

VSUSPECTATOR

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Love is in the air



**Blazer
basketball
poster
on the
back cover**

**Student
spotlight on
Kendra
Beasley
pg 7**

NEWS

VSU ranked in 2017 most affordable online colleges

Alex Dunn
ASST. FEATURES EDITOR
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Valdosta State University is ranked in the 2017 Most Affordable Online Colleges, offering degrees at a reduced price for their master's and doctoral programs.

Schools can be ranked on four different degree levels: associates, bachelors, masters and doctoral. VSU was ranked third for its Doctoral degrees and 17th for their Masters.

VSU's online doctoral degrees cost \$4,395 for annual tuition, and offer three programs. The online Master degrees are \$5,274 with 25 programs to choose from. Colleges were required to offer 10 fully online degrees, according to a press release by SR Education Group.

"To develop these rankings, we researched accredited schools across the nation offering online

degree programs and ranked the top 25 according to annual tuition rates," said Taitum Ridgway, a representative of SR Education Group, through an email.

According to the press release, the organization ranking the schools was founded in 2004 and promotes tuition transparency in higher education and research into affordability rankings over 68 subjects.

"VSU was ranked so high because they have made an outstanding commitment to making their online programs affordable for everyone," Ridgway said.

For the remainder of 2017, SR Education Group will continue their coverage of affordable online education. The organization intends to compile updated tuition research into affordability rankings covering over 102 subjects, according to the press release.

For more information, visit OnlineU.org or follow @SREducationGroup on twitter.

Announcements

National Survey of Student Engagement

Complete the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). NSSE looks at how students are spending time in and out of the classroom, which guides decisions that will benefit students.

If you have any questions about this project, or how results will be used, contact Barrie D. Fitzgerald: bdfitzgerald@valdosta.edu or 229-333-7836.

Campus Rec events

- Twerk Fit- A Dance Class for Anyone! Feb. 13 at 9 p.m.
- CORE Clinic- Climbing technique (Free for students)- Feb. 15th, 6 p.m. SRC Rockwall
- Partner Yoga- Feb. 16- 8 p.m.
- Free Tower day on the Leadership Challenge Course - Feb. 16 2-6 p.m.
- Billiards Tournament Feb. 16 at 7 p.m. in the Student Union Game Room

Arbor Day ceremony

The 2017 Arbor Day Ceremony celebrating VSU's 5th year designation as a Tree Campus USA. Thursday, Feb. 16, 2017 at 10 a.m. on the Whitehead Camellia Trail, Georgia Avenue.

Blazin' LOVE 5K

Walk or run the Blazin' LOVE 5K Saturday, Feb. 11. Event starts promptly at 8 a.m. - race day registration opens at 7 a.m. Start/Finish at the school near the PE Complex. Special Pricing for current VSU students.

Planning and Budget council meeting

The next meeting of the Planning and Budget Council will occur on Feb. 17, at 9 a.m. in the UC Cypress Room.

"Vagina Monologue" tickets on sale

Vagina Monologue tickets are on sale now in the Women's and Gender Studies office located in Ashley Hall, 1102. Tickets are \$5 for students with ID and \$10 general admission.

Want to have your event featured in our Announcements section? Email your information to Editor-in-Chief Gabe Burns at gcburns@valdosta.edu.

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NEWS

SGA signals a power shift with new vice president

Juston Lewis

ASST. SPORTS EDITOR

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It's only four weeks into the new semester and the Student Government Association has already made substantial changes for the future.

Monday's weekly meeting began with Sen. Adam Slaton being sworn in as the new vice president of SGA. The former vice president, Othellious Cato, stepped down from the responsibility.

The vice president job – or any position of power – was not something that Slaton aspired for.

"I never intended on being a member of executive board," Slaton said. "It was very sudden that the position became vacant. There were some efforts to create a vacancy, but I never wanted to fill that vacancy."

Slaton said it took encouragement from President Maya Mapp for him to accept his nomination. He also said Mapp has become one of his closest friends, which speaks volumes because their first conversation was at The Happening in August.

"I didn't know Maya Mapp at the beginning of the school year," Slaton said. "I would consider her a close friend now, and I didn't even know her six months ago.



Juston Lewis/THE SPECTATOR

Senator Devin Spencer speaks at Monday's SGA meeting.

She has made my transition so welcoming, as well as the other executive members."

Part of Slaton's new role as vice president is conducting the weekly meetings. During the meeting Slaton was in charge of discussing the revised SGA Bylaws.

Slaton, as well as Sen. Silas David and Sen. Dillon Rountree, revised the Bylaws and brought it to the floor to be discussed.

The senators discussed and added amendments for more than an hour before finally voting to pass it. This is the first time the Bylaws have been revised since 2013, and it is only a small step of the new rebranding SGA is attempting to achieve.

The next topic on the agenda was the literal rebranding of SGA. Senator Anea Thompson brought

forward three provisional logo ideas to the floor.

None of the designs were approved by the senate, but it did give Thompson a feel for what the other senators were looking for.

Nominations for Speaker of the senate was the last topic on the agenda.

Two of the newest senators were both nominated for the position: Jacob Bell and Jalah Morris. The vote to confirm them was tabled for next week.

Mapp said she is proud of the senate and was visibly excited at the progress they've made.

"To finally have these big structural changes finally implemented, it's super cool to see," Mapp said with a smile. "That probably isn't the right word to use, but it is cool to see that change. I think this will

benefit the student body in more ways than one."

The change she is referring to is a switch from the typical three branches of government to a higher education system.

The system is changing from judicial, executive and legislative branches to having four independent chambers in SGA. A chamber of finance, a chamber of campus activities, a chamber of academic affairs and a chamber of outreach and public relations.

"That's perfect, not only doing that internally but to be able to share that externally with the whole rebranding of SGA," Mapp said. "I think that'll be great, and then we can really get back to what we're supposed to be doing when it comes to servicing the student body."

Mapp said SGA does hear students, and they were able to host students at a concern table, where they got better insight on what is important to students. She said they are trying to get to the point where they can help students with those concerns.

Part of that process is contingent on the relationship between SGA and new school president Dr. Richard Carvajal.

"I can say, confidently, with the leadership of Dr. Carvajal, we'll be moving in the right direction,"

Mapp said. "He was awesome to speak with, and he has great initiatives for SGA to tackle. He's open to listening to what students have to say and what's going on on campus."

Mapp said SGA is currently collaborating with the president's office to have listening sessions with Dr. Carvajal in the near future. She also said that SGA should be the open connection between students and staff. She said in working with Dr. Carvajal, the campus as a whole can advance, but her personal focus is advancing students.

