systems throughout campus, but Turner believes that by implementing ROBOCOPP it will be a great companion in improving campus safety.

"The sound grenade is so perfect to not only enhance but to augment what campus security is already doing."

Besides the ROBOCOPP, Turner's main piece of safety advice? Remove your phone from your face.

"When you're on your phone completely oblivious to everything around you, all you have are your body, your voice, and your awareness," Turner said.

While there may be similar devices with cheaper prices already out on the market, ROBOCOPP gives potential buyers a more aesthetically pleasing option for just a bit more.

Robocopp can be purchased either through the company's website, Robocopp.com or Amazon for the price of \$19.99.

College student saves money by creating own dental wear

Meaghan Bitters
STAFF WRITER
mkbitters@valdosta.edu

Who needs a dentist when you can fix your teeth from home? A digital design major from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Amos Dudley, may have found a way to cut his dentist bill in half by successfully designing and creating his own orthodontic aligners using a 3D printer.

According to Dudley's blog, amosdudley.com, he was insecure about his smile and wanted to straighten his teeth, but was short on money.

After much research, he found an image of a name brand clear-alignment treatment and realized he could make a similar product using a 3D printer.

Then he researched the professional process of clear orthodontic alignment using "Contemporary Orthodontics" by William Proffit DDS, PhD, and "Orthodontics at a Glance" by Gill Daljitand.

He applied the techniques he learned but used different tools: a 3D scanner, mold of the teeth, CAD software, a hi-res 3D printer, retainer material and a vacuum forming machine.

He used the NJIT digital fabrication lab's Stratasys' Dimension 1200es, vacuum forming machine, and NextEngine laser scanners. He ordered the inert retainer plastic from eBay and already had the rest of the materials.

He made a mold of his teeth using alginate powder, Permastone, and a 3D printed impression tray to determine what corrections need to be made.

Then he laser scanned his mold, where he could then alter multiple molds to correlate with his teeth as they

changed.

To create a series of 12 molds he measured the total distance of travel and divided it by the maximum recommended distance a tooth can travel per aligner. (amosdudley.com)

Then he printed the mold aligners, labeled them and vacuumed out the plastic aligners, and sanded them down to avoid irritating his gums.

He said he wore them all day and night for 16 weeks, only taking them out to eat and that he plans to make more retainers in the final position that he can wear the rest of his life.

He also said the aligners can also be used for a night guard and a whitening tray.

According to CNN.com, Dudley's clear aligners cost him less than \$60.

3D printers may be the next big thing for consumers to produce their own products, but unless a mass amount of people stop going to the dentist or orthodontist, people in the dental field have nothing to worry about.

The amount of possible error of regular people attempting this project successfully is too high for dentists and orthodontists to be at risk.

Despite Dudley's warnings not to attempt this yourself, people continue to comment on his blog post that they're going to try it and some even offer money for him to make the aligners for them.

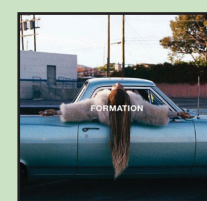
Dudley repeatedly replied that he will not be making any aligners for anyone, even if they offer him money, due to liabilities.

He told CNN that he's not interested in orthodontics and that this was all for a project.

= Listen Now

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Playlist: Staff Favorites



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Beyoncé | [Formation](#)

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"Sugar"
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-Coach



"Hungry Ham"
A\$AP Ferg | [Always Strive and Prosper](#)

-Not-Kevin



"Contradiction"
Mali Music | [CHI-RAQ](#)

-The Alphabetizer



DID YOU KNOW?

According to Uberfacts, people who daydream often tend to be more efficient learners and better at solving complex problems.

Sharing food, culture and flavor around the world VSU to hold 40th Annual International Dinner

Pam Agedah

STAFF WRITER

peagedah@valdosta.edu

Valdosta State University is preparing for a night full of food and diversity.

VSU will be holding its 40th Annual International Dinner hosted by the Society of International Students on April 23.

“The SIS is a registered student organization that would like to help foster diversity to the VSU and Valdosta community,” said Daniella Bacud, an international student advisor who helps plan the international dinner each year. This is her third year being a part of the program.

This year’s theme for the International Dinner is “Déjà Vu.” The organization chose that theme so it could continue with the theme of VSU’s Homecoming.

“There is a lot that goes into planning this event. Date and spaces need to be reserved; students choose what committee they would like to be on such as, cooking, entertainment, publicity, fundraising, and decorations,” Bacud said.

During the international dinner, there are also performances from students with different cultural backgrounds. So auditions also have to be held for groups or individuals that would like to perform.

“The current exec board helps with the planning, and the other

Each year’s menu choices depends on the students’ choices.

students help with executing the preparations,” Bacud said.

Students also have the opportunity to work with the Chartwells staff to make sure that food preparations for the dinner goes well.

Students from the various countries sign up for the cooking committee and decide what dish they would like to prepare.

“Each year’s menu choices depends on the students’ choices,” said Bacud.

Some countries being represented at the International Dinner are Russia, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Bahamas, Philippines, South Korea, and Germany.

