

■ **Understanding Ukraine.** Russia launches the largest land-war in Europe since WWII, see our Q and A that helps explain it: page 4.

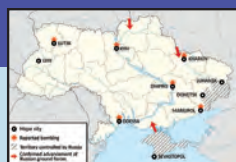


■ **Across the universe.** First-year student has eclectic interests, including stars, Snapshot: page 6.



■ **As mask mandates loosen,** editors urge more caution, because the COVID-19 pandemic is not over. Staff Editorial: page 3.

■ **GE retired executive** to present annual Knapp lecture today, March 3, page 4.



Driven by Love

Poet Smith: Poems are ‘containers of humanness’

By Jenna Welty
staff writer

Love was the primary message weaving the words of prized poet Danez Smith’s performance and Q&A for the Visiting Writer Series celebrating Black History Month.

“It’s always about love,” Smith said. “Poems are just little containers of humanness; proof that we were here, and we felt.”

On Feb. 23 at 7 p.m. in the Betty Cherry Heritage Hall, students and faculty members gathered to hear and ask questions about Smith’s diverse voice and these words of endearment. A student also presented the poet with a gift at the conclusion of the event.

Mary Vermillion, the director of the visiting writer program and professor of English, introduced Smith to the audience, praising their literary accomplishments and defining their poetry as “urgent and



Visiting writer Danez Smith (above) gives a reading in Betty Cherry Feb. 23. Earlier in the day, they led a poetry writing workshop. Teodora Simovic, graphic design junior (left) gave Smith a framed poster she designed using one of their poems.

“When you are coming from a place that is trying to transcribe and amplify love, you get it right.”

Danez Smith, visiting writer

relevant.”

After suggesting the game of Twister as an addition to the night’s plans, Smith began with a performance of their 2016 poem, “My President.” They continued by reciting a multitude of their

accomplished poems, including their most famous, “Dinosaurs in the Hood.”

Detailing the idea of making a movie where “Jurassic Park meets Friday meets The Pursuit of Happyness,” the latter is a

“love poem towards childhood innocence.”

“Besides, the only reason I want to make this is for that first scene anyway: the little black boy on the bus with a toy dinosaur, his eyes wide and endless his dreams possible, pulsing, and right there,” Smith read aloud.

The crowd exhibited mixed emotions. They laughed with Smith in the humorous moments and sat quietly during the serious ones. Often, these occurred back-to-back as Smith’s voice fluttered and boomed across the room, drawing the audience in, and body language

mimicking the words they spoke.

Their eyes were wide with the boy on the bus. They held an imaginary wine glass and raised their hand at the bus stop in “My President.”

The Q&A brought additional insight to the audience, from questions about the publishing process to dealing with wariness about putting out one’s own voice. But Smith assured that there is “no way to control

◆ **Student prepares poster**
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Jada Veasey, senior nursing major, is the editor-in-chief of the MMU Times and was recently named the Iowa College Media Association’s “Pat Pisarik Journalist of the Year,” the top student honor ICMA awards. Veasey is the first MMU student to win this recognition. (Times photo by Gwen Johnson)



Times editor named Iowa ‘Student Journalist of the Year’

Newspaper earns first-place for editorials, blog, investigative story and front page

By Annie Barkalow
managing editor

In years past, the Times has taken several first-place awards at the Iowa College Media Association (ICMA) awards, and this year was no different—with the exception that a first first was awarded to a Mount Mercy University student. Senior Jada Veasey, Times editor-in-chief, won the “Pat Pisarik Student Journalist of the Year” award, a first-time honor for MMU and the Times. What makes this journalism award even more remark-

able is that Veasey is not a journalism student herself, but a nursing major.

“(She) is basically the most outstanding student journalist in the state of Iowa,” said Joe Sheller, professor of communications and adviser to the Times. The judges cited Veasey’s leadership in covering the pandemic as a factor in her win. Along with a certificate of recognition, the award also comes with a \$500 stipend.

The Student Journalist of the Year award is named after Pat Pisarik, a journalism professor at Loras College and founding member of ICMA, who “passionately

embraced the role of the press as unbiased contributors to democracy and as a voice for the marginalized.”

Veasey, who is passionate about writing, politics, and current events, has been involved with the Times since she was a freshman. She began as a staff writer and work study student, became opinion editor her sophomore and junior years, and editor-in-chief her senior year. She found out she was a finalist for the award at the end of January.

“I was so excited. I didn’t think there was any way I’d win, I was just excited to be named a finalist,” said Veasey. When her

◆ **Winner hopes to inspire**
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Heads Up:

Networking and mentorship event

On April 1 at 1 p.m., Project Connect will host a networking and mentorship event for students. Kalindi Garvin, director of career services, will speak on the importance of professional mentorship and networking ability.

Bandana Project student training

Join the Bandana Project, MMU’s mental health awareness RSO, for a student training on April 4 from 7 to 8 p.m. See the Mount Mercy app for more information and use the link in the event description to RSVP.

M2AP Board pop-up event

M2AP Board will host a pop-up coaster giveaway event on April 5 at 5 p.m. in the UC. Stop by their table to get a free blank coaster to decorate.

Mustang Leadership speaker on April 7

The next event in the Mustang Leadership series will occur on April 7 at 7 p.m. in Flaherty Community Room of Basile Hall. Dr. Vincent Reid will speak about leadership in healthcare, and snacks will be provided at the event.

Intramurals badminton

Mount Mercy intramurals will host a badminton tournament on April 11 at 7 p.m. in the UC. Check out the event description on the Mount Mercy app for more information and register for the event for the chance to win a t-shirt.

Digital future

Newspaper sets online focus for next year

By Jenna Welty
staff writer

More emphasis on digital news media rather than print is coming from the Mount Mercy Times as online formats grow in popularity. The modification involves additional engagement on the Times’ website and social media accounts. Joe Sheller, associate professor of communication and faculty advisor of the Mount Mercy Times, has been advocating for this change for many years.

“I’m hoping that the digital nature of this initiative will meet students where they are and produce content that might energize some students,” Sheller said. “Students tend to think of print journalism as being old-fashioned, but it is still important.”

He is pushing for a tabloid format to replace the current broadsheets of the newspaper students see today. This tabloid format reduces the number of stories printed and is around half of the current size of paper.

“I want to continue the strong tradition of print journalism that’s been so important to Mount Mercy by continuing the print edition of the Mount Mercy Times but do so in a way in which the pages shrink, and there’s less emphasis on the print product,” Sheller said.

