

Science is the new sexy - pg. 3

February 23, 2017

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# THE SPECTATOR

THE UNFILTERED, UNCENSORED VOICE OF THE STUDENTS.

**Softball ranks  
sixth in the  
nation by  
the NFSA**

**Photos on p. 12**

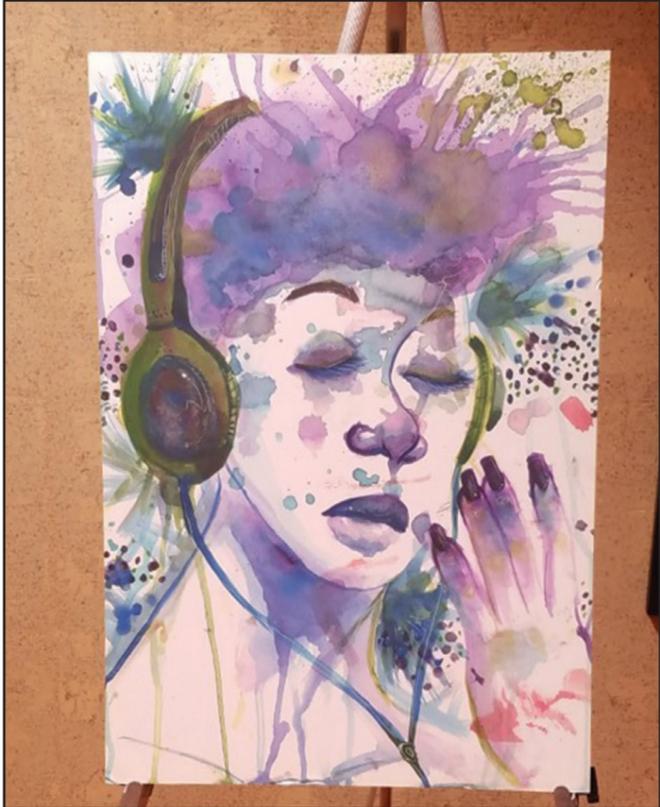
Photo illustration by Seth Willard

**VSU  
students  
juggle  
parenthood  
and  
education  
p. 8**



# NEWS

## Artshow held for Black History Month



Bryce Ethridge/ THE SPECTATOR  
"The Sounds of Society" by Savannah Taylor, presented by Kyle Breaux.

## Upcoming activities

### Scuba certification class

CORE is holding a clinic for a Scuba Certification Class, March 3 and March 5. The clinic will be at the VSU pool. The registration fee is \$300.

### CORE paintball trip

There is a CORE paintball trip March 4, in Jacksonville, Florida. Registration is \$55 for students and \$65 for staff.

### VSU Rec Life announcement

VSU Rec Life is holding Percentage night at Chick-Fil-A in the Valdosta Mall, Feb. 24, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

### Hypnosis showcase

There is a Hypnosis showcase in the Student Union Theatre, Feb. 24. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the show starts at 7 p.m.

### Blazer Sports

Thursday, Feb. 23.

Women's Basketball vs. Shorter at 6 p.m.  
Men's Basketball vs. Shorter at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 25

Baseball vs. West Florida (DH) at 1 p.m.  
Women's Basketball vs. Lee at 2 p.m.  
Softball vs. West Florida (DH) at 2 p.m.  
Men's Basketball vs. Lee at 4 p.m.

Want to have your event featured in our Upcoming activities section? Email your information to Editor-in-Chief Gabe Burns at [gcburns@valdosta.edu](mailto:gcburns@valdosta.edu).

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# NEWS

First guest in the inaugural Presidential Lecture Series

## Ira Flatow: Science is the new sexy

National radio host credits the entertainment industry for scientific revival

**Julie Jernigan**

STAFF WRITER

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Flatow

Ira Flatow visited VSU with a big bang.

Flatow, award-winning television journalist and host of National Public Radio's "Science Friday," spoke on why "science is the new sexy" in front of a full crowd on Feb. 21, as a part of Valdosta State's first Presidential Lecture Series.

In his lecture, Flatow incorporated clips from popular shows, such as "The Big Bang Theory," "The Colbert Report" and "The Simpsons" to show how science is gaining popularity through the entertainment industry.

Flatow said he found his love

for science at a very young age when he almost burned down his mother's bathroom by trying to recreate a biology experiment. He later founded the Science Initiative, a nonprofit company committed to produce television and internet programs that make

science more user-friendly.

We are indeed honored to have a true difference maker to launch our Presidential Lecture Series," VSU President Dr. Richard Carvajal said in his introductory speech.

Flatow gained laughs from the audience when he thanked Carl Sagan, who wore turtlenecks and had distinctive speech mannerisms, for making science sexy with his show, "Cosmos," which at one time was the most watched television show in the world.

"If you want to talk about really difficult issues, you have to look toward popular culture or the entertainment industry," Flatow said. "They understand that people are interested, so if you wanted to discuss global warming, you can find

discussions all in there."

He explained how the popularity of "The Big Bang Theory" led to the rise of many other shows, such as "Scorpion," "Silicon Valley" and "Limitless."

"The market is talking, but how do we know that science is really sexy?" Flatow asked. "When people who are not normally involved with science want to be involved in science."

He elaborated on Seth McFarland, the creator of "Family Guy," who helped "Cosmos" come back on the air because of his involvement with Fox.

Flatow also discussed the growing involvement of women in science, mentioning how Barbie, by popular demand, became a computer engineer sold with a laptop and headset.

At the end of his lecture,

Flatow answered questions from the audience, which ranged from defining role models to the concept of universities teaching classes on how scientists should deal with the media.

"Your role model doesn't have to be another scientist, but they just have to be someone who takes an interest in you and shows you the ropes on how to stay interested," Flatow said. "Science should be made a discussion around the dinner table as much as sports and business."

"We cannot now, especially in this atmosphere, give up on science," Flatow said at the closing.

Dr. Carvajal thanked Flatow for showing the university the impact of power and knowledge and presented him with a parting gift.

## SGA makes changes

**Hunter Terrell**

OPINIONS EDITOR

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The Student Government Association finalized major changes to its constitution this week.

Senators concluded that the judicial branch played an "insignificant role" in SGA, so they decided to make it a two branch organization. The student judicial board still exists as a division of the Conduct office, but it is independent of SGA.

In result, there will now be four groups within SGA that focus on improving a certain part of student life: campus affairs, academic affairs, financial affairs and public relations.

"In order to make sure we are representing the students, SGA will not change its governing documents without your approval. That means you can vote to approve SGA's new constitution by using the link sent in student

email," said President Maya Mapp.

Other details in the meeting, Sen. Adam Slaton introduced presenter Joy Ihedioha, who advocated being an added member to SGA.

"You don't see a lot of collaboration among organizations on campus and the administration," said Ihedioha. "I want to help create cohesion and mix things up."

Sen. Dillon Roundtree then motioned to hold off voting until the following week, as the old constitution said is the correct policy.

After short updates and the introduction of a new SGA logo, president Dr. Richard Carvajal spoke to SGA.

"I will treat this organization as the voice of the students," said Dr. Carvajal. He thanked SGA for what they do and promised he would return.

## Carvajal hopes for understanding

**Juston Lewis**

ASST. SPORTS EDITOR

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VSU President Richard Carvajal is listening. And students gave him an earful.

Chad Capers, Black Student League president, and Jasmin Martin NAACP president, called together a forum for their members to allow Dr. Carvajal to directly hear students' concerns.

This meeting was not a response to any one incident according to the two leaders but the forum did come a week after the protest conducted by the two organizations.

One of the main goals of the protest was to have administrators support for minority students on campus. Students wanted that support through Dr. Carvajal or other administrators

at their events.

Dr. Carvajal informed students that he hasn't been avoiding any one group of students.