During the International Dinner, a silent auction is held to help with the cost of hosting the event and for people to see items from other countries. International students bring in souvenirs from their home country to auction off.

“I hope that they will enjoy the global experience that they will get on this night, and celebrate how diverse our community is,” Bacud said.

The 40th Annual International Dinner is on Saturday, April 23 at 6 p.m. in the Student Union Ballrooms.



Students had a chance to experience various cultures and food from around the world at the 2015 International dinner. According to the VSU International Student Service homepage, there are currently over 350 international students from over 45 different countries attending VSU. Photo credit: Society of International Students.



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Football spring
scrimmage:
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4 p.m.

ANALYSIS

Three reasons why VSU softball is the Gulf South Conference favorite

Gabe Burns

SPORTS EDITOR

gcburns@valdosta.edu

Over the weekend, VSU annihilated a potential playoff foe.

If the season ended today, the Blazers and Alabama-Huntsville would clash in the Gulf South Conference tournament. VSU just swept UAB, but there's still six games remaining.

The tournament looms large as each game gains the utmost importance, but there are three aspects of the Blazers recent hot streak that have them primed to add to the trophy case.

The team is peaking at the right time: The Blazers may be fourth in the GSC standings, but they are a group that no one wants to see right now.

VSU has won six games in a row and has one loss in its last 17 decisions. The lone defeat came to Mississippi College, which had its 13-game winning streak interrupted as the Blazers took two of three on the road.

The Blazers travel to Carrollton this weekend to challenge arch rival West Georgia. The Wolves are

sitting at 28-20 in the year with a 13-14 mark in the GSC. No games should be taken for granted, but VSU stands a favorable chance at quickly bettering its place in the GSC standings.

Afterwards, VSU will play the conference's second seed, Delta State. The Blazers could still steal a top three spot prior to the tournament, but it will take winning out, something VSU is very capable of doing.

With Caitlyn Calhoun on the mound, VSU can defeat anyone in the country: Well, this isn't something we've learned recently, but it has been further validated during the Blazers' hot streak.

Calhoun sports a 1.46 ERA, 22 wins, 27 complete games, 194 strikeouts in 182 innings pitched. All of those stats lead the GSC. For perspective, those 194 strikeouts are 48 more than the second best pitcher.

But Calhoun's success transcends the 2016 campaign. She has pitched in 101 games in her VSU career. Her most recent win moved her into fifth place in school history with 62 victories. She is also only the second Blaz-

ers to pass 500 strikeouts.

VSU sports an efficient offense: The Blazers are known for winning on the long ball –and rightfully so– but the team isn't boom or bust in that department.

VSU has hammered 65 dingers, which is 10 more than North Alabama, the GSC's No. 1 team. The Blazers' 262 RBIs rank third in the conference. UAH leads in that category, but it was stifled by Calhoun and the Blazers' arms.

There is a stigma with homer-heavy teams that they carry large strikeout numbers. With this team, that is not the case.

VSU's 130 strikeouts is second best in the GSC and only one more than UAH. The Blazers are also second in walks and on-base percentage.

The ability to get runners on and put the ball in play, paired with the power bats, bodes well for VSU's chances moving forward.

The bottom-line: This group has fared well in the GSC gauntlet. VSU is a team no one wants to see come tournament time.



Marquis Mitchell/THE SPECTATOR
The Blazers line up before game one of a doubleheader versus UAH. VSU took two of three from the Chargers.

Blazers offense unplugs Chargers

Austin Wells

STAFF WRITER

amwells@valdosta.edu

The Atlanta Braves may not have had the best weekend, but the VSU Blazers made up for it with a tide-turning series win.

With seven wins in a row, the team was hot going into this weekend's huge Gulf South Conference matchup against the Alabama-Huntsville Chargers.

The first game of a doubleheader took place Saturday afternoon, and with it came pitcher Wilson Adams and Alabama-Huntsville bringing the Blazers' win streak to a screeching halt.

Despite a solid start from VSU's Mitchell Cody, who gave up three runs and pitched into the eighth, the offense was shut down by UAH's Adams, who registered 10 strikeouts in 7.2 innings. The only run for the Blazers came in the eighth via an RBI single from first baseman Tyler York.

Despite the quiet first game, the Blazers' offense more than bounced back in game two; VSU

scored 14 runs in the victory. The Blazers had a four-run third and five-run sixth that carried them. Eight players had at least one RBI in the game. Junior pitcher Roman Donofro picked up the win in relief, pitching 4.2 innings with six strikeouts and no walks.

The finale took place early Sunday afternoon, and it turned out to be a high-scoring affair. The Blazers jumped out to an early 5-2 lead in the third inning and didn't look back, winning 11-9 while stopping Chargers' rallies in the sixth and ninth innings. Second baseman Chipper Andzel collected three hits along with three RBIs for VSU, and shortstop Ryan Slaughter hit a pair of two-run doubles to lead the Blazers with four RBIs.

With the two wins, the Blazers were able to move ahead of Alabama-Huntsville in the GSC standings. Now having won nine of their last 10 games, VSU will try to continue their hot streak on the road this weekend against bitter rival West Georgia.

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*Student comments from letters of recommendation for Excellence in Teaching Award