Stories would be posted online before appearing in print. With a website already made, the shift entails bumping up what already exists to the next level. There will be opportunities for more stories that are released right away, as opposed to waiting until the print publication date.

“Speed of delivery is one of the advantages of the digital world, and I hope that we do that, and we need to do it in a responsible way so that we don’t

The Mount Mercy Times won first place (below) for investigative reporting (Needed or Nuisance), blog (Anne with an E), and editorials that were all about the COVID-19 pandemic. The Times also won recognition for the best newspaper front page (right). (Times illustration)



ICMA awards won by Times

Here are other awards the Mount Mercy Times won in February in the Iowa College Media Association annual student media contest:

- First place, investigative reporting,** Annie Barkalow.
- First place, staff editorials,** Jada Veasey, Gwen Johnson, and Veronica Jons.
- First place, front page,** Veronica Jons and Jada Veasey.
- First place, blog,** “Anne with an E,” Annie Barkalow.
- Second place, blog,** “The Girl in the Chair,” Gwen Johnson.
- Second place, headline writing,** Veronica Jons and Jada Veasey.

Veronica Jons is an MMU alumni who graduated last spring and is a former editor-in-chief of the Times. Annie Barkalow is a junior and the current managing editor, and Gwen Johnson is a senior and the Times’ opinion editor.

“I want to continue the strong tradition of print journalism that’s been so important to Mount Mercy by continuing the print edition of the Mount Mercy Times but do so in a way in which the pages shrink, and there’s less emphasis on the print product.”

Joe Sheller, associate professor of communication

lose control of our product,” Sheller said. It is important to Sheller to leave a good foundation of student media for the student body and allow the program to live on

for many years to come. “It’s a way of positioning the Mount Mercy Times to continue to be relevant in the future,” Sheller said. “We need to lay a foundation for a vibrant student media that continues because having student media is important to a student body. It’s a way in which the students can express themselves.” Laying the groundwork for digital content in an increasingly digital society is one part of Sheller’s desires for Mount Mercy. He also hopes to leave behind a legacy. “I don’t want to leave this place doing what I’ve done for the last 20 years when the world has shifted,” Sheller said.

Winner hopes to inspire others

◆ **Times editor named**
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name was called as the winner, Veasey was back home hanging out with her mom. “My mom and I screamed in our living room!” she said.

Veasey’s professors say having a student like her is what makes their job “so rewarding.” “Jada is perhaps one of the most caring and conscientious students I have ever had an opportunity to teach,” said Audrey Sheller, assistant professor of nursing. “Knowing that Jada is soon to enter the profession of nursing makes me feel so honored and blessed to have been able to teach her. She is going to do such amazing things in this world, both in the profession of nursing and far beyond!”

While Veasey loves nursing, she said working for the Times has been “something special” and one of her favorite parts of college.

“Getting to learn from Joe (Sheller) and from other editors has been so awesome. I’m going to miss the late nights in the office once I graduate,” she said. As editor-in-chief, one of



Besides Jada Veasey, editor-in-chief, students who won statewide journalism awards are Annie Barkalow, managing editor; Gwen Johnson, opinion editor; and Veronica Jons, graduate who served as editor-in-chief. (Times file photos)

Veasey’s main goals has been to brainstorm how to keep it running once she is gone. “Historically, we’ve had a way bigger staff and had lots of underclassmen who could step up after people graduate. Right now, all but two members of our staff are graduating either in May or next December. “I’m just trying to find some Mustangs who love writing and love journalism and want to keep this awesome publication afloat in the coming years. Student journalism is so important and if the Times disappears, I think students are going to realize they don’t have an easy avenue to voice their thoughts on campus,” she said.

Biden nominates Black woman for court

By Jada Veasey
editor in chief

With only nine justices serving on the Supreme Court, it isn’t every day that one announces their retirement. But on Jan. 27, that’s just what happened. Justice Stephen Breyer will step down from the highest court in the United States at the end of the court’s current term.

Breyer is currently the oldest member of the Supreme Court at age 83. He has held that particular distinction since Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg passed away in 2020. In 1994, Breyer was nominated to the Court by President Bill Clinton and replaced the seat vacated by retiring justice Harry Blackmun.

Some may be surprised that not only is Breyer retiring himself, but the Justice who held his position before him retired as well. Supreme Court Justices are well known for their unique life-long terms, but Allison McNeese, Mount Mercy history professor, says that a Justice retiring isn’t as rare as someone might assume.

“It’s not uncommon for Supreme Court Justices to retire rather than die in office. I’ve read that just over 44% of Justices in U.S. history have died while serving on the Court, but just over 47% have retired from their positions,” said

McNeese. Breyer’s Supreme Court career spans over two decades, and he has made his mark on the Court. He is one of the Court’s liberal justices, of which, at the moment, there are three. Though he did not write the majority opinion, Breyer may be most recognizable to the general American public as one of the five justices who voted yes to legalize same sex marriage at the federal level in June of 2015.

More recently, Breyer penned the majority opinion in the 2021 case Mahanoy Area School District v. B. L. The case garnered media attention as it dealt with a high school cheerleader suspended from school for cursing in a Snapchat video she recorded outside of school. The Court ruled 8-1 that the school district violated the cheerleader’s freedom of speech. In the opinion, Breyer wrote, “It might be tempting to dismiss B. L.’s words as unworthy of the robust First Amendment protections discussed herein. But sometimes it is necessary to protect the superfluous in order to preserve the necessary.”

Breyer will retire on Oct. 3, which will mark the start of the Supreme Court’s next term. President Joe Biden nominated Ketanji Brown Jackson to replace Breyer. If approved by the Senate, she will become the court’s first Black woman.