"My main goal for May is to regain that rapport [with students]," Mapp said. "My first semester serving as SGA president did not go how I thought it would, but you have to understand how to overcome trials."

Mapp said she understands that goal may not happen overnight, but it will be something she continues to work towards through May.

"I respect all of the different opinions that will be thrown my way and will be thrown my way," Mapp said. "It's always constructive criticism, and I can always continue to learn and try to be better as a leader. As a senate, we'll continue to do the same thing."

President Carvajal, VSU take to canoes for battle



Courtesy of Kendrick King

Dr. Carvajal meets participants at the Feb. 2 canoe battle.

Commencement dates announced

Darla Dunning

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President Richard Carvajal recently said in an email this year's undergraduate Spring Commencement will be held on Saturday, May 6 on the Front Lawn.

If rain does occur, the Commencement will take place in the P.E. Complex where each graduate will receive a limited number of tickets due to limited seating. There will also be televisions set up at various campus locations, so people will be able to view the graduation if they do not get a seat.

"I look forward to what I know will be a very special night in the life of our university," Dr. Carvajal said. "I am happy to announce

that, going forward, our undergraduate commencements will be held on the front lawn."

Nearly 1,000 people, including 700 students, responded to a survey asking where the commencement ceremony should be located. Forty-four percent of all responders indicated their first choice would be to have the undergraduate Commencement on the Front Lawn of West Hall.

"Every class [first year, sophomore, junior and senior] listed the Front Lawn as their clear favorite," President Carvajal said.

The second choice was Baze-more-Hyder Stadium with over 31 percent of votes.

The graduate ceremony will be separate and located in the P.E. Complex on Friday, May 5.

Cynthia Papailler

STAFF WRITER

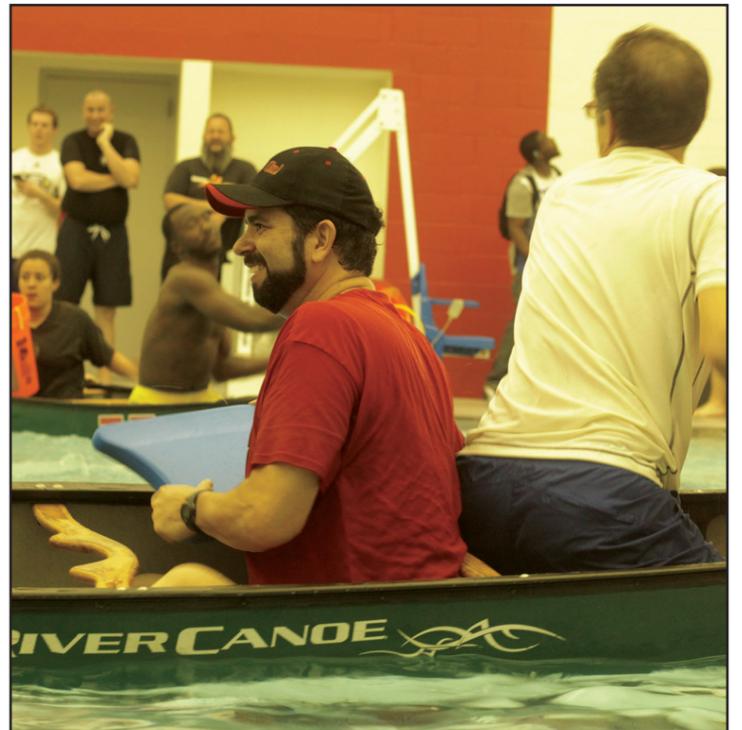
ctpapailler@valdosta.edu

On Feb. 2, the Student Recreational Center hosted Canoe Battleship in the newly renovated swimming pool.

President Richard Carvajal participated as one of the players on the faculty team. The objective of the game was to take buckets filled with water and sink the opposing team's canoe.

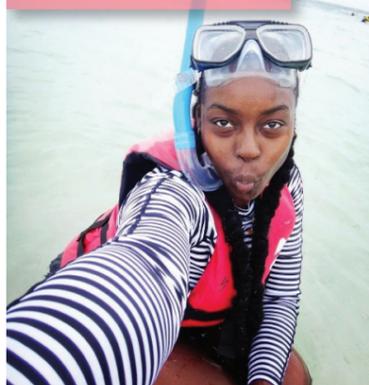
Four teams competed, and the faculty team was the second canoe to sink in the first round. They lost once more in the second round. Canoe Battleship is one of the Student Recreational Center's most popular games.

The Rec also hosts an assortment of other events and lessons for people who like to learn to swim. Visit the Student Recreational Center's website to see upcoming events.



Courtesy of Kendrick King

Dr. Carvajal goes to war in his canoe at the Rec Center.

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OPINIONS

Our point of view...



MTC Campus

Valentine's Day not for everyone

Valentine's Day, or the holiday's full title, Saint Valentine's Day, is a time dedicated to lovers. But why are hearts, flowers and everything romance associated with a Christian saint?

The details on Valentine's Day's origins are murky, but History.com dates it back to the ancient Romans and the Catholic Church. During the third century in Rome, Emperor Claudius II outlawed marriage for young men under the notion that single men made better soldiers than family men. Defying Claudius, Valentine performed secret marriages for young lovers, resulting in an order for his death.

According to History.com, another legend states Saint Valentine sent a letter from prison to his lover addressed, "From your Valentine." Hence the modern-day, February panic to find a Valentine.

Though the story is unclear, in every legend it's apparent Saint Valentine was a combatant for romance.

Even still, why February? History.com states it may be because the Church wanted to Christianize the pagan celebration of fertility, where the Luperci, an order of Roman priests, would sacrifice a goat and dog then dip strips of goat hide in blood. The priests would then go into the streets to slap women and crops with said bloodied hide. Romantic.

Yet with all this history, Valentine's Day is now celebrated with sales, overpriced flowers, forced romance, heart-shaped boxes of chocolates and making those who are single feel bad for being alone. It's a day for businesses to post a sale, but what holiday hasn't become corporate?

So don't feel bad for not having a Valentine, because no one really knows what they're celebrating, and you don't need a lover to eat chocolate. And while it's fun to have a day of love, be sure to always be sweet to significant others, not just once a year.

Buy flowers once a month, not once a year, and be sweet out of affection, not holiday necessity, because love is a feeling, not an obligation.

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

VSU Students weigh in on the freshman 15; how and why

"I have extenuating reasons for why I didn't gain the freshman 15. Biggest reason being I'm in the military, so I have to keep up strict physical requirements."