"If you come to basketball games, you know have not been hiding," Carvajal said.

He then started explaining his history. That is something that neither of his interim predecessors did.

He began by explaining his childhood, which included his homelessness during high school and how he was forced to live in his car.

"Now you've met the university president that was homeless," Dr. Carvajal said to students.

He told students how he battled pancreatic cancer while on the way to a triathlon in Alabama.

"I'm the homeless president and I'm the guy that won his

battle with cancer," Dr. Carvajal said.

He told students that he didn't share his stories for their sympathy but to better understand him and his past.

Dr. Carvajal allowed students to go around the room and address issues on housing and residence life, transportation and campus communication.

Once all of the students spoke, Dr. Carvajal implored students to look at their role in the Blazer experience saying: "Success and failure are concentered by administration and students alike."

To read the rest of this story go to:

[VSUSpectator.com](http://VSUSpectator.com)

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 Tues., Jan., 31<sup>st</sup> noon -1:00pm  
 or Tues., March 7<sup>th</sup> 2:00pm-3:00pm

**Coping in College**  
 Tues., Feb., 7<sup>th</sup> noon -1:00pm  
 or Thurs., March 9<sup>th</sup> 2:00pm-3:00pm

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As midterms near, be sure to find the perfect place on campus to relax and de-stress. Students here at Valdosta State enjoy the beautiful campus in so many different ways to keep their mind clear throughout the busy semester. The Campus Recreation center features many activities to relieve stresses and to focus your mind on something other than studying. The Student Union is full of relaxing spaces and is host to Union Station, which features billiards, ping pong and video games. A campus favorite is taking in all of the beautiful weather Valdosta has on the front lawn and leaving all of your worries behind.

Photos by Seth Willard

A VSU student relaxes on front lawn with her dog.

# Relax during midterms



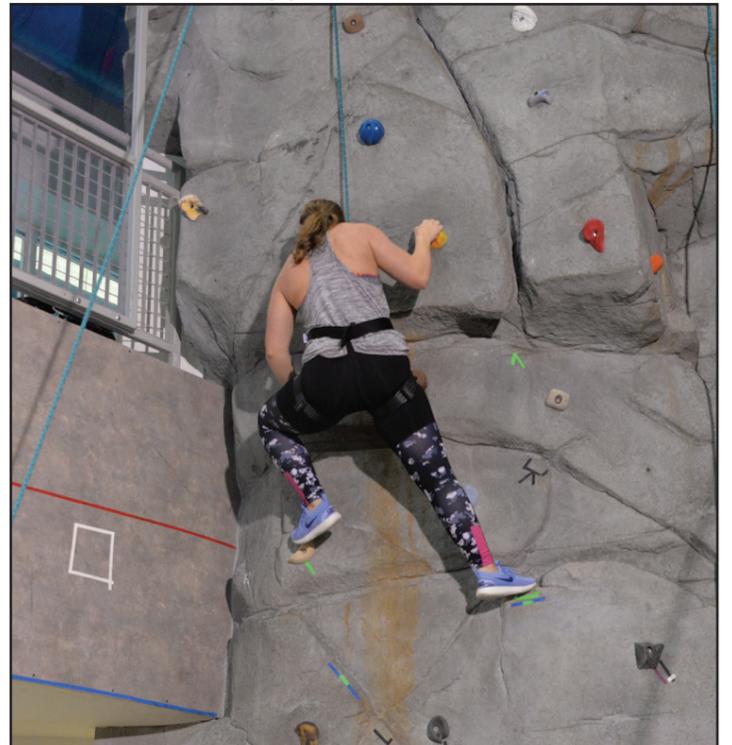
A VSU student relaxes in a hammock suspended from the palms.



A VSU student enjoys a match of billiards with fellow classmate.



Martin, Ethan, Kevin, Haji and Drew playing cards in between classes in the Student Union Rotunda.



Christy takes advantage of the rock climbing wall at the Campus Recreation Center.

**OPINIONS**

*Our point of view...*

# Bring back summer commencements

It's the last day. Finals are finished. All the boxes are checked off on the graduation checklist. All that's left is to wait around five months to walk across the stage at commencement.

For students finishing their degree in the summer semester, this is a possibility. It's either wait around five months or walk early, which many students do, but with that decision students must accept that they have chosen to give up honors recognition at graduation. Neither option seems a fair payout for the four or more years spent paying tuition and fees, studying for classes and putting social life on the backburner.

Not many people want to work in their profession, with a bachelor's degree, for almost half a year and then ask off from work to participate in a commencement ceremony, and that shouldn't need to happen.

VSU has held summer commencement before, as recent as August 2015. Those summer graduates are not more important than the students graduating this summer or in the following summers.

Walking early is an option the student body appreciates, as seen in 2014 when there was not a summer commencement ceremony and former VSU President Dr. William McKinney denied students the chance to walk early but then retracted that decision considering how much it affected students. However, walking early is still far from the best option.

At graduation, students can be recognized for Cum Laude honors (overall 3.50 grade point average), Magna Cum Laude honors (overall 3.70 grade point average) or Summa Cum Laude honors (overall 3.90 grade point average). Students who walk early will not be recognized for honors during commencement. According to the Application for Degree form on VSU's website, honors recognition at graduation is based on grades from students' transcripts immediately preceding graduation, and so the last semester's grades are not reflected in the graduation program. That being the case, students who walk early in spring, planning to graduate in the summer, should be recognized for honors the same way that students who are not walking early are recognized.

As a staff with members who take their final courses this upcoming summer, and as a staff that wants the students to have a fulfilling commencement experience, we urge VSU to consider bringing back summer commencement or reworking the early walk honors stipulations. We know that commencement costs money and that reworking walk early terms is time consuming, but we, the students as a whole, have spent ample money and time as well, and we want commencement to celebrate our accomplishments.

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



A house in San Jose, California (top), contractors walk the site of a remodel in Austin, Texas (bottom left), and for sale signs overlap in Denver (bottom right).

## U.S. News releases 2017's Top 100 places to live

**Darla Dunning**  
ASST. OPINIONS EDITOR  
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U.S. News and World Report announced their list of the top 100 best places to live in America for 2017. The ranking of America's 100 largest metropolitan areas was based on affordability, desirability, job openings and quality of life.

According to Today.com, a survey was given to thousands of people across America to decide which qualities they preferred to have in a hometown. The data from the surveys was collected by the United States Census Bureau, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Labor Statistics for determining the final ranking.

Kim Castro, executive editor of U.S. News, explained how people voted for which metro area they preferred.

"When considering a move, people are concerned about find-

ing a job in their field, earning enough to afford a home, sending their kids to good schools and feeling like a part of their community," Castro told U.S. News.

Austin, Texas took first place, replacing the previous first place winner, Denver, Colorado, which took spot No. 2 on the list. Austin, Texas was ranked number one this year because the public

*Denver dropped from first because of its increase in crime rates.*

surveys said the job market and quality of life improved for the city.

Denver, Colorado, dropped from first because of its increase in crime rates, according to U.S. News.

"Despite its reputation as a safe area, Denver has seen an uptick in crime – some of which is gang-related," U.S. News said on its website.

Coming in at No. 3 was San Jose, California. San Jose received a higher percentage of votes in the desirability survey in comparison to last year.

According to Real Estate U.S. News, the desirability survey polls 2,000 random internet users to choose which metro area they would prefer to live in. The metro areas were then ranked according to the total votes they received.

One student looked over the list of the best places to live and said Boston should have ranked in the top five instead of ranking eighth.

"I think this list is inaccurate, because Boston has a lot of great job opportunities, and I feel that the quality of life is great too," Sidney Carrol, a freshman history major, said. "It should have ranked in the top five instead of coming in at No. 8."

The full list of the 100 best places to live can be viewed at <http://realstate.usnews.com>.