Student prepares poster to present to poet

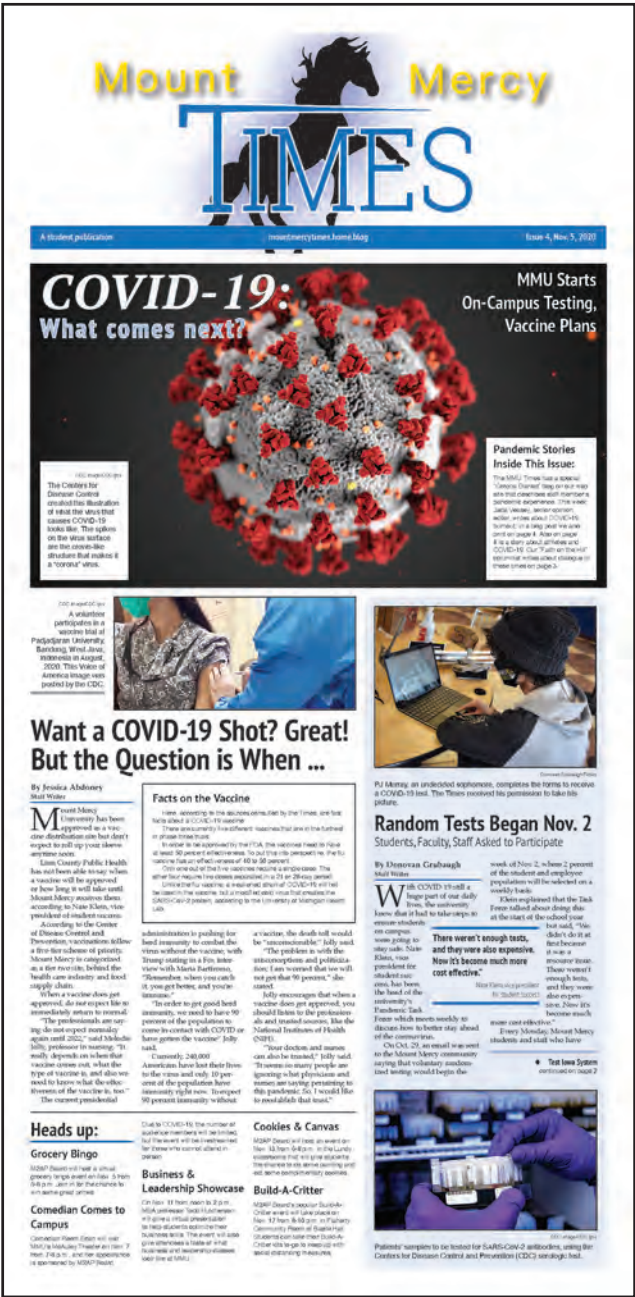
◆ **Driven by love**
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people’s takeaways.” “It’s a moment of releasing,” Smith said. “When you are coming from a place that is trying to transcribe and amplify love, you get it right.”

To show appreciation for these answers, the performance and workshop, Smith was presented with a framed poster of one of their poems designed by junior Teodora Simovic, a graphic design major.

“It was definitely an honor to do this and be part of this event,” Simovic said. “All the work that was done behind the scenes and the final poster turned out to be great, and I’m really glad that they liked it too.”

The words of Smith’s poem “Summer, Somewhere” were shown in the poster, acting as a reminder to broaden perspectives, learn about social issues and admire the love present in one’s life. As one line in the poem poignantly asks, “do you know what it’s like to live someplace that loves you back?”



compiled by Annie Barkalow managing editor

Feb. 21
5:49 p.m. Call, student inquiring about parking citation they received.
7 p.m. Found parking lot lights at the grad center out. Attempted to reset the parking lot lights’ switch, north parking lot remained off. Called facilities on-call and received no answer.
7:24 p.m. Received call back from facilities, who advised they would check the grad center lights in approximately 30 minutes.
7:37 p.m. Notified by facilities on-call that the issue with grad center parking lot lights is a known issue a work order is already in place and they need to bring in an electrician to fix it.
Feb. 22
10 a.m. Student called about game room being locked. Facilities came to fix the lock.
10:56 a.m. Library called and reported a student’s phone in the bathroom in the basement. It was turned in to the info desk.
11:20 a.m. Donnelly elevator is sticking and staying open after you push the buttons.
8:33 p.m. Student inquired about checking camera footage for the Andreas parking lots in regards to damage to her vehicle. Advised that there is no camera coverage currently of the Andreas parking lots. Asked if it happened on campus and the caller said thank you and hung up.
10:05 p.m. Andreas A resident complaining about lack of hot water. Advised that facilities is

aware of the situation but that a repair wasn’t likely until tomorrow.
11:12 p.m. Hennessey elevator stuck on first floor.
Feb. 23
1:38 p.m. Toyota SUV in pit sitting unattended with the rear hatch open—closed hatch.
11:00 p.m. Received call from Andreas that someone’s roommate was having a seizure, was informed that they had already contacted paramedics and the parents before they called Public Safety.
Feb. 25
11:29 a.m. Call, student in lower campus called about their smoke detector beeping, indicating low battery.
Feb. 26
8:44 a.m. Noticed the drinking fountain outside office hanging off the wall. Checked footage and couldn’t find anything.
9 p.m. Reviewed Rydin records. Embailed student (14 citations on record), encouraging them to register their vehicle.
11:57 p.m. Noted student on camera entering Donnelly. A quick check of door activities revealed it to be an RA.
Feb. 27
6:12 p.m. Student informed PS that the McAuley elevator was down.
9:55 p.m. Walk up, employee wanted to bring broken water fountain outside PS office to our attention.
10:22 p.m. Call, student complaining that the McAuley elevator is down.

Rush to remove pandemic precautions



A marketing & communications poster posted next to the mask station in the entrance of Regina Hall. MMU is removing its indoor mandate except in classes (Times photo by Jada Veasey).

It feels reckless to take off masks as 2,000 a day die

The COVID-19 pandemic isn't over, but you wouldn't know that based on how many politicians are shaking up pandemic precautions.

On Monday, Feb. 21, major pandemic news poured in from England. Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced that England plans to end all legal COVID-19 restrictions. This announcement followed just hours after the world learned that Queen Elizabeth tested positive for the virus.

In the United States, some politicians are handling things much the way Boris Johnson is. Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds has never been keen on COVID-19 restrictions, and thus Iowa is currently without a statewide mask mandate. In early February, neighboring Illinois' Gov. J.B. Pritzker unveiled a plan to dial down COVID-19 restrictions in the coming weeks.

Other governors are making similar announcements. According to the Chicago Tribune, the governors of Delaware, Connecticut, New Jersey and Oregon have laid out plans to adjust mask requirements in schools over the next couple months. Additionally, California will stop mandating masks

for fully vaccinated individuals.

Politicians are certainly correct that COVID-19 cases are on the decline, but now seems too early to start adjusting restrictions. According to the New York Times, the United States' COVID-19 numbers have declined 80 percent since they peaked in January, but national numbers of new cases are still topping 100,000 per day. That's not exactly a minuscule number.

It's also worth mentioning that more than 2,000 Americans a day are dying due to COVID-19. There was a time in this pandemic where that many deaths a day was unfathomable.