-Brad Rowan, Senior, Biology major



"The added stress of having to maintain your own schedule and the added effect of getting to college and not having a limit. In college you can just eat what you want, and you have no one to tell you what's healthy and what isn't."

-Kyle Brooks, Junior, Biology major

"You have an abundance of food on campus, so you just want to eat whatever. You also have Dining Dollars, which people don't really consider money, so you just go eat whatever."

-Adrianna Small, Senior, Communications major



"A lot of college students don't have cars and most of the food on campus is fast food, which is fatty. I didn't gain any weight because I lived off campus and didn't have a meal plan."

-Devante Watts, Senior, Mass Media major

All photos and interviews taken by Geneva Crooks.

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OPINIONS

Social media platforms labeled notorious for spreading 'fake news'

Geneva Crooks

STAFF WRITER

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Social networks can be a pretty scary place when a bunch of "fake news" is going on.

Fake news took the internet by storm during the 2016 election.

Using eye-catching titles, such as "Donald Trump says the earth is flat," and "Germany folds to Shariah Law, approves child marriages," fake news has the ability to not only draw users in but get them to stay.

The titles of fake news

stories are intriguing, but the stories that lie beneath them do just that, lie.

Fake news is a new wave of clickbait articles that are completely made up but can easily be mistaken for real news.

Clicking on these pages allows for the writer, and the website itself, to profit from advertisements by grabbing viewers through curiosity.

Often, viewers of these "news" articles believe what they read, and this can cause problems to arise.

Many of these fake news articles were used to sway citizens to a certain side of the

political campaign, and they defamed both presidential candidates during the campaign.

According to BuzzFeed, a great majority of students fall victim to fake news. This is no surprise, considering the fact that the majority of students get their news from social media.

As college students in this day and age, we often visit social media sites, and in turn, get our news from them.

Being millennials, we spend more time on social networks than we do watching the news or reading a newspaper. This

opens us up to the bad side of the internet, where honesty isn't a policy.

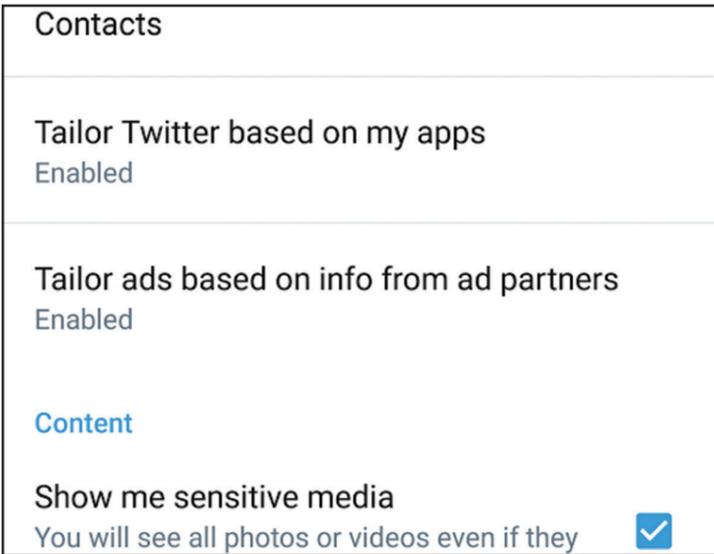
"I can scroll through Facebook, and be like 'hmmmm, that doesn't sound right' and keep going down my timeline," said Marlea King, sophomore, French major said.

Overcoming the grip of fake news is simple really.

If something sounds unrealistic or ends with jaws dropping, a Google search will suffice. Vetting what we read on the internet is important. When having discussions, whether they be about poli-

tics or a recent crime in the neighborhood, we want to be accurate and credible.

The internet has greatly improved the lives of college students, making research and communication easy. However, the internet is a creature nearly too big for us to wrap our minds around, and it allows for just about anyone to be able to post and share whatever they like. Although we would hope people don't abuse the power the internet can so easily give, we have to remember that not everyone is interested in being truthful or morally correct.



MCT CAMPUS

Screenshot of Twitter's latest anti-harassment efforts.

Twitter executes plan to maintain positivity and safety

Hunter Terrell

OPINIONS EDITOR

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On Tuesday afternoon, Twitter announced their full plan to bring all abuse and online harassment to a halt.

Ed Ho, vice president of Twitter's Engineering department, said Twitter's main focus, as of right now, is to make Twitter safer.

The social media platform stands for the "freedom of expression and people being able to see all sides of any topic," Ho said.

Anything that disturbs Twitter's harmless and positive ambiance will not be tolerated.

Twitter started to make changes back in November.

More recently, Twitter users will notice three drastic changes; no new abusive accounts, safer search results and no more abusive or low-quality tweets.

If ones account has previously been terminated, Twitter is making new efforts to assure that user cannot create a new account. This focuses on the most damaging online behavior.

"I dont think you should have more than one account anyways. It becomes too much to handle as the person behind the account, and

the ones effected by it," said Macie Smith, junior early education major.

Next, Twitter's safe search blocks and mutes accounts that contain potentially sensitive content.

"I like that feature. You go under your settings and can manually type in words that you do not want to come up in your Twitter suggestions," said Maya Brook, junior, history major said.

Lastly and more proactively, Twitter will identify and collapse all low-quality replies so that the most relevant information is shown first.

All replies can be seen, if one wishes to seek them out.

"It sounds like Twitter is trying to be positive and neat. I'm not opposed to that," said Nicholas Grant, freshman, undecided.

Ho promises product changes to happen for weeks to come and will update its users as adaptations are made.

"With every change, we'll learn, iterate, and continue to move at this speed until we've made a significant impact that people can feel," said Ho.

Twitter recommends and looks forward to all and any feedback to help them progress.



MCT CAMPUS

Young Syrian protesters stand solemnly outside Chicago airport.

Trump's international travel ban affects VSU's students at three different airports

Tiana Foster

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Following President Trump's executive order, thousands of angry protesters gathered at airports across the country to voice their opinion. This recent order banned traveling across U.S. borders for citizens of seven Muslim-majority countries: Iran, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Somalia, Libya and Yemen.

The ban is active for 90 days and has temporarily banned entry to any refugee for 120 days. Steve Bannon, Trump's senior counselor, ignored the decision of the Department of Homeland Security to let permanent residents of Muslim descent back into the U.S., according to CNN. Many people who had the legal right to travel were denied access into the U.S. and were separated from their families.