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## OPINIONS

### 59th Annual Grammys

# Artists show up, show out

**Eboni Register**

STAFF WRITER

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The 59th Annual 2017 Grammy Awards aired on Feb. 12 and featured a plethora of artists taking to the red carpet with designer clothing as well as memorable performances.

Upon arriving to the Grammys at the Los Angeles Staples Center, many celebrities took to the look of glitz, glam, satin and feathers. Rihanna rocked a two-piece dress set similar to the 2014 prom dress breakout design. While her skirt was made of a thick and heavy material, she and her wardrobe team came up with a great way to show just enough skin, showcasing one of her most known tattoos.

Demi Levato also walked the red carpet with a shocking metallic dress, which hugged her body but still showed enough skin to give us a taste of sexy.

CeeLo Green, on the other hand, took an extreme look this year, mimicking some sort of superhero with metal covering him head to toe. It was speculated that it was a public stunt to get listeners interested in his upcoming tour and album.

Moving forward to the actual event, this year's Grammy host

was James Corden, star of "The Late Late Show with James Corden." "When choosing someone to host an award show, the host should have widespread appeal, so we keep watching.

This being a gig that brings a lot of pressure, most expect the host to show confidence and bring a non-staged, scripted

*One artist that I can say many viewers, fans and celebrities were happy to see win an award was unsigned artist Chance The Rapper.*

presence during the live show. Trial and error to find a host who is comfortable and appealing to most may take time. I don't believe James Corden is here to stay.

The night brought highly awaited performances by Adele, Bruno, Beyoncé and Lady Gaga.

"My favorite performance had to be Beyoncé," Cori Griggs, a sophomore, said. "I mean, she defied gravity, people."

Stefan Daniel, a senior, said, "Bruno Mars showed up and had a great energetic soulful performance, as we expected he would."

As Grammy winners were announced, Adele racked up

awards, and with 84 categories, she took home six awards, three of which were the biggest awards. She won Record of the Year, Song of the Year and Album of the Year, but that wasn't a shocker for those who were watching; it's Adele.

One artist that I can say many viewers, fans and celebrities were happy to see win an award was unsigned artist Chance The Rapper. He took home a total of three awards: Best New Artist, Best Rap Performance and Best Rap Album. As he accepted his awards, he thanked God for everything he has done for him and led him to doing. Those who followed Chance The Rapper prior to the Grammys know he has been struggling with his beliefs, and since his daughter was born, he has gradually become closer to God.

Ultimately, the Grammys held weight, featuring artists who had extraordinary stage presence and brought eye-catching and satisfying performances. Although I would've liked to see a wider variety of awards spread to other artists who were nominated, those who won continue to rack up and be pinnacles of worthy music and morals.

## What is Strange about the Johnson's?

### Controversial film resurfaces, sparking conversation

**Shanice Barnes**

STAFF WRITER

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If you haven't heard about the Johnsons, consider yourself lucky. They're not your average happy-go-lucky family. There's something quite strange about them.

In 2011, young filmmaker Ari Aster showed what made the Johnsons so strange when he released a very controversial short film entitled, "The Strange Thing about the Johnsons," touching on incest and molestation. The film has now resurfaced, and the public is talking about the Johnsons once more.

The short film starts with a father bursting in to his son's room at the wrong time. The young son, Isaiah, was masturbating to a picture. Sidney, the father, saw how embarrassed his son was and explained that what Isaiah was doing was completely normal. Gaining his father's approval, Isaiah felt a sense of ease, but what Sidney didn't know was that the picture his son was holding was a picture of him. The son became obsessed with his father, not in a role model way, but in a romantic way.

Years go by and the obsession progresses. Isaiah rapes his father on a regular basis; Isaiah even molested Sidney during his own wedding. This film raises a lot of eyebrows, and the questions that

seemed to be on everyone's mind was why the father didn't put an end to this infatuation. Was he really so afraid of his son that he couldn't teach him wrong from right?

Many people found this film really disturbing and hard to watch, but individuals have still made memes of the film mocking the abuse. For some people, this was just plain disgusting, while for others it was their reality. There are instances where incest and molestation occur within someone's household.

However, most films touch on the complete opposite of what occurred in this film, which is the parent raping the child and not the other way around; that is what made the film harder to digest.

The film left me speechless because as much as I wanted to blame the father for allowing this to happen to him, I also had to put myself in his shoes and try to see things from his point of view. The abuse could have made him crazy or could have caused post-traumatic stress disorder.

One part of the film that seems to have audiences in a frenzy is when the wife, Joan, witnesses her son raping her husband at Isaiah's own wedding, and she pretends not to know anything about it. How can you watch your son molest his father and not do anything about it?

The writer failed to provide viewers with the reason why

the Johnson's were so afraid of their son. It jumps from Isaiah's adolescence to adulthood, and as I watched the short film, I couldn't help but wonder how a grown man could be afraid of his son and allow him to do such vile things. Was the father just as much to blame?

Sidney, unaware that his wife knows about his encounters with their son, tries to inform her through a book entitled "Cocoon Man," which details what Isaiah did to him. Isaiah eventually finds the copy and burns it. After the family's new year's party, Isaiah decides not to go home with his wife but stay at his parents' home instead. There he found his father in the bathtub and molested him. Sidney's screams echoed through the hall. The audience sees Joan in the other room, as she turns up the volume of her TV and does nothing to help.

Sidney eventually dies after trying to release "Cocoon Man," to the world. Running away from his son, Sidney gets hit by a car. The movie ends with Joan finally confronting her son, in a very indirect way I might add. After she confronts him, he attacks her, and they scuffle for a while until she stabs him to death.

By then, the damage was already done. She shouldn't have just allowed it to happen. She was just as bad as her son for witnessing the abuse and not taking a stand.

## Five steps to help clean up your social media

**Tiana Foster**

STAFF WRITER

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Fake news is everywhere and some people do not know how to distinguish between real and fake stories.

Social media has contributed in making fake news easily accessible to a larger audience.

Fake news has an agenda and that's selling its propaganda. Fake news can cause real consequences.

Facebook and Google have even agreed to partner up with fact checkers like ABC News and The Poynter Institute to help decrease the distribution of fake news.

There are five easy guidelines that will help support a real news story from a false claim.

First step, figure out who actually wrote the article. Any real news organization will credit the journalist by using a byline. An author's bio will always tell you if the writer is a credited journalist.

Next, one of the easiest ways to detect a fake news story is to find out if the headline matches the article. The headline of a fake news story is always the click bait. Click bait is used to attract and encourage people

to click on links to certain web pages. Fake news is used as entertainment to distract the public from real issues.

Third, does the article provide a credible source? It's very important that an author's idea can be verified and supported by evidence. Professional journalists support their information by sending out emails, making phone calls and tracking down any information to seek out the truth.

Make sure you verify that the publication is trustworthy. Real news stories are always published by a media outlet that has a strong fact-checking record.

Fake news is almost always published via social media. For example, Instagram distributes real and fake news, but look for the blue checkmark on its Instagram page to verify accuracy.

Lastly and most importantly, make sure the stories unbiased and insert both sides of a story. A news story should always cover both sides without any opinion.

The internet is full of information but it's up to you to decide whether the information is legit.

These five steps should help you gather more reliable information to strengthen your news literacy.

Get Started

Create a site with WordPress.

Choose the software powering 27% of the internet.

Get Started

Hunter Terrell/THE SPECTATOR

WordPress was hacked last month.

## Hackers attempt to blackmail WordPress

**Eboni Register**

STAFF WRITER

ebregister@valdosta.edu

During an automatic update on WordPress on Jan. 26, pushing the newly released version caused an opening within the interface, which led to more than 1.5 million hackers destroying and defacing site owners' content, according to BBC.

