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THE PARTHENON

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Webinar series recommends remote working after the pandemic

By **XENA BUNTON**
MANAGING EDITOR

To continue the Small Business Webinar Series, Brad D. Smith Schools of Business hosted Business Re-imagined: Utilizing Cloud Technology to Improve Performance webinar on Monday, June 28.

The purpose of the webinar, presented by Timothy Bryan, assistant professor of accounting, and Shayna Chapman, chief strategist at Shaynaco, was to provide information about building a cloud system and the benefits while managing a business after a pandemic.

According to GCF Global using “the cloud” means to use the stored servers on the internet instead of a computer’s hard drive. The term that is also referred to as cloud computing or cloud storage, means to use web-based email services, file storage or sharing, web applications, image editing application, Google Docs or to back up data.

In an hour timeframe, both accounting professionals addressed struggles during the pandemic, the process of change, and what cloud programs can provide for both the employee and the client.

“We have to change what we are doing so we can unlock our minds, attitudes and action so that we can then change our hope for values and practices,” Bryan said. “Change will never ever be as slow as it is today.”

Bryan starts his presentation by explaining Kurt Lewin’s change model. Bryan restates Lewin’s work by saying the first steps into changing is to mentally unfreeze, change group values and to refreeze at a new level. He then uses Ernest Hemingway’s “The Sun Also Rises,” to quote the process of change, “Two ways: gradually and suddenly.”

“For change to occur, the pain of not changing has to be greater than the pain of changing,” Bryan said. “We are so stuck in our ways that to force a change we have to feel like it is worse off for us not to change than to change.”

Bryan said that all types of businesses experienced a change during the pandemic.

The Harvard Business Review released research in May 2021 that 70% of businesses plan on the hybrid shift to be permanent. The research shows that there was a lack of culture inclusion and



COURTESY OF XENA BUNTON

the pre-pandemic work from home employee’s had lower promotion rates.

“We need to be concerned about [culture]. I think you are seeing that most businesses are not connected to 100% hybrid. You have to actively pursue activities within the culture,” Bryan said.

Bryan that having virtual staff in workplace does not matter—besides the sales associated—and that the team can still be managed effectively. He said that the pandemic was not the first time he has used remote work.

Over 20 years ago, Bryan had an employee a mother of 2 high schoolers that lived 30 minutes away from the office. She missed several school events due to work and Bryan decided to organize a way for her to work at home to successfully complete her job requirements and continue to support her children. Bryan’s business partners were concerned about how he would be able to hold the employee accountable.

“I told them it going to be easy. If she is not getting the work done in the same amount of time

Local gift shop offers collection for Pride Month

By **CATHERINE BLANKENSHIP**
REPORTER

Starting as a beginning retail space within a ceramic studio, Full Circle Gifts and Goods has evolved into a unique shopping space located in the Heritage Station area of downtown Huntington, West Virginia in 2016.

After 14 months of being closed due to COVID safety, owners Noelle and Scott Horsfield reopened for business May 1st of 2021 after moving their business strictly online.

“We are thrilled that we are reopen officially,” Noelle Horsfield said. “We offer unique shopping experience where visitors can choose from entirely handmade one-of-a-kind ceramics, apparel, greeting cards, house designed porcelain items, handmade jewelry

from other local businesses across the country, and various stickers.”

The Horsfield’s business provides an inclusive environment in hopes of giving back to the Huntington community. The two are on the Huntington Pride Board and designed the first shirt for the annual event.

“We started designing the Huntington pride shirts when it began two years ago, and wanted to give back to the community,” Noelle said. “We have various items available for pride at our store and want to create a nice inclusive environment for our customers.”

Full Circle offers local pickup as well as online orders.