Kia Makarechi, story editor and associate director of audience development for VanityFair.com, was live on the scene at New York's John F. Kennedy Airport. According to Makarechi, several protesters and lawyers joined the protest, chanting and holding different signs that read: "No Ban No Wall We Welcome All" and "No One

is Illegal." New York Representatives Nydia Velazquez and Jerry Nadler attempted to persuade Customs and Border Patrol officers to allow those who had a valid visa into the country.

Shortly after, a federal judge in New York issued a brief stay on the order, allowing passengers who already arrived or were en route to JFK to avoid deportation. The decision helped free those who were stranded in the airport after being detained for several hours. Although the order released some passengers, other airports refused to comply.

According to CNN, there were at least 40 protests taking place in airports around the country. There were massive crowds of protesters at airports in large cities, such as: St. Louis, Los Angeles, New York, Seattle, Dallas and others.

Hannah Tabrizi, a senior communications major, witnessed some of the commotion that took place at the airports as she was traveling.

"I was at three different airports that day: one in St. Louis, one in Atlanta and one in Valdosta," Tabrizi said. "At the St. Louis airport, I saw a large group of people, predominantly women, holding picket signs with various

phrases of solidarity."

Tabrizi's flight was delayed three times and didn't leave for Valdosta's airport until midnight. This was a result of Delta's computer automation system crashing, not the protesters.

"Mostly, I was experiencing the frustration people had when the Delta computers went down," Tabrizi said.

These airport protests were also significant to Tabrizi.

"As someone with family in Iran, whose father emigrated from Iran in the late 1970s, I'm disgusted and disheartened by the ban," Tabrizi said. "I feel as though people are being unfairly targeted due to racial and ethnic bias . . . It's textbook prejudice and racism."

The ban does not represent America as the land of the free. It was an unfair decision that affected the lives and families of many, not just in America but other countries as well.

I applaud the protesters, lawyers and judges who tried to make a difference. Even though the order is still active, the protests were a success. It's satisfying knowing that there are others willing to make a change for equality.

FEATURES

Provocative poet visits VSU, 'misses the penis'



Darla Dunning/THE SPECTATOR

Poet Kim Addonizio visited VSU to recite poems and excerpts from her personal essays for students and staff.

Darla Dunning
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Kim Addonizio read a collection of her poems and stories to a full theater of students, teachers and the local community on Feb. 2.

Her provocative poems and short stories that were read didn't hold anything back, detailing her sex life and humorous adventures that led her to be a writer.

Addonizio is the author of six poetry collections, two novels, two story collections and two books on how to write poetry. She recently released a memoir called, "Bukowski in a Sundress" and a collection called, "Mortal Trash: Poems."

"She can make me ache with desire at the end of a poem; she can make me fall in love again, and she can do all of these things in her poems that delight me over and over again," Dr. Marty Williams, professor of English, said as he introduced Addonizio.

Addonizio's humorous poems struck the audience with laughter when she chose three male students to go on stage with her, as she read her poem "Penis Blues." The male students had to moan while she read this provocative poem about her sex life.

"I miss the penis," Addonizio said, reciting the poem. "I feel like a word with no vowels; no one wants to pronounce me."

She also read an excerpt from "Bukowski in a Sun Dress" called, "How to be a Dirty, Dirty Whore." This provocative essay, as well as the other essays in the book, explored her life as a writer, her life growing up and her relationships with men.

"This book is all about my writing," Addonizio said. "It's

the way I experience life through being a writer and writing music. This book is about sex, love, being a mother and being a daughter. It also includes weird sexual encounters."

In addition to writing, Addonizio connects to music by playing the harmonica. She has two word/music CDs called, "Swearing, Smoking, Drinking, & Kissing," and "My Black Angel." "When I started writing poetry, I gave up on music, but after I started playing the blues on the harmonica, music started coming back to me in a really different way," Addonizio said.

One audience member shared his thoughts on Addonizio's book reading.

"Addonizio's work is gripping and shocking, yet it drew my attention throughout her book readings," Brian Ward, professor of English, said.

At the end of her book reading, Addonizio answered questions from the audience that ranged from explaining her writing techniques, her writing process and what inspires her to write.

"Sitting down and trying is my writing process," Addonizio said. "A lot of times I'll read first and get something going. I will write a lot of crap and sometimes some good writing happens out of that garbage."

Addonizio ended her question and answer session by telling her audience they all should write about something that compels them.

"Imagination for space is more important than anything," Addonizio said. "Everyone should write poetry. It might surprise you."

VSU holds poverty simulation

Edward Rella
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Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live as an immigrant in the U.S., undocumented, and working for a mere \$20 a day, or maybe a struggling college dropout living off of odd jobs for cash around their city?

On Thursday, February 2, Dr. Consuela Ward hosted a unique poverty simulation.

The simulation utilized cards that told the situation you were placed into along with a budget sheet with various expenses you may encounter, all with one goal: "Budget to survive the month", Dr. Ward says.

Dr. Ward has been hosting the Courageous Conversations program since 2010, and has traveled throughout the United States with the intent "to expose and challenge people on how they can address poverty in their communities." Dr. Ward said, "There is only two to three people doing this in the country, and I am self-run, and very mobile. I can get onto a plane with everything I need and go anywhere that needs me."

During this event, Dr. Ward began by opening with a bit about herself and how she came to become such an activist on poverty around her. Dr. Ward then shared the instructions of the simulation; the groups get labeled cards with situations like those whom would be in poverty. She

then passed around budget sheets to each table, with around four to six people at each one.

As the event went on, many people went from talking and giggling to seriousness and concern when Dr. Ward continued to talk about how poverty in the United States is not improving and needs more support from anyone willing to help.

A group of people were to work together to budget expenses for an entire month. The budget sheet included things like housing, food for the family, health-care, transportation, internet and insurance. Some of these things could be skipped out on to help alleviate the costs of others, but the decision ultimately was up to the groups' discretion.

There were government assistance alternatives to dampen the costs of the expenses, but each group was only allowed to choose two for the month.

As for extra money to help the budget for the month, each group had two choices of a variety of 'odd jobs' such as pawning items, taking out a cash advance loan, committing theft, selling drugs, and even prostitution. If a group was to choose an illegal activity, they were to flip the 'Police Station' card, giving them a 50/50 chance of being incarcerated, spending 30 days in jail with a \$500 bail, or never being caught for the month.

There were also children to account for in most scenarios which led to increased amounts of

money being spent and the need to flip over the 'School Visit' card which prompts the group to decide to volunteer for their school and/or donating money for school supplies, both are completely up to the group to decide.