WordPress is a free publishing platform and open-source blogging tool for content managing. "WordPress is the most popular blogging system in use on the Web, at more than 60 million websites," according to cmins.com.

Throughout the hack, WordPress partners, such as Sucuri, a company made to protect and fix hacked sites for any platform, took initiative to research the hackers and mandate repairing the break the update caused.

As hacking sprees continued, Sucuri focused on the campaigns that defaced pages and why this occurred. WordPress and its partners found that those who had the most success hacking would halt

all damage only if a compromise was made.

While WordPress is free, web hosting and domain require payment, which start as low as \$3.95 a month and are covered by official host providers not the users of the site.

Therefore, there are no money ties to give to the hackers who corrupted the system. The amount of money within free blog domains are minimal, and because of this, executives hope attacks will die out.

To those who are frequent users and account publishers, Sucuri.net provided steps on cleaning a hacked WordPress site. The steps included: identifying the hack, removing the hack, post-hack WordPress and then Sucuri wants those who were targeted to help identify and fix hacked websites.

"This is not meant to be an all-encompassing guide, but if followed it should help address 70 percent of infections," Sucuri said "Harden your site after a hack."

# FEATURES

## Editor Experience

# Lions and tigers and bears, oh my! Well, almost

**Kelsey Dickerson**

FEATURES EDITOR

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Hidden down a dirt road just 24 miles from campus in the city of Quitman is a safe haven for exotic animals.

Tiger Stripes Exotic Animal Sanctuary, Inc. is what one of the workers, Diane Cox, called “a retirement home for animals.”

Owned by Chris Kilpatrick, a man with 35 years’ experience with exotic animals, including a 13-year stint at Wild Adventures, the place feels a lot like a giant barnyard stocked with big cats instead of cows. Though the enclosures do include a petting zoo filled with goats, potbelly pigs and chickens.

Kilpatrick worked with the big cats at Wild Adventures until 2009, when he was diagnosed with stage four breast cancer and had to undergo a double mastectomy.

In 2010, Kilpatrick opened Tiger Stripes, Inc. as a nonprofit so he could care for the big cats he had worked with at Wild Adventures when they retired. Now, Kilpatrick is back to work at Wild Adventures, but still operates his sanctuary. Tiger Stripes

Inc. houses a variety of abandoned and abused animals, including two black bears, a timber wolf, two cougars, two macaws and a cockatoo.

“We lived here first, and then built the place around it,” Kilpatrick said.

When my family arrived at Tiger Stripes, Kilpatrick was standing near the first enclosure, the house of 58-year-old Samantha, a blue and gold macaw whose favorite song is “Let it Go” from Frozen.

Kilpatrick went into the enclosure and played the song from his iPhone for her while she bobbed her head back and forth to the beat. He said Tiger Stripes had hosted a “Frozen”-themed party a few weeks before, and Samantha had started dancing along to the music.

Kilpatrick led us around the other bird enclosures, to a 10-year-old Catalina macaw named Vinny, who has been given away when his owner moved to Pennsylvania, and to Napoleon, a shy Cockatoo who came from a hard life as a breeding animal.

Though he is extremely friendly and informative, Kilpatrick is a man of few words, and did not conduct the main tour of the property.

Diane Cox, the only employee on the property besides Kilpatrick and his wife, led us and other families around the main enclosure space.

There, Cox introduced us to two spider monkeys that the sanctuary had recently taken in from Wild Adventures. We then came face-to-face with Jazzy and Honey, two black bears who were once “surplus” animals at the Okefenokee Swamp in Waycross.

*“We lived here first, and then built the place around it.”*

*- Chris Kilpatrick*

Honey, Cox explained, had originally been used for monetary purposes. “She was bred as a photo op bear, which is ‘Hey, I have this baby bear, you can come take a picture with it for five bucks,’” Cox said. According to Cox, as Honey got older, her owners attempted to cut her claws down by themselves, leaving her deformed.

The main attraction, the tiger enclosure, had most of the children in our group screaming at the tops of their lungs. Raja a white male Bengal tiger and Liska, a female Bengal tiger, both retired Wild Adventures show animals, were in the big enclosure, though the sanctuary houses five tigers in total.

Cox said that they had to rotate the tiger’s time in the enclosure, as they are traditionally solitary

animals. Liska and Raja, who have been together since they were cubs, are the exception. “If we were to separate them for even a week we would never be able to bring them back together again” Cox said. The two tigers lived at Wild Adventures before Kilpatrick was diagnosed with cancer, and upon his departure became so upset and unresponsive that Wild Adventures gave the animals to Tiger Stripes, Inc. according to Cox.

After the tiger enclosure, Cox introduced us to Balto, the lone male timber wolf of the sanctuary. “Everyone wants to know if Balto howls at the moon,” she said. “He howls at everything.”

Lastly, we got to look at a pair of cougars, siblings Takota and Lexie.

Two retired Wild Adventures show animals, Takota and Lexie were first kept as pets before Lexie became sick. “Lexie had a kidney disorder and the lady [their owner] couldn’t afford it and was going to euthanize her,” Cox said. Takota and Lexie were later separated, causing Takota to develop separation anxiety and a life-long habit of chewing his tail.

After the tour, we were invited into a petting zoo on the property, which consisted mainly of goats abandoned after student 4H projects but which also included two potbelly pigs, both victims of abuse.

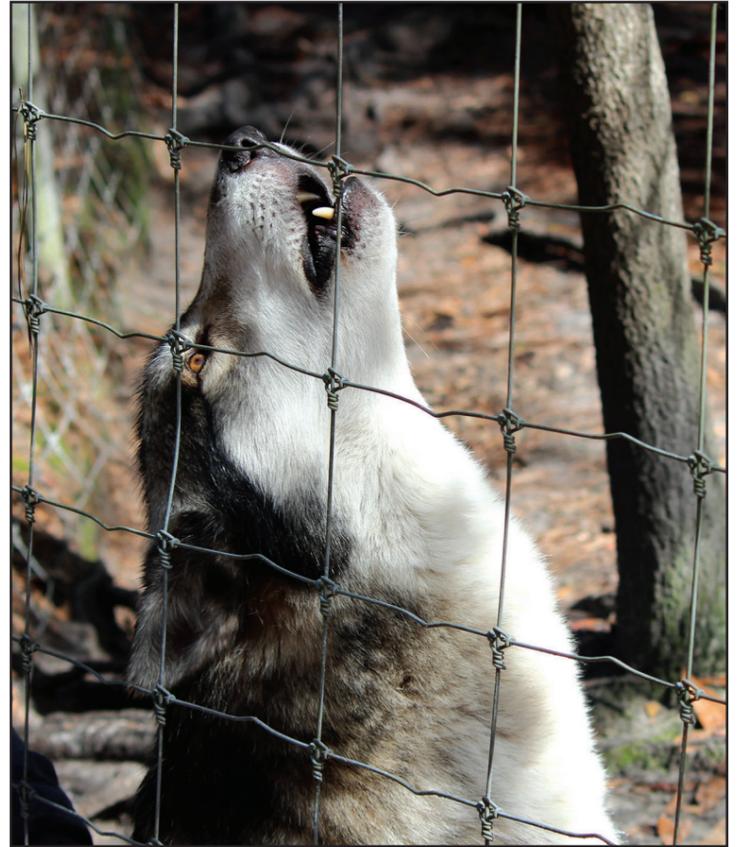
Outside of the enclosure, domestic cats ran around the property. Kilpatrick’s daughter, who has been around big cats since she was 3, brought these smaller cats around for children to pet. One calico seemed to really like my nephew. “If you don’t like that one, there’s 20 others you could take with you,” Kilpatrick said.

As we left, Kilpatrick was again in the enclosure with Samantha the macaw. “She’s all danced out,” he said.