Has any policy maker stopped to consider that the restrictions are the reason that cases are on the decline? If we remove all precautions with reckless abandon, aren't we taking a gamble that cases could go on the rise again, and we'd be right back where we started?

On Friday, Feb. 28, Mount Mercy announced via an email from Nate

Klein that the university is changing its mask mandate. Klein's email said that beginning March 1, masks will only be required in classroom settings. This means that people in common areas and nonacademic settings on campus no longer need to wear masks. The email also says that the campus intends to remove the classroom mask mandate by the end of the semester.

We think MMU is being too hasty. Much as we all want it to end, the pandemic is not yet over.

The Times urges the university to return the mask mandate to how it was before, for now. It is important to make health and safety of our campus community a priority. Mount Mercy is also well-known as one of the region's top nursing and health sciences schools; it seems appropriate that a place known for such programs would put health and safety above all else. Isn't it better to be safe than sorry during a pandemic?

Opinion by Gwen Johnson, opinion editor

Next media move: Audio

We need to recognize journalism value



A weird quirk of coincidence has gotten me thinking.

A couple weeks ago, there was the awards ceremony for the Iowa College Media Association. This is a little bit like the Oscars for student publications that are part of said association. Categories include things like Best Headline Writing and Best Investigative Reporting, but also various and sundry Bests for different non-print formats like television and radio or podcasting.

A couple weeks ago was also the time that I had to choose a research project for a class, and it had to have a media-related topic.

I chose to combine my innate competitiveness with the knowledge that there are currently five people enrolled in introductory journalism classes, a fact that does not bode well for the publication you are currently reading.

My idea was to research

whether the inclusion of non-print media in journalism programs was related at all to student involvement.

While the project is in process, I thought I would speculate a bit.

College students tend to be on the go, from personal experience, and based on what I've seen, less likely to pick up a print publication than a digital one.

According to the timeline on the wall next to Student Services, the university at one point had a radio station.

Can you see where this going?

Radio stations require a lot of money to maintain, but there is a more modern invention with a much more reasonable barrier to entry: podcasting.

The university already has some of the required equipment, but the endeavor depends on student interest.

I am certainly interested in the idea—I think it might engage more Mustangs in student journalism, and it would definitely allow the Times to compete in more categories at ICMA—but I am also graduating soon.

I believe we as a campus need to engage more with student journalism and better recognize its value. Podcasting might help us reach a wider audience in the digital age, but first we need the work and accomplishments of student media to be acknowledged to get people interested in the first place.

I believe we as a campus need to engage more with student journalism and better recognize its value. Podcasting might help us reach a wider audience in the digital age.

Black is not a bad word; take time to celebrate it



It's Black History Month. Well, it was when I was writing this column, anyway. By the time this issue hits newsstands it will be March, but you'll have to forgive me for not being able to make the calendar bend to my will.

In celebration of Black History Month, I thought I'd impart a little wisdom — telling Black people you're "colorblind" is not the super woke win you think it is.

This teachable moment is brought to you by the Winter Olympic Games. The Olympics started on Feb. 4 and wrapped up on Feb. 20. If you didn't keep up with bobsledding at the games this year, you probably don't know that American bobsledder Elana Meyers Taylor made some major Olympic history. Meyers Taylor just became the first Black Winter Olympian to win five career Olympic medals.

After achieving that awesome feat, Meyers Taylor was excited. "It's so crazy to hear that stat and to know that I'm part of a legacy that's bigger than me," she said, according to CNN. Hopefully it just encourages more and more black athletes to come out to winter sports and not just Black athletes, winter sports for everybody."

As I scrolled through the comments on the official Team USA

Facebook post celebrating Meyers Taylor's achievement, some of the responses really started to get on my nerves. Tons of people were commenting things like "who cares if she's Black, just celebrate the achievement!" and "I don't see color, just an awesome athlete."

Not seeing color doesn't help anyone, especially the person of color. To ignore a person of color's skin color and ethnicity is to ignore our lived experiences. It's an insult, and it harms far more than it helps.

I would go so far as to say that being color blind is not only unhelpful to people of color but is actually counterproductive. Intentionally ignoring someone's lived experiences as a person of color is an attempt to erase those experiences. Additionally, not recognizing the experiences of a person of color can help to perpetuate racism. If no non-Black people recognize a Black person's Blackness, how can that Black person achieve equality? Step one to making society more equal for everyone means that first we have to recognize that it isn't equal yet.

So yes, we should be able to celebrate Elana Meyers Taylor's historic new record. Her Blackness isn't something to be ignored or overlooked; it is something to be celebrated.

Faith on the Hill by Vanessa Milliman

Joy is the root of God's unconditional love for all of us



What does it mean to seek joy? How will we know when we have found it?

Seek God in all things and you will find God in all things. Seek joy in all things and you will find joy in all things. The joy in Christ is sustainable for all eternity. While it is often associated with being happy, joy surpasses our emotions. External forces have no effect. This joy is the foundation of our lives. We were created by love, out of love, and for love. Joy has been defined as "the experience of knowing you are unconditionally loved." Loved. Unconditionally.

How can we be joyful when we are suffering? Look at suffering from God's perspective. He sees the bigger picture and knows the meaning of suffering. As humans, we only see one piece of

the puzzle. Joy comes with the understanding that love continues even when we are suffering. We are not limited by requirements, conditions, or circumstances. Loved. Unconditionally.

Think back to when you woke up this morning. I probably groaned as my alarm clock chirped away. I should have found joy in knowing that God gave me the gift of another day. One day can have so many moments of joy. Assuming you get eight hours of sleep, you have 16 hours for knowing

that you are unconditionally loved. For college students, we get even more hours in the day to know that we are loved.

Unconditionally.

The joys of everyday life can be overlooked easily. We are busy with our to-do lists and what our calendar dictates us to do next. The innocence of a child provides insight into where they find their joy. Children find joy in the simplest tasks.

They can be bouncing a ball and find so much joy in it. A child wants an action to be repeated over and over again. My

younger siblings loved peek-a-boo. Each time they reacted like it was the first time. They found joy in those moments and must have known they were loved. Unconditionally.

We can have this childlike joy in our lives as well. The boring tasks can bring joy if we look for it. My goal for the next couple of weeks is to find joy in brushing my teeth. Brushing my teeth can become the most mundane of tasks. It takes time that I would rather be doing something else (anything else to be honest). I can turn this into a moment of joy. I can acknowledge that I am taking care of myself by doing this. I can use this time to be in the moment, to be present.