Once the group drew up the monthly budget, they were to process the entire experience with a few questions from the remaining card, 'Processing Questions'. The groups took time to talk about how they felt, what they thought, and what else could have changed their outcomes.

Dr. Ward then began visiting each group, asking how they did and what their scenarios were. Some groups stuck with a more legal route, while others depended on prostitution and drug dealing to help get them through the month. Dr. Ward also addressed the problem of wealth inequality in America and prompts the crowd; "Think about what you can do to address poverty and what you can do to help," she said.

Taylor Bennett, a senior middle grade education major, said "[This event] opened up what I thought was poverty and showed me what it really is."

Rhett Ham, a junior psychology major, agreed with Taylor Bennett.

"[We] thought [we] understood what poverty was, but never fully. There is a lot more that goes into it," he said.

Student's '20 questions' goes viral

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Briana Parrish, a student at Valdosta State University, recently posted a list of questions about VSU to the university's branch of The Odyssey Online that skyrocketed to viral video status, prompting VSU to respond.

Parrish posted her questions on Jan. 23 titled "All the Unanswered and Somewhat Unimportant Questions VSU has Left Us with." VSU responded about a week later with a video on their Instagram page.

Since Instagram only allows a certain time limit to their videos, VSU only got to answer a few select questions. The video features Blaze and other VSU members acting out and responding to Parrish's original post.

Parrish asked questions that

were pointed towards classic problems students encounter on campus. For example, she said "Why do the card reader machines at the gym hate humans? No matter how many times I go to swipe my card, that pesky little light always blinks red."

Parrish also asked questions wondering about certain features of the school, like how the front lawn always is so green, and what exactly is Blazer the mascot?"

"What exactly is a Blazer?? I mean, I know our mascot is a man made of fire, but I'm still confused on this one," said Parrish.

These and other questions were among the select few that were answered by VSU, creating equally entertaining responses to her questions.

Parrish said that she was just having fun when she wrote her questions, and wanted to give

others a sneak peek at what she sees everyday on campus.

Parrish also said her inspiration for posting these questions was basically how underrated she thinks the school is. She suspects that since VSU is located in the South, it is often overlooked, though it is a great and beautiful campus.

"We have a beautiful school that I'm proud to call home," said Parrish.

According to her, she was surprised and happy when VSU emailed her asking her permission to use her article.

"It was super fun to write, I'm just glad it was just as fun to read," said Parrish.

Will VSU respond to more of Parrish's questions in the future? Only time will tell. For more information visit The Odyssey Online to see the full 20 questions that Parrish posted.



In the response video, mascot Blaze can be seen at a press conference about what exactly he is. Courtesy of VSU

FEATURES



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Half an onion challenges Trump to twitter war

A new twitter account was created on Inauguration day calling itself "Half an Onion in a Bag." The account's main goal is to attain more twitter followers than president Donald Trump.

According to the account user, they did not create "Half an Onion in a Bag" to blow up peoples' feeds and encourage them to protest Trump; they just simply want to see if they can get more followers than him and to upset his alleged favorite media platform.

Even though their main goal is not to start a major protest, followers are taking the account's lead and posting similar pictures and jokes to show their support, and tagging "Half an Onion" in the process.

The account's profile picture is, you guessed it, actually half of an onion in a plastic bag. The cover photo on its page is the onion and a picture of Donald Trump facing off.

The account has posts about Trump related topics, but they're mainly highlighting the funnier aspects than the more serious ones. There are plenty of jokes and memes that are giving this account such popularity.

Others like the Huffington Post have picked up on the unique account, reporting about the funny posts intended to annoy Trump.

Huffington Post reported that the unknown creator of the account has been in contact with other reporting platforms. The creator did tell CNet.com that they wanted to add a new flavor to the political climate through their account.

"I wanted to make some noise

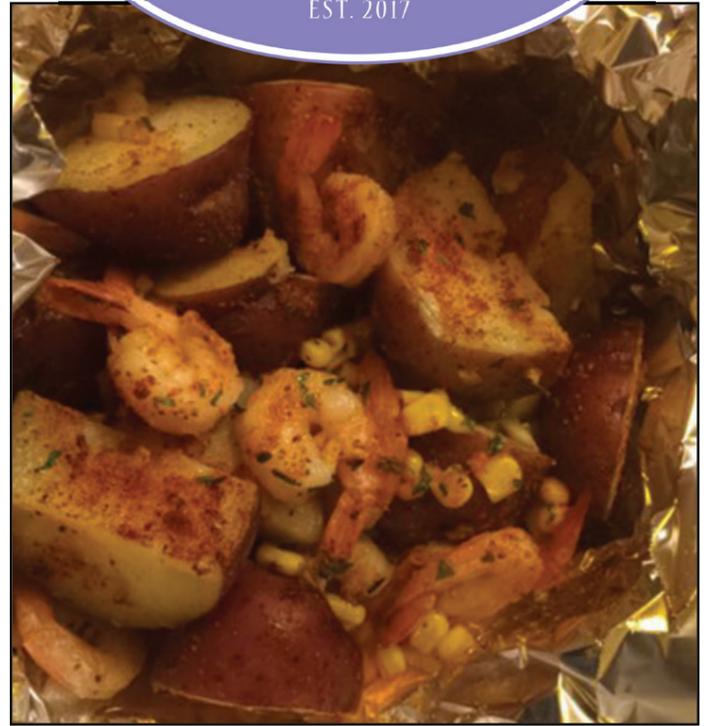
and make some people laugh in the process, because I think we're going to all need a good dose of humor to get through this," the creator said.

As of now, the twitter account has 768 thousand followers, which increases each day, while Trump has over 30 times that amount with 23.5 million followers, though eventually "Half an Onion" might catch up if it keeps its pace of followers.

To check out this account, visit Twitter.com and look up @HalfOnionInABag.



Courtesy of @halfanonioninabag



Erin Turner/THE SPECTATOR

A "Cajun Shrimp Foil Pack" is a quick, easy and filling meal to make during a busy school week.

Erin Turner
STAFF WRITER
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2 teaspoons garlic powder
1 stick butter

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
 2. Place halved potatoes into microwaveable bowl and Microwave on high for six minutes or until tender.
 3. Place optional serving of potatoes, shrimp, corn, cooked sausage onto a foil-lined pan.
 4. Sprinkle seasonings, parsley, and garlic on top of the shrimp, potatoes, corn, sausage.
 5. Drizzle olive oil.
 6. Cut up 1 stick of butter and place evenly on mixture.
 7. Bring up 2 sides of the foil pack until edges meet. Seal edges, while leaving a small opening for ventilation.
 8. Cook for 15-20 minutes. Until shrimp is pink and sausage is heated evenly throughout.
 9. Remove from oven. Sprinkle with parsley and devour!
- *Add 2 lemon wedges to add a nice and fresh flavor.