Tiger Stripes, Inc. is located at 1075 McKinnon Road, Quitman, Georgia 31643 and is open to the public the third Saturday of every month from noon to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$10.



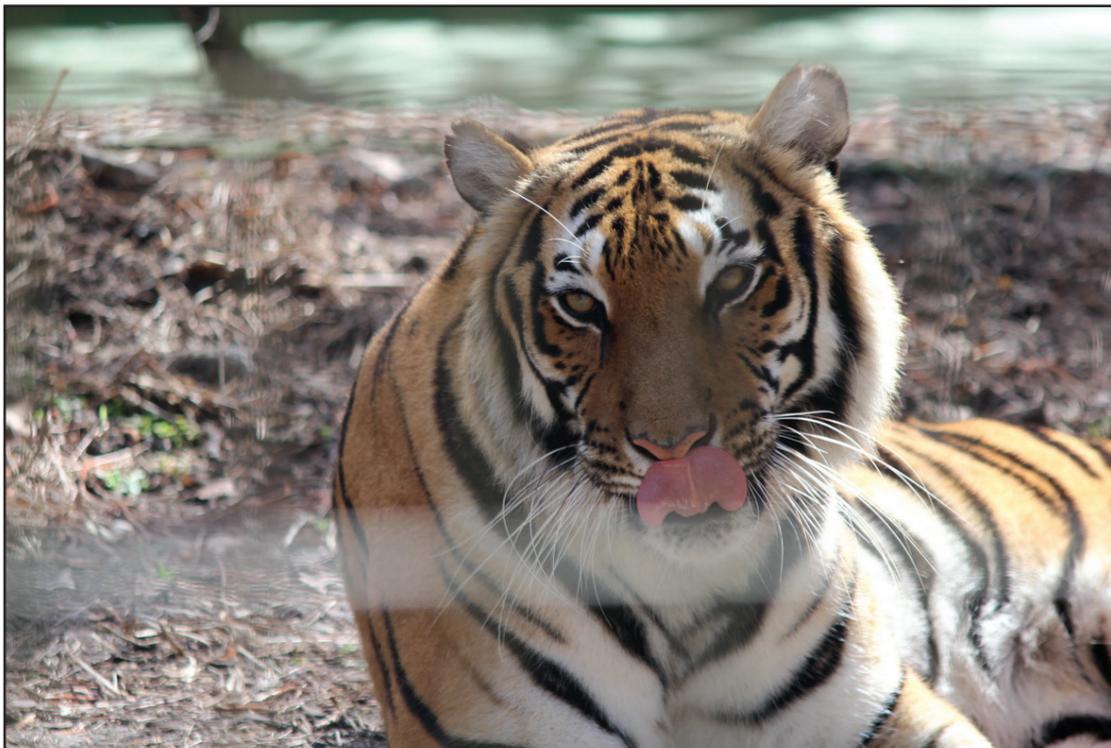
Chris Kilpatrick, owner of Tiger Stripes, Inc., got into the enclosure with Samantha the blue and gold macaw to show visitors how she liked to dance to the “Frozen” song “Let it Go.”



Balto, a male timber wolf, is the only wolf at the sanctuary. According to worker Diane Cox, Balto howls at everything.



Diane Cox, a Tiger Stripes, Inc. employee, fed Honey the black bear chocolate covered animal crackers while she told the visitors the bear’s story.



Liska, a female Bengal tiger, is one of five tigers housed by Tiger Stripes, Inc. She shares her space with a rare white Bengal tiger Raja, who she has been with almost from birth. Raja and Liska are both former Wild Adventures animals.

## FEATURES

## BALANCING ACT



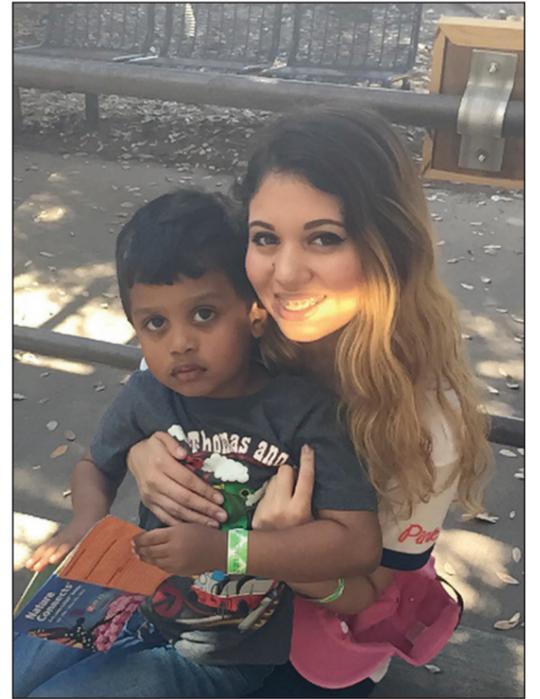
Courtesy of Swader family

Mckenzie Swader and her boyfriend, Josh, with her son Jackson Swader.



Courtesy of Crotty family

Kara and Joseph Crotty with their three sons: Logan, Daxton and Parker.



Courtesy of Stephanie Oliveira

Stephanie Oliveira with her son Jonathan.

## VSU parents discuss juggling school and family life

**Alex Dunn**

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Many students at VSU find it hard to balance getting good grades, making it to work on time and balancing a social life. Some students, however, have one more important responsibility to handle: parenting.

Stephanie Oliveira, 20, is an early childhood education major at VSU. Her son Jonathan is 4.

Oliveira said that when she first found out she was pregnant she couldn't believe it, and she was terrified and didn't know what to do or who to talk to.

"Obviously, when you're 15 you don't plan on getting pregnant; people make mistakes and I chose to deal with my situation," Oliveira said.

Once she told her family, and Oliveira's little brother was excited to be an uncle, she said her whole perspective on the situation changed, and she felt she could handle it better.

Oliveira said being a mom and a full-time student is not easy, but she explained that her son is the reason she started doing better in high school, and he motivated her to go to college to make a better future for the two of them.

Having a support system can make a huge difference on a day to day basis.

"He goes to daycare during the day, but my mom and brother watch him too, while I am at school," Oliveira said.

Some times are harder than others. Trying to balance everything, sacrifices have to be made to make sure things gets done. Oliveira said she almost failed a class last semester because the work load was so intense she barely had time to do much else.

"It's hard when you have to choose between an assignment

due at 12 a.m. [midnight] and spending time with your child, but sometimes you have to tell yourself it's for the best and do what you have to," Oliveira said.

Oliveira said sometimes it's hard to accept the fact she's missing important things in her child's life due to her education, but keeping a positive outlook on it can help. She knows, one day, her son will understand and appreci-

school and getting enough sleep.

"Watching him grow and [watching] his personality develop were the best aspects," Swader said.

Swader said she has a great support system for her child. Along with her mom, sister and boyfriend, she found two reliable babysitters. Her son stays at preschool in the morning and then daycare in the afternoon.

*"Obviously, when you're 15 you don't plan on getting pregnant; people make mistakes and I chose to deal with my situation," Stephanie Oliveira.*

ate all she's done for him.

"I wouldn't change a thing when it comes to being a mom because at the end of the day, my son is the reason for everything I do, and he inspires me every day," Oliveira said.

Oliveira plans to graduate fall of 2019. She then wants to attend graduate school to become a Spanish professor.

Another student, Mckenzie Swader, a junior social work major, had her son, Jackson, when she was 17. Her anticipated graduation date is May 2018.

Swader was shocked when she found out she was pregnant in high school, but once her loved ones got over the shock as well, they became a huge help. Getting pregnant in high school left Swader facing many challenges. She explained how she figured out a plan, so she could still graduate with her class.