I can simply contemplate how I am loved. Unconditionally.



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Annie Barkalow Managing Editor	Lavaris Duncan Sports Editor
Brianna Ostwinkle Web Editor	Vanessa Gaul Distribution Manager
Grace Ries News Editor	Joe Sheller Faculty Advisor

The Mount Mercy Times is a biweekly student publication serving MMU students, faculty, and staff and those close to the Mount Mercy University community. The Times is published on alternate Thursdays during the school year (each issue has a Thursday date, but the paper is usually distributed Wednesday).

In addition, the Times maintains a student-run website for the dissemination of additional news in various forms, including Times TV video stories.

Membership on the staff of the Times is open to any MMU student, full- or part-time, undergraduate or graduate.

Please attend one of our staff meetings, which are all open to the public, or contact an editor or our advisor for more information. Meetings will be announced in the paper, via social media and with on-campus posters. During the pandemic, meetings may be remote, at the discretion of editors.

Staff Writers are listed by name on the stories they write, photographers are credited on photos.

Content in the Times represents student writers, and is not official communication from Mount Mercy University. Editorials express the opinions of the Editorial Board and may not be shared by the university nor by all individual Times staff members. Bylined commentaries and cartoons reflect the opinions of the writer or artist.

Letters to the editor are encouraged. Letters should be concise, 300 words or less, and preferably emailed. The author's name, phone and address must be included. The name is published with the letter. Longer commentary, in the form of guest columns, is also encouraged. Besides the name, a photograph of the author is published with guest columns.

The Times reserves the right to edit or omit submissions. Letters and other submissions may be sent to the Times via email, campus mail or brought to the Times office in the lower

level of the Busse Library.

The Times sells advertising space. Advertisers are responsible for their own content, but the Times reserves the right to refuse an ad at its sole discretion.

The Mount Mercy Times will not print material found to be in poor taste or that it deems detrimental to a person's personal character. However, provocative comments on matters of public interest are encouraged.

Letters are due Friday at noon for consideration of publication the following Thursday.

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Retired GE executive to deliver Knapp lecture

By Vanessa Gaul
Staff writer

A distinguished businessman will be present at several events on campus today as part of the Knapp lecture series.

Today, Thursday, the business department is hosting Mr. John G. Rice, Vice Chairman of GE (retired) at three events. The first event will entail meeting with undergraduate students in Flaherty from 2:30 – 3:30 p.m., which is hosted by three business clubs: Enactus, Investments, and SHRM. Then, Rice will be meeting with graduate students at the

Graduate Center from 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. To close the event, Rice will address students and the community at-large “Lessons I’ve Learned” at 7 p.m. in the UC.

Rice has been president & CEO of GE Technology Infrastructure, GE Energy; and GE Transportation at different times throughout his career. His career began in 1978 where he held several leadership positions in the United States, Canada, and Singapore.

Rice holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, and is a life trustee there. He currently serves on several boards such as Baker

Hughes, the Foundation for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, and he is also on the President’s Council of the Hazelton Betty Ford Foundation.

Additionally, Rice serves as a senior advisor for the G-100 companies and is a senior professor at the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at Georgia Tech.

Throughout his life, Rice has been immersed in the business world and has valuable knowledge and advice to share. These events will teach others about business and how to be successful in the field.



John Rice, Knapp speaker



Artist Gail Chavenelle (above) speaks in the Janalyn Hanson White Gallery, as Jose Clemente, associate professor of art, listens. Students (right) view Chavenelle’s folded metal artwork. (Times photos by Vanessa Gaul)

Metal morphed into art explored

By Vanessa Gaul
staff writer

The concepts of permanence, color, abstraction, and business in metal sculptures captivated an audience interested in the works created by Gail Chavenelle.

Chavenelle explained how she created some of her most popular sculptures from her Permanent Paper collection, and why she made the artistic choices that she made on the evening of Feb. 25 in Janalyn Hanson White Gallery.

“I think metal moves with joy; it curves with happiness,” said Chavenelle when describing why she uses metal to create her art. Also, mentioning that when she made paper sculptures, they often got ruined, leading her to create a collection of metal pieces titled Permanent Paper.

She described her color palette being an old box of eight crayons, where each color is bright and happy.



“You never want to get caught matching anything,” said Chavenelle, explaining why her color pallet is so bright. “I’m as abstract as regular people like to be,” said Chavenelle, leading into the business aspects of being an artist.

She gave several examples of how people want to look at something and know what it is, so that is often what she creates, although she still enjoys creating wildly abstract pieces.

Chavenelle was transparent about her income from her art and talked about how the pandemic slowed business in the art industry significantly. However, that did not stop her from continuing to create her sculptures. She also often uses recycled material and seldom lets things that she could transform go to waste.

The charismatic personality and unique creations by Chavenelle taught the audience about metal sculptures and inspired them to continue creating interesting works.



A map illustrates the Russian assault on Ukraine, from the Crimean Peninsula in the south, Russian breakaway territories in the east, and Russia to the north. (Image from Wikimedia Commons)

War in Europe

Russia invades Ukraine, here are some FAQs

By Gwen Johnson
opinion editor

War has come again to Europe, with Russia’s recent invasion of Ukraine, an independent nation to its south. To help Mustangs get some context on this historic tragedy, the Times has prepared this Q&A explanation of the conflict.

Q: What is the historical context of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and when did the most recent conflict between the two nations begin?

A: Ukraine has been an independent nation since 1991. The BBC says that “president Putin has frequently accused Ukraine of being taken over by extremists, ever since its pro-Russian president, Viktor Yanukovich, was ousted in 2014 after months of protests against his rule.”

2014 was also the year that Russia illegally annexed Crimea, breaking a treaty that said it would respect the country’s borders in exchange for its denuclearization.

The BBC also says that “late in 2021, Russia began deploying big numbers of troops close to Ukraine’s borders, while repeatedly denying it was going to attack. Then Mr. Putin scrapped a 2015 peace deal for the east and recognized areas under rebel control as independent.”

According to NPR, “Putin himself has long said that he believes Ukrainians and Russians to be a single people, unified by language, culture and religion. In July 2021, he wrote a long essay about the ‘historical unity’ between the two nations.”

Q: How is NATO involved in the Russia/Ukraine conflict?