Just because you're away from home, doesn't mean you should go without a home cooked meal. This Cajun Shrimp Foil Pack recipe is perfect for anyone craving a low country boil. The Cajun shrimp, buttery potatoes and spicy andouille sausage will make you feel like you're in the French quarter of New Orleans. Enjoy a taste of the South!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb of uncooked, peeled, and deveined large shrimp
- 1 lb of halved red potatoes
- 2 mini corn on the cob, cut in half
- 2 oz of cooked & sliced andouille sausage
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- ¼ cup of parsley chopped
- 1 tablepoon old Bay seasoning
- 2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon seasoning salt

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Kelsey Dickerson/THE SPECTATOR

Kendra Beasley, middle, is in her junior year at VSU and was the only VSU student to take on a lead role in VSU's opera production this past January.

Kendra Beasley, VSU's voice of gold

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Her name is Kendra Beasley, and this past January she had the honor of being the only student to have a lead role in VSU's annual opera, "Cinderella," starring alongside a leading cast of professionals.

Twenty-year-old Beasley, a music major in her junior year here at VSU, said she felt blessed to be the only student to be cast with a lead role and doubly blessed to be cast in an operatic lead as a black woman.

According to Beasley, seven years ago when she was still in middle school, she had only played around with music, but decided to join a choir.

As a junior in High School a few years later, she began to take her talents seriously. Beasley said this was when she made the choice to make music her career. It was during this moment in her life that she decided she would mainly focus on classical and opera genres.

Now a mezzo-soprano and a

member of the VSU's Chamber Singers, Beasley is a force to be reckoned with.

A young woman fully focused on her craft, others have taken notice. She is the current recipient of the Lucy Martin Stewart Scholarship, a VSU scholarship offered to one vocal music major a year based on an audition and their promise as a performer.

Beasley has surrounded herself with music in all aspects of her life, not just in school.

"Music helps me to portray my emotions and feelings. It is through and with my music that I try to remain focused on my one true priority.....God" Beasley, an intern at Trinity Presbyterian Church, said she is happy that she has never gotten into a situation with her music that has forced her to sing something that would go against her faith and hopes she never does.

While performing here at Valdosta State University, Beasley has set her goal on earning a graduate degree in music performance from a major music conservatory and one day possibly earning a doctorate degree in music. How-

ever, in the mean time she has hopes that she can perform her way into landing one of the most coveted jobs in American opera, performing with the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. Beasley said that not only would performing at the Metropolitan Opera take her to the highest level in her art, but it would also allow her to exhibit her beliefs in equality, civil rights and black excellence.

Before that happens, Beasley plans on capitalizing on every performance opportunity she comes across as well as taking acting classes while still here at VSU. "What people don't realize is, opera is not only singing. It is a combination of singing and acting. In opera the two correlate a lot," she said.

Overall, Beasley is extremely happy to be performing and showcasing her talents to the world. She said she loves classical and opera music, and from the looks of things, they love her in return.

Beasley is will be gracing the stage again on March 3 at the annual spring choir concert, which will take place at 7:30 p.m. at First United Methodist church.

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Chynna Downie
Ireland

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ENTERTAINMENT

A new look at the trials and success of New Edition

Eboni Register

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“The New Edition Story” premiered on Jan. 24 through 26 on Black Entertainment Television. “The New Edition Story” is a six-hour long, three-part series biopic that shows the rise to fame of American boy band New Edition.

Six black men, Bobby Brown, Ralph Tresvant, Johnny Gill, Michael Bivins, Ricky Bell and Ronnie DeVoe, who grew up in the projects in Boston got their chance at fame by creating the band, New Edition, as young adolescents.

In the series, viewers see this group grow from boys, to young men and then into adults. Within the three-part series, there were many trials and tribulations depicted on camera, which included drug abuse, alcohol abuse, behavioral problems and other unhealthy tendencies.

As teenagers progressing into their 20s, it was hard for the men of New Edition to stay focused on the prize; they had a

lot of eyes on them, as this was the pinnacle of their career.

Woody McClain did an impressive job of playing the role of one of the original members of New Edition, Bobby Brown. McClain thoroughly exuded the ego of Brown, as he was in 1985. Brown was uncontrollable and unmanageable in the group during this time, resulting in his solo career.

As the series progressed, the episodes showed, in tedious detail, how the R&B/Pop stars became who they are and how they got where they are today. Seeing the group started from three, grew to six and then separated into multiple groups, it was vital that all the artists’ stories be told.

BET Network did an outstanding job on keeping the viewers interested in the highly dramatized lifestyle depicted in “The New Edition Story,” while also staying true to the reality of how the group paved the way for artists who followed in their footsteps.

Filmmaker reacts to travel ban by choosing not to attend The Oscars

Bryce Ethridge

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In the wake of President Trump’s immigration ban on travelers from primarily Muslim countries, which stalls those who do not have a green card or dual citizenship from entering the United States, filmmakers from those countries will not be able to attend the Oscars.

One such filmmaker, Asghar Farhadi, told The Guardian there might be some exceptions to allow him to attend the Oscars, but it would probably include various conditions, which he wasn’t willing to accept.

Farhadi was planning to attend for his Oscar nominated movie, “The Salesman,” which was nominated Best Foreign Language Film in this year’s Oscars. Currently, there is no clear exception to allow Farhadi and his crew to attend.

The Oscars stated the ban is troubling, since it’s barring certain filmmakers, according to The Guardian.

Even before the ban was enacted, “The Salesman” actress Taraneh Alidoosti, who currently lives in the U.S., vowed to boycott the award ceremony due to Trump’s immigration policies, The Guardian reported.

Alidoosti stated on Twitter: “Trump’s visa ban for Iranians is racist. Whether this will include a cultural event or not, I won’t attend the #AcademyAwards 2017 in protest.”

Farhadi told The New York Times he intended to draw attention to the discrimination of immigrants and travelers in the U.S.

“As supporters of film-makers – and the human rights of all people – around the globe, we find it extremely troubling that Asghar Farhadi, the director of the Oscar-winning film from Iran, “A Separation,” along with

the cast and crew of this year’s Oscar-nominated film “The Salesman,” could be barred from entering the country because of their religion or country of origin,” a spokeswoman for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences told The Guardian.