Swader said the hardest part about raising Jackson was going through the newborn stage. Even though she considered him to be a "good" and "easy" baby, it was hard to juggle catching up in

"I had to do my schedule around his schedule, which meant I may not get the professor I want and have to settle for one who doesn't have as good of rating as the one I wanted," Swader said.

Swader also said time management is very important in order to balance school and parenting. She said she would do her homework when her child was taking a nap or when she was away at school.

Swader used to work at a daycare, which offered its benefits, as she was near her child and received discounted childcare.

Now, Swader decided to take a step back from work and focus on graduating and being a mom. Her boyfriend, Josh, supports the family.

Jackson's biological father signed his rights over to Swader, and he is no longer in the picture. Swader said Josh became a prominent father figure in her son's life.

"He's a contractor for the military and works hard, so I can stay at home and focus on school and spend more time with Jackson and not be so stressed," Swader said.

Joseph and Kara Crotty, a couple in their late 20s, are pursuing nursing degrees at VSU, while raising three children.

Their two eldest sons, Logan, 8, and Daxton, 7, attend school during the week, while Parker, their 17-month-old, goes to daycare.

Joseph and Kara always try to pick up Parker as soon as they get out of class. Since Parker is the baby of the family, Joseph and Kara enjoy picking Parker up together and watching him play with the other kids.

Kara said they typically study two to four hours at night, after their sons have been fed, washed and put to bed. On weekends, they make time for family throughout the day then go back to studying.

The Crotty's had to put their academic careers on hold until their eldest sons attended school full-time. They both have to sacrifice study time in order to make sure their children's needs are met first.

Kara said finding the best study

schedule has benefited them a lot as parents and allows them to have enough time with their sons. She explained that they have time for family but also time for themselves. They also said asking for and accepting offers of help can go a long way.

Kara said being nursing majors, they are assigned clinicals, which they have to do in order to pass their class. She said sometimes they can't work around them and end up having to move things around, so they can attend them.

"Talk with professors, they are and have been a huge help with us and working with our specific needs because of our circumstances with children and both being in the nursing program," Kara said.

Joseph and Kara's anticipated graduation date is May of 2018. Joseph plans to continue his career in the military as an officer and nurse and then pursue a Master's degree in nursing. Kara either wants to continue the same work as her husband, giving back to those who have sacrificed so much, or find a job as a civilian in her desired field of nursing.

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# FEATURES

## What does black history month mean to you?



Travis Edwards, junior anthropology major

“We need Black History Month because we need a universal understanding of black life, which I feel black history month helps us do that.”



David Moore, senior biology major

“Black History Month is important not only to me but to black people because I feel like it reminds us that we’re more than just what society tells us.”



Ashley Horne, sophomore healthcare administration major

“Black History Month is important because it helps us embrace our culture.”



**Julie Jernigan**

STAFF WRITER

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“The Simpsons” isn’t the only show that can predict the future.

Along with predicting the World Series win by the Chicago Cubs last year, the show, “Parks and Recreation,” made other predictions fans are beginning to notice.

The last season of “Park and Recreation” aired in January 2015, but the setting took place two years in the future in 2017. Executive Producer Michael Schur wanted to do something people wouldn’t expect from a sitcom.

“As soon as we decided to throw the last season of ‘Parks and Rec.’ into the future, into 2017, we sort of started calculating what the world might be like,” Schur told Washington Post.

In a scene from the episode, “Ron and Jammy,” the characters Tom, Lucy and Andy visit Chica-

## ‘Parks and Rec’ predicts the future

go, as the city was still celebrating its World Series victory.

The Cubs beat the Cleveland Indians 8-7 on Nov. 2, 2016, nearly two years after Schur and his team of writers began making predictions for the last season, but Schur does not want recognition for his guess.

“Every baseball writer in America knew the Cubs were going to be good,” Schur told Washington Post. “I can’t emphasize enough how little credit I feel like I should take for that prediction.

Along with Chicago’s win, fans noticed the similarities between the recent presidential election and season four’s election when Leslie Knope ran against Bobby Newport for city councilman.

Knope, like Hillary Clinton, was an experienced public servant, and her opponent, Newport, was an inexperienced, rich businessman like Donald Trump.

Many of the tactics the characters used against each other were similar to those used by Clinton and Trump.

For example, Knope, like Hillary, used insulting advertising campaigns against Newport, who then responded by saying, “You guys are mean.”

Trump responded to Clinton in a presidential debate in a similar way by saying, “It’s not a nice thing she’s done.”

Because this season happened before the campaign took place, Schur made it clear the characters were not based on Trump or Clinton.

“We were drawing on contemporary examples of women in politics and government coming up against [different] kinds of obstacles,” Schur told Washington Post.

Even though the sequel to “Hitch,” Shia LeBeouf becoming a fashion designer and the merger of Verizon, Chipotle and Exxon have yet to take place, there’s still plenty of time left in 2017 to see if more “Parks and Recreation,” predictions come true.



Courtesy of BagoGames on Flickr

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ENTERTAINMENT



Courtesy of Universal Pictures

Dakota Johnson and Jamie Dornan star as Anastasia Steele and Christian Grey in the sequel of "Fifty Shades of Grey." The movie premiered on Feb. 10 and is playing now at Valdosta Stadium 16.

# 'Fifty Shades' of meh

**Alex Dunn**  
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"Fifty Shades Darker," hit theatres last weekend with mixed reviews and a high expectation for a sensual and dramatic show.

Based off the books by E.L. James, the second movie in the series continues with the story of Anastasia Steele and Christian Grey, as they face new challenges in their relationship.

When a desperate Christian wants Anastasia back, she demands he make changes before she is willing to consider. As their new relationship begins to bloom, ominous figures from Christian's past start to threaten the future they want to make together.

"Fifty Shades Darker," did not hit the box office with good reviews. Critics slammed the movie for its failed attempts at adding drama and a sensible plot to the film.

"[It's] the kind of movie that's fun only when you're laughing at its flaccid attempts at drama," Jake Coyle of Associated Press said.

Critics gave the movie a nine percent rating on Rotten Tomatoes, an even lower rating than the first movie received, with its 25 percent rating. However, the targeted audience enjoyed the film much more than the professionals did, giving the movie a 62 percent rating.

"I loved the movie," Ana Machado, a 20-year-old junior, said. "It was so much better than the first; I

would definitely recommend seeing it with all your girlfriends."

Annie Lee, an 18-year-old sophomore, said, "I thought the movie was amazing. It was good to watch Christian open up more to Anastasia."

I am not a fan of the "Fifty Shades," franchise. Having read the first book and seen the first movie, I wasn't surprised that it was just as bad on screen as in print.

Convinced by friends to go see the movie for a girl's night, I expected to cringe at the awkward sexual encounters. However, I found myself enjoying it with minimal cringe. The plot was much better this time around, and I can say that "Fifty Shades Darker," surprised me.

# Shia's livestream can't be stopped

**Kelsey Dickerson**  
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After a premature end to the protest installation "HEWILLNOTDIVIDE.US," Shia LaBeouf and collaborating artists Nasatja Säde Rönkkö and Luke Turner announced last Saturday that the livestream would live again.

The installation was previously housed at the Museum of the Moving Image in Queens, New York.

According to a press release from the Museum of the Moving Image following the closure of the exhibit, "The installation created a serious and ongoing public safety hazard for the museum, its visitors, staff, local residents and businesses."

In a statement from the artists, LaBeouf said, "From the outset, the museum failed to address our concerns about the misleading framing of our piece as a political rally, rather than as a participatory performance artwork resisting the normalization of division."

The statement cites a rally held by the museum at the installation on Jan. 29 as a particular point of contention, which the artists had no say in.

"It is clear, therefore, that the Museum of the Moving Image is not fit to speak of our intent as artists," the artists wrote in the statement.