A: For context, NATO was formed after World War II to represent Western interests in Europe. Any European country can join, but Vladimir Putin believes that allowing Ukraine to join would break a promise from the 90s that NATO would not expand. This was brought up in early stages of negotiation at the time, but not formally offered in later stages. Putin sees the expansion of NATO to include Ukraine, the second-largest piece of the former USSR, as a threat to Russia.

Q: What has President Biden said about the conflict so far?

A: President Biden has called the conflict a “needless act of aggression against Ukraine and global peace and security.” He has also announced economic sanctions against Russian banks.

Q: Why is the conflict in Ukraine

important to Iowans?

A: This conflict means that prices for energy, food and raw materials could increase, and related supply chains could be further disrupted. It also means that we need to be extra mindful of the existence of disinformation and make doubly sure to verify that any information we share on the internet is reliable.

Facebook’s parent company caught two small scale Russian disinformation campaigns in their early stages. There were about 40 Facebook and Instagram accounts involved in the first, posting from Russia and Ukraine and calling the latter a failed state. The accounts were posing as independent media outlets.

According to NPR, “The focus of the efforts appeared to be driving traffic to the network’s own websites, Meta said, and the network posted across social media, including on Twitter, YouTube, Telegram and Russian social networks VK and Odnoklassniki. On Facebook and Instagram, it accumulated fewer than 5,000 followers across Facebook and Instagram. The company did not say how many people interacted with or saw its posts.”

Q: Is there any chance this could signal the start of World War III, and what would that mean?

A: There are 30 members of NATO, and we are obligated to defend them should Russia attack. This is stated by Article 5 of that treaty. The unclear element is cyberattacks. It would be a clear violation of Article 5 if traditional fighting spilled over into a neighboring NATO country, but if a cyberattack did something like cut power in one of those places, it may also count. This is not quite as clear since the tactic is so new.

It was recently announced that Ukrainian and Russian officials will meet for peace talks, but the announcement did not specify when.

Q: Are we vulnerable to and likely to see Russian cyberattacks?

A: NPR has reported that “various federal agencies, including the Treasury and the Department of Homeland Security, have warned of possible cyberattacks on targets like big banks and power grid operators.”

Final note: The Times advises you to get your news from multiple reliable sources and remember that all Mount Mercy students have access to the New York Times, which has live updates of the situation in Ukraine. In addition to the BBC, information in this story came from NPR’s special series “Ukraine invasion—explained.”

Flashback

—memories from MMU student media

compiled by Annie Barkalow
managing editor

Seven years ago, March 2015
BSU founder is always on the go

“All people are different and should be celebrated for their differences,” according to Capria Davis, founder and co-president of the newly-formed Black Student Union Club. Davis, a member of the women’s track team and Multi-Cultural Club, was perplexed that Mount Mercy did not have a BSU when she transferred from Winona State in Minnesota, where she had been involved with one—so she started one

herself. Davis thought having a BSU on campus would be a good resource to not only educate students, but to celebrate diversity within the community. As a communications-media major, Davis hopes to continue to spread the word about BSU and watch it grow. “I want to give back and give other people opportunities,” she said.

Five years ago, March 2018
In response to hate incidents, diversity statement signed

A statement describing the university’s commitment to diversity and inclusion was opened to be signed by students,

staff and faculty on Feb. 14 in the campus lobby and Feb. 21 in the Chapel of Mercy. “Several incidents that have happened have prompted us to really kind of state Mount Mercy’s position,” said Sister Linda Bechen, vice president of mission and ministry. Several campuses across the nation are working to combat intolerance as well, focusing on issues from outright intolerance to subtler forms of bias.

Two years ago, March 2020
Incoming MMU president takes over at Time of Challenge

After almost a month of anticipation, Dr. Robert Beatty was named the new

president for MMU by the board of trustees. Beatty will step into his new role July 1. Saying how pleased he was that his dream job opened up at Mount Mercy, he added, “I am very optimistic about the future of this institution.” Beatty faces some challenges as he takes over: the need to increase enrollment, maintaining quality faculty with tenure, and guiding how a Catholic University manages in today’s world. “I am excited to see what he has planned for Mount Mercy,” said Alma Apolonio Bernal, who served as a student representative on the presidential search committee.

Haley Hartshorne, a graphic design major, practices with the women's soccer team. (Times photo by Grace Ries)



Juggling several sports

First-year student plays soccer, track & field

By Grace Ries
news editor

Practicing without a team seems unrealistic—but not for freshman Haley Hartshorne, a graphic design major, who participates on both the women's track & field team and soccer team. All of Hartshorne's classes are during the afternoon and evening, which is the same time as her track practices. "It has been challenging to practice on my own recently but going to soccer practice times in the mornings and doing my track workouts during that time has really kept me honest in getting my workouts in," Hartshorne said, "especially since my soccer team is there and are just as supportive as my track team."

The demanding work that Hartshorne has put in with the sprints

crew and high jumps does not go unnoticed by her coaches. "Haley is definitely filling some gaps on our team. We only have one other high jumper on the team, so having Haley has been and will continue to be a big contribution to the team," Dan Rolling, women's high jump coach, said. "At each meet she has placed high enough to score points, and at the conference meet that is what we would like to see."

Being a multi-sport athlete with such an abnormal schedule has kept Hartshorne on her toes, but she enjoys every second of it. "Being in multiple sports is definitely hard, I always feel like there is somewhere to be and something to do," Hartshorne said. "Being a freshman, I do think it can be overwhelming at times, but I also believe that's why it is the most rewarding. It is a

lot of hard work but it's paying off." With the dedication and time that Hartshorne has put in, Rolling recognizes her athletic potential as a high jumper and has big goals for her. "My hope for Haley is that she will continue to chip away at technical aspects of her jumps, keep her composure throughout the process and trust the training," Rolling said. "If she does that, I think she will put herself in a very competitive position for the conference meet."

Hartshorne recently qualified for the Heart of America Indoor Track & Field Champions in Maryville, Missouri. She jumped her seasons best and tied at 12th place, alongside another Mount Mercy jumper, sophomore Tara Sampson, and a jumper from Graceland. The women's team placed fifth overall out of 12 teams in Mount Mercy's Conference.

Basketball player aspires to be a nurse practitioner

By Lavaris Duncan
sports editor

Addison Rath is currently in her senior year at Mount Mercy University. She is from a small town in Iowa, called Kalona. It is about 45 minutes away from Mount Mercy. Rath doesn't feel like she is too far away from home. "It hasn't been too bad, because I am still within the area of being able to go home, which I enjoy going home to get a break once in a while," she said.