The Guardian reported the immigration ban did not only enrage foreign filmmakers, but it also enraged American filmmakers. One such filmmaker, Michael Moore, tweeted: “To our Muslim neighbors in the world: I & tens of millions of others are so very sorry.”

“Along with liar, racist, misogynist, fool, infantile, sick, narcissist – with the Muslim ban we can now add heartless and evil to [Donald Trump’s] repertoire,” Rob Reiner, actor and filmmaker, posted on Twitter.

Even in wake of these events, the award ceremony premieres on Feb. 26.

What in the world ever happened to WVVS Blaze FM 90.9?

Bryce Ethridge

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Blaze FM was an on campus radio station, controlled by students. The station became defunct due to there being no students to take it over.

After three years, VSU’s then president, Dr. Cecil Staton, turned the station over to Georgia Public Broadcasting, after creating a contract with them in 2016.

GPB was supposed to have a different program from what is being played today.

“We would take GPB’s talk show radio and they wanted us to follow their programming from six in the morning to eight at night,” stated Assistant to the President Phil Allen. “Now all they play is a mix of 80s music.”

Allen said after programming is over at 8 p.m. there is nothing that plays. According to Vice President, Dr. Vincent Miller Allen was in talks with the dean of the College of the Arts to create an academic program for mass communication students, but there has not been anything set in stone yet.

Allen said that there has been talk of using it for a mass communication program, but professor and journalism adviser Dr. Patricia Miller, proposed to stream it through the Spectator app. Allen commented on both, saying “It’s all up in the air.”

In the case of possible student use of the station, Allen said: “If you’re interested, write a proposal. Tell me what you’d do. We’ll look at the cost. It’s about \$1000

a month for power. You’d have to have replacement costs built into the business plan. You’d have to have salaries you’re paying people for their time on the air; music licensing too.

“Now all they play is a mix of 80s music.”

- Assistant to the President, Phil Allen

“The way he is, he’s very open and he’d probably would tell me ‘Get back with that student’ and we’ll set up a meeting where students can come over and pitch it. It would be like: ‘Here’s our vision. What do you think?’” said Allen. “I think that would be great.”

He also stated that while new president Dr. Richard Carvajal, has not set a place for the radio station in his vision, he is very open to ideas like this. “

“To be honest I don’t think it [the station] needs to live in the office of the station, so one of the things I’m going to work to do between now and July is find it a permanent home,” said Allen.

Allen’s office currently resides in the office of the President and is always open to schedule an appointment. The station could turn out to be a great outlet for the student’s voice.



Courtesy of Comingsoon.net

Kate McKinnon from “SNL” will be the voice of Ms. Frizzle on Netflix’s revamped “Magic School Bus” series, “Magic School Bus Rides Again.”

‘Magic School Bus’ returns to television with revamped series

Erin Turner

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The millennial generation grew up watching Ms. Frizzle as a fun way to learn science. Now, she’s back.

“The Magic School Bus,” originally aired Sept. 10, 1994, and it was the first fully-animated series aired on PBS.

Like the original series, the new series will show Ms. Frizzle and her elementary school class going on crazy and scientific adventures. The rendition of the series, “Magic School Bus Rides Again,” has been in the works since 2014 under Netflix. On Sept. 8, Netflix announced the

show is finally on its way.

The original voice actress for Ms. Frizzle was Lily Tomlin. However, “Magic School Bus

The complete 26-episode series will air on Netflix, so viewers prepare for the new and improved series.

Rides Again” features a new voice for Ms. Frizzle: “Saturday Night Live” comedian and “Ghostbusters” actress Kate

McKinnon.

We’re not in 1994 anymore, so of course we need a more modernized bus. The bus is now equipped with more scientific developments and high-tech gear for the students to complete their adventures with.

The complete 26-episode series will air on Netflix, so viewers prepare for the new and improved adventure. Netflix has yet to announce a release date for the show, but fans are excited for the throwback show. Though many of the viewers may be 20-year-olds, the show will be perfect for any child that enjoys seeing school children in a flying bus or riding a blood cell. Seatbelts everyone!

CAB plays Cupid

Photos by Seth Willard



SPORTS

DID YOU

KNOW?

VSU football lost two coaches recently. Defensive Line coach Justin Hinds left to take the same position at Lafayette College of Division I FCS. Wide Receivers coach Jake Grande also left the team.

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Seth Willard/THE SPECTATOR

Saadiq Muhammad draws a foul against West Florida during the win streak.

VSU to play Union University Blazers look to start new streak

**Juston Lewis,
Bryce Ethridge**

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After suffering a devastating defeat to Delta State, the VSU Men's Basketball team lost its first game in 11 outings.

The Blazers faced the Statesmen in Cleveland, Mississippi, on Feb. 4, and were handed a 58-72 loss, their worst conference loss of the season.

The Blazers offense was uncharacteristically stagnant, and for the first time in gulf South competition, Jeremiah Hill failed to score double digits.

Hill is averaging 19.1 points per game, which is five points more than the next highest scorer on the team.

"It's got a lot to do with the start [of the game]," Hill said. "In the past few games, we've started real slow."

Hill said the team was too

overconfident when playing against Delta State. He said the team has to focus when going into the next games.

"We felt like we were better than everybody, so we didn't pay attention as much," Hill said.

Forward Saadiq Muhammad and Hill both agree their environment is not a factor when talking wins and losses.

"We've just got to prepare and play harder," Muhammad said. "We're all grown men and we've got to be able to play in any environment."

The environment will loom large as the GSC tournament begins on Feb. 28, and the Blazers currently have a shot at the Division II National Tournament.

Muhammad said that statistically, the team needs to improve free throw shooting, bring defensive field-goal percentage down and turn the ball over less.

Against Delta, the Blazers only shot 7-18 from the free throw line and allowed the Statesmen to shoot nearly 50 percent from

the field.

Last week, Jeremiah Hill won player of the week, but he said he doesn't really look for individual awards. He is looking at the bigger picture.

"I didn't even know about it until three days later," Hill said. "I didn't pay attention to it; it's not an 'I' award, it's an 'us' award."

VSU still currently leads the Gulf South Conference in scoring, rebounds and field goals. Union doesn't lead any offensive categories but the Blazers are not taking any game lightly.

The Blazers were the first team to clinch a postseason spot along with Alabama Huntsville. The two teams are currently first and second in the GSC. The matchup with Union and Christian Brothers will largely shape the Blazers road matchup with the Chargers on Feb. 16.

The Blazers play against Union this Thursday at 8 p.m. at The Complex and against Christian Brothers on Saturday at 4 p.m.