"HEWILLNOTDIVIDE.US," created by LaBeouf, Rönkkö and Turner, consists of a single video camera mounted on a wall below the words "HE WILL NOT DIVIDE US" in black, a direct refer-

ence to President Trump. Dubbed a "participatory performance" by the artists, anyone is encouraged to approach the installation at any time and repeat the words painted above the camera.

On Jan. 26, LaBeouf was arrested by New York police and charged with misdemeanor assault and harassment. In a video released on YouTube and social media, a man is seen greeting Shia LaBeouf with his arm around him, saying, "Hilter did nothing wrong." In the video, it appears LaBeouf pushes the man away.

As both go off camera, the man can be heard saying, "Why did he attack me?" According to the New York Times, LaBeouf pulled a scarf from the man's neck, scratching his face in the process.

Over the course of the installation's stay at the Museum of the Moving Image, LaBeouf had several similar altercations, often screaming at Trump supporters and other people who used the stream to speak in support of Nazism. Still more people used the stream for their own comedic intentions, "trolling" LaBeouf and others.

The Albuquerque location of the exhibit seems much calmer, perhaps due to the absence of LaBeouf.

A few individuals have used the installation to silently protest the University of New Mexico's campus security measures in the name of Juan Carlos Romero, 26, who was fatally shot on Feb. 7. Protestors held up two white signs, urging viewers to contact the University of New Mexico Board of Regents and the Albuquerque Mayor's office.

# 'Samurai Jack' is back

**Cynthia Papailier**  
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After 11 years of collecting dust, "Samurai Jack," is back.

"Samurai Jack," an animated series about a samurai who's trying to make his way back to the past, is set to grace our television sets once again on March 11.

Even with 52 episodes between 2001 and 2004, "Samurai Jack," fans were left with no closure as to what became of their calamitous protagonist. According to the show's Wikipedia page, Jack is a "time-displaced" samurai trying to travel back to his own time in order to defeat a shape-shifting demon named Aku. He is stuck going further into a future where Aku rules the world.

Genndy Tartakovsky created the animated series. With advancements in animation, the creators faced technological challenges with the reboot. The original "Samurai Jack," was paper to pen. Now, animators use computers, Photoshop and tablets to create all of the animations. The show's Art Director, Scott Wills, is trying to stay true to the artistic style of the original "Samurai Jack." However, that is only a fraction of the challenges the creators faced.

"After we finished the first run—the first four seasons—I was kind of burnt out," Tartakovsky said in a YouTube interview. "Everyone kind of moved on with

their careers, and then through the last, I guess, 12 years, I felt like Jack got more and more popular."

The "Samurai Jack," reboot picks up many years later. Tarkakovsky noted in his interview that viewers will be able to understand season five without watching the previous seasons. With the show moving from Cartoon Network to AdultSwim, viewers get to see "Samurai Jack," in a new light, as this Jack is darker and has lost his way. Viewers will watch Jack try to overcome his personal demons, struggling in his quest to defeat Aku.

Fellow Blazers had this to say about the reboot:

Keyon Laster, a sophomore music major, said, "I'm just excited to see it again and see what he does because I know it's coming on AdultSwim, so it's going to be a lot more graphic."

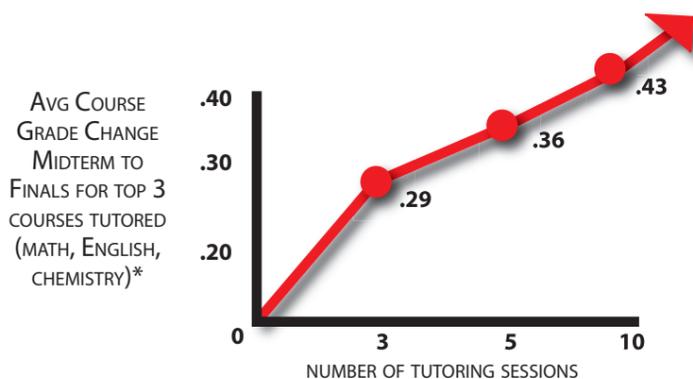
Rahkeem Armstrong, a junior psychology major, said, "I am beyond excited, but I'm nervous because you're so hype for it to come back that you're almost anticipating it to fail."

Kevin Nyugen, a junior physics major, said, "It's an incomplete story that actually hasn't finished yet; considering the fact that it's actually coming back with a much grittier undertone to it, that's actually much more exciting because that gives the creators more leeway to see what's going to happen to our hero."

The "Samurai Jack," reboot premieres on AdultSwim on March 11.

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# SPORTS

## DID YOU KNOW?

VSU Baseball's Luke Suchon leads all hitters in the Gulf South Conference with a .578 batting average. The infielder also leads the conference in hits with 26. VSU as a team has the second best team average in the conference at .312.

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# Men's Basketball looks to keep momentum

**Juston Lewis**  
ASST. SPORTS EDITOR  
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Beating VSU will be a tall task for Phil the Thrill and Shorter University on Thursday, as the Blazers are looking to keep tabs on the No. 1 seed.

The Blazers defeated Alabama-Huntsville, providing payback for the Jan. 2 matchup, and they disrupted North Alabama's playoff hopes by sweeping the two Alabama teams in last week's conference play.

The team's performance last week garnered them a host of accolades and awards this week. The team was ranked No. 20 in the NCAA Division II National Association of Basketball Coaches, Coaches Poll. They were also ranked first in the NCAA South Region, moving up from second after beating former No. 1 Alabama-Huntsville. Head Coach Mike Helfer was named the Division II Coach of the Week by Hoop Dirt.

The Blazers have secured a home GSC quarterfinal play-off game on Feb. 28, but they are still focused on the regular season. More specifically, they are focused on stopping Shorter and Phil Taylor.

Taylor is the leading scorer in the nation, averaging 32.8 points per game. He leads Shorter in minutes per game with 38.9. He's second in the Gulf South with 48 steals.

Taylor and the Hawks received

high praise from Helfer on the season they're having.

"He's a fantastic player, and I'm not sure you can stop him," Helfer said on containing Taylor. "We're just going to have to do it by committee and help when we need to, but sometimes that's not good enough."

Taylor will have the respect of the Blazers going into the game, but they aren't shying away from the responsibility. Beau Justice is one of the players that will likely guard Taylor and his ball denial defense will be put to the test.

"We're going to put me and Dame and Josh on him, and try to deny him," Justice said. "He doesn't really like that. He had trouble scoring the first time, but we can't let him shoot 15 or 16 free throws because that's where half of his points come from."

Taylor does lead the GSC in free throw attempts with 286, converting 241 of those for a .843 free-throw percentage which is second in the GSC.

Students from VSU found Taylor's two Twitter accounts and talked a bit of trash to him as well as the Shorter Basketball team's Twitter. The exchanges resulted in many VSU students being blocked by Shorter players and their team's account.

Jordan Jones, a member of VSU's student section, the Fire Pit, said the students provide a lot of support for the team.

"The goal is to find ways to encourage our student athletes, while simultaneously finding



Seth Willard/THE SPECTATOR

Tim Dal Bon shoots over a defender against Union. Dal Bon will provide leadership for VSU against Shorter.

ways to discourage the opponents," Jones said. "A student section is absolutely essential in helping a team win. We're the sixth man on the court."

The anticipation and hype for this game rivals the pre-West Georgia build-up in comparison. Like prior to the West Georgia game, Helfer is leaving the hype to the fans.

"I don't really follow that and

don't pay attention to it much," Helfer said regarding excess anticipation. "I can tell you this, it'll be a good basketball game, and I think both teams are very good. I think all of the extra-curricular can stay with the fans."

Justice and his teammates aren't engaging in the trash talk or hype either. They're just looking forward to the test on Thursday.

"With him [Taylor], he's going

for the GSC scoring record right now," Justice said. "He's going to be shooting it every chance he can. We're just focused on playing them on Thursday."