Rath is a nursing major. After she graduates in May, she plans to pursue emergency medicine and hopes to eventually further her nursing journey as a travel nurse. Rath hopes to obtain a Master of Science in nursing and or a Doctor of Nursing practice degree.

Rath has spent a lot of time reflecting on her college career at Mount Mercy. She said one of the biggest lessons she's learned at Mount Mercy has been time management. "Being a nursing student and being a part of the Mount Mercy women's basketball team can be a challenge. Both of these have consumed a large majority of my time. With time management, I was able to learn how to prioritize and organize my time between academics and athletics."

Although basketball and nursing school has consumed the majority of Addison's time, she explained that the people who make up Mount Mercy and the many friendships she's gained have been her favorite parts of the university. "I have grown close to many of my teammates and students in the classroom while being at Mount Mercy."

Volleyball player juggles nursing and social life

By Lavaris Duncan
sports editor

Being a nursing major while attempting to have a social life can be challenging. Adding playing volleyball on top of that makes the challenge even more difficult.

Senior Olivia Makinen has learned the importance of balancing certain factors in life. "College taught me how to balance class work, volleyball, a job, all while still having a social life because that is just as important. I learned how to better take responsibility through college and manage my skills."

Makinen is a nursing major, with a minor in child and adolescent studies. Makinen came to Mount Mercy from Wisconsin. After college, Olivia wants to return home and start her journey as a labor and delivery nurse.

Mount Mercy has been important for Maniken in creating lifelong friendships and memories. Her Mount Mercy experience allowed Maniken to find a "forever friend" in fellow senior nursing major Tori Alexander. Maniken and Alexander did not know each other prior to attending Mount Mercy but, with the help of volleyball, rooming together, and their nursing courses, they became best friends.

"I am forever grateful to have had this opportunity for this lifelong friendship," Maniken says her favorite thing about Mount Mercy has been "getting to meet new teammates each year of volleyball and seeing the growth and lasting friendships both on and off the court."

Sports in Short

Three men earn conference honors

Three Mustangs from the Mens Basketball team received all conference honors. Ryan Bartley was named freshman of the year. Bartley averaged averaged eight points and three rebounds. He started 18 games as a freshman, his top performance was 21 points against Grandview Earlier in the season. Royshaw Webb was named second team all conference. The senior averaged 14 points and six rebounds. Webb joined the 1000-point club this season. Bailey Basala was named All Conference Honorable Mention. Basala was the leading scorer for the Mustangs, averaging 17 points and 6.5 rebounds a game. Bailey ended up breaking the school record for most 3's made. The record was held for over 25 years , it now belongs to Basala at 300.

Men end season in first round

The Mount Mercy Mustangs took on Evangel in the first round of the conference tournament. The back-and-forth game led to Mount Mercy having a 10-point lead late but the Mustangs weren't able to hold on, falling 71-63 in a season ending loss. Anthony Horton led the Mustangs with 16 points, five rebounds, four assists and three steals. Lavaris Duncan added 9 points off the bench.

On Feb. 19, the Mustangs take a hard loss on their senior night. Chris Giles had a spectacular senior day performance, leading the team with 15 points and five rebounds. Anthony Horton Jr. and Cole Hrubes brought a spark off the bench scoring 15 a piece. The mustangs fell to 9-10 in the conference.

Four women receive recognition

Four women basketball players were selected for all conference honors. Madison Dreckman was named all-conference first team. She averaged 11 points and seven rebounds a game. Sammy Mia was selected for the all conference second team. Mia was MMU's leading scorer with an average of 14 points a game, and she also led the team in steals collecting 42 over the season. Kyla Richardson and Annika Headington were both named all-conference honorable mention.

Women fall to Mid-Amerca Nazarene

On Feb. 24, the womens basketball team traveled to Olathe, Kansas to face Mid America Nazarene in the first round of the conference tournament. Mid AM dominated from start to finish, putting an end to the Mustangs' season. Kennedi Fulwyllie scored a team high 16 points off the bench in her final game as a mustang. Sammy Mia added 11 points as well.

The women took a hard loss on senior night. After leading at halftime, they started the second half allowing Grandview to go on a 19-4 run. The Mustangs fell to 10-9 in the conference but earned the third seed of the conference tournament. Senior Kyla Richardson led the way with 17 points. Annika Headington added 11 points and a game high 14 rebounds.

Men's volleyball takes two at home

The Mustang men's volleyball team was strong at home, winning 3-0 matches at home againsts University of Health Sciences and Pharmacy Feb. 25 and sixth-ranked Missouri Baptist Feb. 26. Against Eutectics, Lucas Rebula and Evan Gaskill had seven kills each. Tiago Almeida got 12 digs. Against the Spartans Feb. 26, MMU had to battle a bit more, winning 28-26, 25-21 and 21-21. Rubela and Gaskil had 17 and 11 kills. On Friday, the Mustangs will take on 13th ranked Missouri Valley at 7 p.m. in the Hennessey Rec Center.

Softball season starts with loss

The Mount Mercy softball team opened their season in Florida against Webber International and Southeastern Feb. 10. The Mustangs dropped both doubleheaders. The Mustangs open their season 0-4 but look to turn things around as they have four games upcoming.

Baseball dominates in early play

The mount mercy baseball team opened up their season with a dominating performance Feb. 11 against College of the Ozarks. They scored double digit runs in both games. In the first game, Kaimana Souza-Paaluhi added a two-run homer as MMU bopped the Bobcats 10-3, and then took the second game 12-1.

Skater from CR among Olympic athletes

By Jada Veasey
editor-in-chief

The 2022 Winter Olympic Games were full of dramatic highs and lows. The Games took place in Beijing, China, and looked a little different than past Winter Olympics due to COVID-19 restrictions. Those restrictions did not stop the two-week event from being packed with action.

The Games ran from Feb. 4 to Feb. 20 and featured 15 different sports in three categories: the ice sports, the alpine skiing and snowboarding disciplines, and the Nordic events. Eighty-four different countries participated in the 2022 Olympic Games.

The United States fared well in the overall medal count, securing eight gold medals, 10 silver medals, and seven bronze medals. This brought the overall medal count for Team USA to 25, meaning the United States ranked fifth overall for the most medals won. The number one country overall in both number of gold medals and number of medals overall was Norway, with 16 gold medals and 37 medals overall.