VSU golf looking to keep high finishes coming

Jake Johnson

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VSU golf will tee off on the 2017 portion of their 2016-2017 campaign after a scorching hot start in 2016 on Feb. 13 and 14 in The Matlock. The team finished in the top five in its first three tournaments, including a win at the UIS Island Getaway in Rio Mar, Puerto Rico.

Head Coach Jared Purvis said it will be business as usual for the team as they travel to Lakeland, Florida, for the tournament.

"I'm always hoping that we play well, but I've learned after several years not to really learn to

expect anything or try to predict an awesome tournament," Purvis said. "If we go out and play the way we're supposed to play then we'll be in contention."

The Blazers finished 16th in the final fall Bushnell Golfweek Division II Coaches Poll. VSU will be joined in The Matlock by two of their Gulf South Conference rivals including top ranked West Florida and eighth ranked North Alabama.

Although VSU won its last tournament, it took place in October. Purvis said he worries about the players being a little rusty going into The Matlock because it will be the players' first tournament in four months.

"I'm always worried about rust," Purvis said. "Whenever you take three months off from tournament play, that's always a concern, but we've been playing qualifying rounds and competitive type stuff for the last two weeks so hopefully they will have their game sharp come Monday."

Davis Roche has been a major key to the Blazers success in the past couple of years and has emerged as a leader in the 2016-2017 season. He made headlines when he posted a round of 58 in Jacksonville a couple months ago, but Roche said he is focused on the tournaments ahead. He said getting back into tournament

play will be the team's biggest challenge.

"This will be my third trip to Lakeland so I feel pretty comfortable there," Roche said. "I hope that helps [get back into the swing of tournament play]. We as a team played six rounds of competitive golf against one another to get into the tournament feel to prepare for our upcoming match."

Roche said he and the rest of the team will try to focus on hitting great shots during the tournament and not worry about scoring until the end of the match.

"I want to go out there and just take care of my role for the team," Roche said. "Playing

my own game and not worrying about results until the round is over helps me stay focused. If I relax and play my game, I'll get the best outcome in the end."

VSU will look to Roche as well as former GSC Freshman of the Month, Jordan Long and junior Olaf Zandveld to lead the team to a low score next week. Zandveld has finished eighth overall or better in the team's three tournaments it's played so far this season.

The Matlock will begin at 8 a.m. on Feb. 13 and will finish after the final round on the 14th.

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SPORTS

VSU women heating up at the right time

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The VSU Women's Basketball team is surging through the Gulf South Conference after three consecutive road victories. On Saturday, the Blazers accomplished a feat that had not been done in over 30 years after beating Delta State in Cleveland, Mississippi, for the first time since 1983, by a score of 48-38. The win over Delta is an accomplishment that even former student-athlete and current head coach Carley Kuhns didn't accomplish during her Hall of Fame career as a player from 2004-2008. The Blazers had to battle for the win, and it did not look bright throughout the game. In the second quarter, VSU only made two field goals and one free throw equaling five points. However, in the fourth quarter VSU outscored the Lady Statesmen 19-4 to secure their victory. Kuhns said the victory was a confidence builder for the season ahead. Confidence will be key in the upcoming games against Union and Christian Brothers. The Blazers knocked off Union earlier this season when the Bulldogs were ranked No. 24 in the nation. "They're going to want a little bit of a revenge against us," Kuhns said. "We beat them when they were a ranked team, but it has been two months. We're both completely different teams." Kuhns said their preparation for Union would be different than other teams because of how well Union shoots the ball. The Bulldogs are second in scoring and field goal percentage and third in three-point percentage. The Lady Bulldogs also lead the GSC in free-throw percentage, shooting almost 80 percent as a team. "We're going to need to be really locked in and know their game plan," Kuhns said. Union had 21 bench points in

the first matchup with VSU, while the Blazers had none. The bench only accounts for 12 of the Blazers' 69 points per game average. Earlier this season, Kuhns said she feels like she has four to five players that can score 20 or more points on any given night. While she admitted the players she referred to were her starters, she said she wasn't worried about her bench's production as far as scoring goes. "I think everyone at this point has figured out their role and what they're great at," Kuhns said. "Jaz McIntosh knows she's our best rebounder and best defender. Those things might not show up on the stat sheet but they win us games." McIntosh has 91 rebounds and 17 steals on the season, neither of which is a team high, but as Kuhns said some things don't show up on the stat sheet. McIntosh typically defends the opponent's best scorer or ball handler and forces them to take bad shoots or make poor passes. McIntosh also is the one that traps opponents when they come up the court and forces them to turn the ball over. "[Rebounding and defending] are things that I do take pride in," McIntosh said. "For her to notice me and know that's my role and I know that's my role and my teammates know that is my role, it means a lot to me. It's good to know that she notices that as well." Kuhns and McIntosh said they were taking the season one game at a time, but they said it is getting closer to GSC tournament and standing will matter. "If we handle business game by game, it'll set us up for the end of the season," Kuhns said. "We're taking it one game at a time, but we know the price of the bigger picture," McIntosh said. "We're honestly taking it every possession at a time because we want to win every possession every quarter." Kuhns said the team has put a target on its back by climbing back to the top of the rankings. She said they'll get everyone's



Juston Lewis/THE SPECTATOR

Madi Mitchell leads the Gulf South Conference in field goal percentage. She's also third in total points with 368.

best shot, but it'll make the team stronger. The Blazers are currently third in the GSC. Sitting currently at seventh, Union is a potential post-season opponent for VSU. The teams VSU faces on Saturday are within striking distance in the conference standings. Christian Brothers is currently fifth in the GSC and could better

its spot with a win over West Florida on Thursday. The matchup with Christian Brothers will be a pink-out game, and the Lady Blazers will be wearing pink jerseys in support of Breast Cancer Awareness. Kuhns will be wearing pink on the sidelines as well. McIntosh said she was excited about wearing different jerseys.

"I'm ready to wear pink jerseys," McIntosh said with a laugh. The Blazers will face Union tonight in the P.E. Complex at 6 p.m., and they will host Christian Brothers on Saturday at 2 p.m. in Valdosta.

Photo Illustration on Page 12 by Photo Editor Seth Willard



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- FG Percentage-- Madi Mitchell (.506)**
- Rebounds-- Kenya Samone' Dixon (184)**
- Assists-- Sonya Franklin (71)**
- Steals-- Sonya Franklin (29)**
- 3-Point FGs-- Kenya Samone' Dixon (56)**
- Free Throws-- Madi Mitchell (97)**

Blazer



Basketball



Jimmy Kodet

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