Win Thursday, and VSU will keep the first seed in the GSC tournament next week. Lose, and they will open the door for Alabama-Huntsville to take control.

The game tonight will be at 8 p.m. in the Complex.

## VSU Women vying to host GSC game

**Juston Lewis**  
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VSU Women's Basketball must do one thing in order to host a playoff game: win a game.

The Blazers must at least split their upcoming games against Shorter and Lee University to join the men's team at the Complex next week.

On Feb. 18, the Blazers took their seven-game win streak to Florence, Alabama, facing Gulf South Conference foe and potential playoff opponent North Alabama. The game resulted in a 70-52 loss for the Blazers, which is the team's worst defeat of the season.

Head Coach Carley Kuhns will use the game as a learning experience moving forward for her players.

"I think it is definitely a learning opportunity for us, and I'm glad it came when it did as oppose to in the tournament," Kuhns said. "From the jump I don't think we competed like we do. I don't think we defended like we usually do, and we're just a little bit out of rhythm and out of sync."

The Blazers shot 22-64 from the field, which included shooting 2-20 from beyond the arc. They

allowed 38 points in the paint and 22 fast break points on defense.

VSU may be without one of their leaders tonight against Shorter, as Aaliyah Cheatham was in a walking boot during practice on Tuesday after being injured against North Alabama. Cheatham leads the team in minutes played and free throw percentage and she is fourth on the team in scoring.

Sonya Franklin said the team will miss Cheatham, but they won't miss a beat in the game.

"All of my teammates are ready and they're more than capable of stepping up," Franklin said.

Kuhns said, the players are going to have to change their mindset approaching the final two games of the regular season.

"Going into these next two games, we are going to have to have a bit of a chip on our shoulder," Kuhns said.

The Blazers' two remaining games are against teams they struggled against on the road. On Jan. 9, VSU fell to Shorter 70-63, where the Hawks scored 19 fourth-quarter points to win the game.

Shorter is in the midst of a five-game losing streak and have been eliminated from post-season contention. They could, however,

hurt the Blazers' post season standing with a victory in Title-town tonight.

VSU will be facing Lee to close out the regular season on Saturday. The Blazers are currently tied with them for second place in the GSC. When the two teams played earlier in the season, the game ended on a last-second buzzer beater by Franklin, which won the game.

Franklin said the team's losses motivate the Blazers to be better, and she expects this to be no different.

"Our losses make us realize how much better of a team we are," Franklin said. "We'll lose and realize that we are a better team than how we played that game. That's how we get our momentum."

Franklin also said the loss at North Alabama won't change the fact that the Blazers do have fun on the court together.

"We've lost before," Franklin said. "We lost before we went on our streak. You win some you lose some. That doesn't change the way we feel about each other."

VSU will play Shorter at the Complex tonight at 6 p.m.

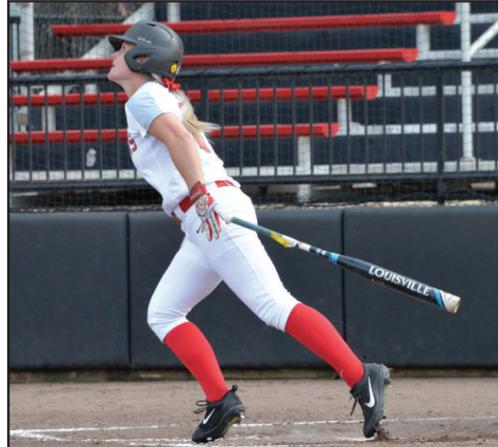
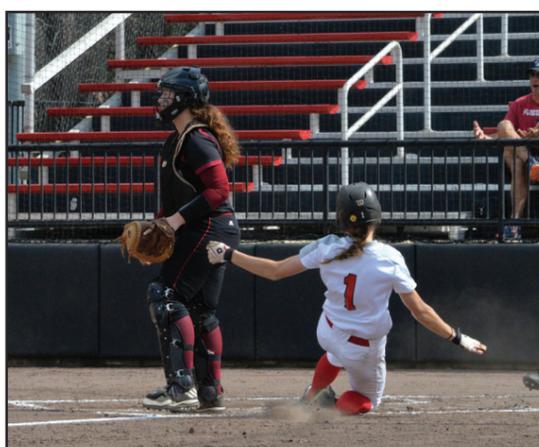
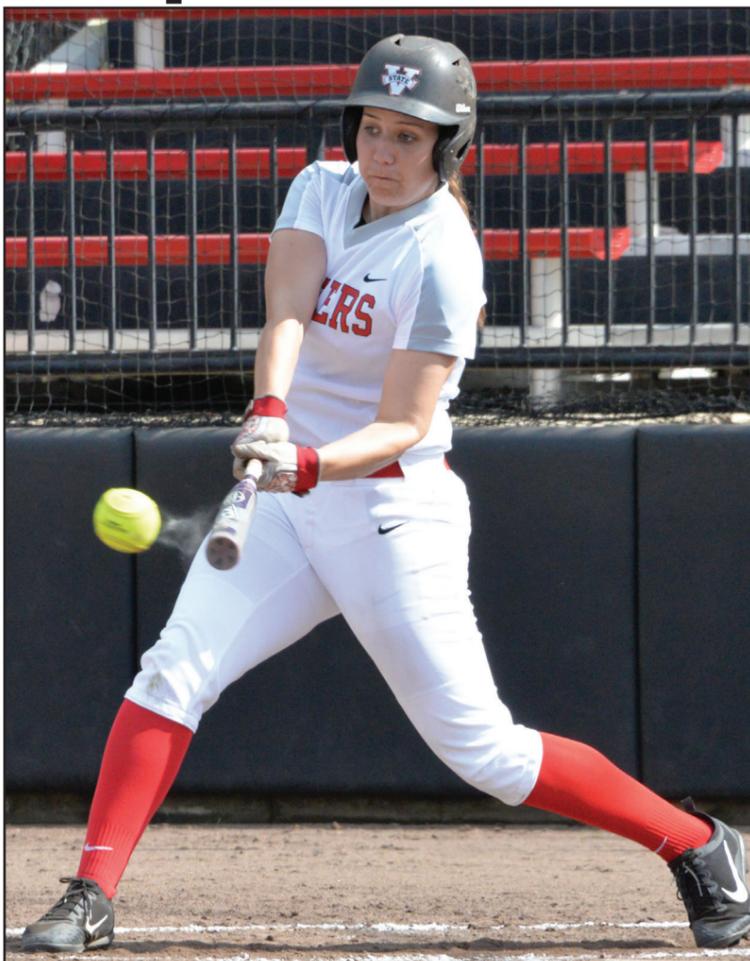


Seth Willard/THE SPECTATOR

Kenya Samone' Dixon averages 14.7 points a game, which is good for eighth in the GSC. Madi Mitchell is fourth with 16.3.

# SPORTS

## VSU Softball splits with Florida Tech



VSU Softball is currently first in the GSC with a 13-3 overall record and a 3-0 record in the Gulf South. The team split its double header Tuesday with Florida Tech, losing 11-2 and winning 6-5. Clockwise from top left: Avery Lamb (P), Hayley Cruthers (OF), Lamb (P), Chelsea Canara (INF), Brandy Morgan (OF). Photos by: Seth Willard/THE SPECTATOR

### VSU Softball Stat Leaders

Batting Avg.-- Jessica Mohl (.517)

Hits-- Jessica Mohl (31)

Runs-- Jessica Mohl (27)

Home Runs-- Chelsea Canara (4)

Runs Batted In-- Chelsea Canara (28)

Slugging Percentage-- Chelsea Canara (.891)

Steals-- Jessica Mohl (12)

Walks-- Taylor Hartenbach (10)

ERA-- Avery Lamb (2.96)

Strike Outs-- Avery Lamb (23)

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