The United States did unusually well in figure skating at the 2022 Games. Team USA won a silver medal in the team figure skating event. The medal-winning team consisted of men's skaters Nathan Chen and Vincent Zhou, women's skater Karen Chen, pairs team Alexa Knierim and Brandon Fraizer, ice dancers

Madison Chock and Evan Bates, and ice dancers Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donahue. The silver medal is an improvement of Team USA's bronze medal in the team figure skating event in 2018.

The U.S. did well in the individual figure skating events, as well. Men's skater Nathan Chen took home the gold in his discipline, redeeming himself after a disappointing fourth-place finish at the 2018 Winter Games. Madison Hubbell and partner Zachary Donahue secured a bronze medal in ice dance.

A Cedar Rapids native and pairs skater also made history at the Games. Timothy LeDuc is the first ever publicly nonbinary athlete to compete at a Winter Olympic Games. LeDuc and partner Ashley Cain-Gribble finished in eighth place in the pairs event.

Other big wins for the U.S. included gold medals in the following events: women's monobob, men's freeski slopestyle, women's snowboard cross, women's 500m speedskating, women's snowboard halfpipe, mixed team ariels and mixed team snowboard cross.

After two back-to-back Olympic years, due to the delay of the summer 2020 Games because of COVID-19, the world will have to wait the usual two years to see more Olympic excitement. The next Summer Games will occur in Paris in 2024.

The universe is her hobby



Clare Bechen loves staring at the stars, playing cards, plucking at the piano--the MMU freshman has diverse interests. Above, she walks on campus in September. More recently, right, she plays solitaire in Busse Library. (Times images by Vanessa Gaul and Gwen Johnson)



Outdoors: A major and a major source of activities for Bechen

By Gwen Johnson
opinion editor

One Mount Mercy freshman has a fascination with the cosmos, a flare for music and an astounding number of hobbies.

Clare Bechen has many extra-curricular interests, only about half of which point in the direction of her choice to major in outdoor conservation.

Bechen was inspired to choose her major by a middle school

project involving a presentation on a global issue and writing a letter to a notable figure. She chose to present on oil spills and ocean pollution, and she wrote to then-president Barack Obama.

The light bulb moment came when he wrote back telling her to stick with it.

She chose Mount Mercy because it was the only school on her list that offered her desired

SNAPSHOT
Meet the people on The Hill
Clare Bechen

major and was in the Midwest. Some of her other options were farther away and did not offer music outside of clubs.

Bechen grew up “surrounded by music” and was determined to keep it in her life. She plays French horn, organ and piano, and says that “people can always tell” when she is at a piano because she habitually plays “Linus and Lucy,” known to

most as the Peanuts theme song.

In the category of non-musical hobbies, Bechen has a sizable list as well. Being fond of Lake Michigan, she is a capable body surfer and amateur astronomer.

She also enjoys sculpting snow into the shapes of her friends’ favorite animals and is perfectly willing to be out in the cold for multiple consecutive hours to do so.

Her love of the outdoors does not round out her collection of hobbies, though—tap dancing

and an extensive knowledge of card games also make appearances.

She credits her wide range of interests to being raised by “the last of the Baby Boomers.”

Bechen is already planning for graduate school, preferably somewhere near a body of water, and wants to add a minor to go along with outdoor conservation. Which of her many passions will rise to such a rank is anyone’s guess, but she has an abundance of options to choose from.

Heard on the Hill

What people are saying on topics of interest

By Gloria Osei Tutu
staff writer

The temperature may say “winter” but Mustangs can take heart, spring break is coming. So, the Times asked:

What are your spring break plans?

J’Lyn Knutson, freshman, exercise science

“I will be going home to spend the St Patrick’s Day with my grandpa, since he’s Irish so it’s a tradition.”



Stephanie Osei Tutu, sophomore, human resources

“Taking a trip to Houston, Texas, with my friends.”



Drew Turner, freshman, exercise science

“Playing baseball.”



Alicia Fernandez Castano, freshman, elementary education

“Going to see Chicago with friends as an international student.”



Paige Adair, senior, psychology

“Going to Florida to spend time with family.”



Mercy Sikitu, junior, health care administration

“Going to Alabama to visit my friends.”



Talking about race on the Hill

SGA, in conjunction with the department of diversity, equity and inclusion, hosted its first “Hot Lunch, Hot Topic” session Feb. 16. The topic, in honor of Black History Month and the Sisters of Mercy Critical Concern on racism, was “what does it mean to be non-racist vs. anti-racist?” Tiara Muñoz, SGA president (top) and Miguel Sola (left) watch the conversation. University President Todd Olson (above) speaks in the UC. (Times photos by Annie Barkalow)

SGA Notes by Tiara Muñoz, SGA President

Treatment of international students identified in SGA survey as key issue



My name is Tiara Muñoz, and I am your 2022 Student Government Association (SGA) president. One of the projects that we have completed this term is Whine Week, which is an opportunity for Mount Mercy students to let us know what they would like changed on campus. This helps SGA decide which projects should gain our attention and what issues are present on campus that we may not know about. Whine Week dictates how we plan out our initiatives for the year.

This year, we had roughly 40 responses with an array of topics ranging from cafeteria food to facilities to technology. One topic that stood out as especially important includes the treatment of our international student population. International students make up 6% of our overall campus population and come from a diverse set of

backgrounds that enrich the student life on campus. Students from international countries come to the United States with an expectation for a quality education, and some even come primarily to participate in our athletic programs.

As some of you may know, relocating to a new country involves intense processes and requirements that students must follow to complete their education in the United States. Mount Mercy and the international students must work together to complete these requirements for the process to be finalized. There are many departments that must come together to complete these tasks including Mount Mercy admissions, financial aid, student services, registrar’s office, business office, and the international systems that dictate if their paperwork will be approved.

Mount Mercy has dedicated time and resources to bringing international students to campus and within athletic

programs. What has been discovered is that there is a lack of dedicated time and resources for international students once they have arrived. Some students explain that they have felt unsupported by the university and have had to rely on other students or coaches to receive adequate accommodations. Even then, students who do not have these resources find themselves isolated until they are able to reach someone for assistance.

We understand that Mount Mercy has personnel to address these concerns but has shown a lack of support for these professionals to better equip international students. If you are in need of services at this time, please contact diversity@mtmercy.edu to schedule a meeting to address these issues and figure out how to move forward. SGA and the department of diversity, equity, and inclusivity see you, hear you, and want to help you as much as we can.