Catherine Blankenship can be contacted at Blankensh403@

See Webinar on pg. 10



COURTESY OF CATHERINE BLANKENSHIP

Editor Recommendations: Binge-worthy shows

- Teen Wolf (Amazon Prime and Hulu)
- Shadow and Bone (Netflix)
- Criminal Minds (Netflix and Hulu)
- Arrow (Netflix)
- The Falcon and Winter Soldier (Disney+)

Abby Hanlon
Campus Editor



- Friends (HBO Max)
- Grace and Frankie (Netflix)
- Schitt's Creek (Netflix)
- Lucifer (Netflix)
- Ginny & Georgia (Netflix)

Brittany Hively
Executive Editor

- The Handmaid's Tale (Hulu)
- Bojack Horseman (Netflix)
- Gilmore Girls (Netflix)
- Tiger King (Netflix)
- Portlandia (Netflix)

Isabella Robinson
News Editor

- American Horror Story (Netflix and Hulu)
- Sailor Moon (Hulu)
- Pose (Netflix)
- Euphoria (HBO max)
- Big Mouth (Netflix)

Catherine Blankenship
Feature Editor

- American Horror Story (Netflix and Hulu)
- The Morning Show (Apple TV+)
- Billy on the Street with Billy Eichner (Netflix)
- Orange is the new black (Netflix)
- Stranger things (Netflix)

Xena Bunton
Managing Editor

‘Democracy, Jobs and CARE-a-van’ mobilizes citizens across W.Va.

By **ISABELLA ROBINSON**
NEWS EDITOR

West Virginians across the state rally to demand action to ensure voting rights as the Working Families Party and WV Citizen Action Group hosts the Democracy, Jobs and CARE-a-van.

The caravan made its first stop Monday at Ritter Park, and will be visiting five other cities in West Virginia before embarking on a journey to Washington, D.C.

“The whole point is to engage with local communities, talk to regular folks and hold politicians accountable and get them to understand that people here do have a voice,” Zachary Shrewsbury, regional director of WV Citizen Action Group, said.

The event included live music from Jeremy Short, the band Heavy Hitters, Colten Settle and Kayla Medlen.

“This is all about getting to know the community, signing up and then just hopefully coordinating together in the future so we can lead action together, making a difference,” Shrewsbury said.

Local businesses at the Huntington rally included Southside Sliders, the Ice Cream a Go-Go bicycle, and vendors selling local art including Art by Linda, Bashful Bee and Conjure Dust Design.

Shrewsbury said Common Defense is partnering with the two organizations helping to support the caravan, and the group is looking for any progressive veterans in the area or state that would like to volunteer to help support events in the future.

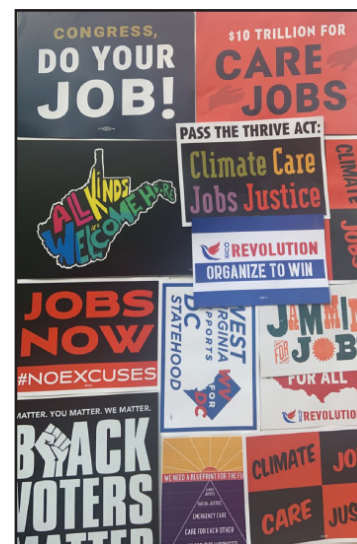
“We want veterans to have a presence in the community and have a platform to share their opinions so the right-wing does not control all

the veterans’ narratives,” Shrewsbury

The caravan’s next stop is in Beckley on July 2, and will also visit Parkersburg, Hinton, Morgantown and Shepardstown before making its way to the nation’s capital on July 13 for the CARE Day of Action.

“Between the bills we are all excited for leading to midterm elections, it is a really good energy base to start from,” Lenny Sundahl, a volunteer at the event promoting support for the For The People Act, said. “As someone working in progressive organizing, it is the kind of thing that we need to see.”

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COURTESY ISABELLA ROBINSON

Top: Activists display signs urging politicians to vote in their interest.



Bottom: Cabell County students urge Senators Manchin and Capito to pass the For The

Alumni Spotlight: Autumn Pivont Paluch

By ABBY HANLON



COURTESY OF @SHOPTHELEAF

The two daughters, Payton and Landry, pose for a photo at the Atlanta market.

“Owning a boutique was always something I knew I wanted to do, but the timing was never right.” Autumn Pivont Paluch, Marshall alumna and owner of The Leaf Boutique, said. “I had three children, and they were young and had numerous activities and sports. When my daughters were in college, they actually convinced me.”

Paluch grew up in Hinton, West Virginia before attending Bauder Fashion College in Atlanta, Georgia. She then transferred to Marshall where she graduated in 1991 in Fashion Merchandising. Paluch currently resides in Raleigh, North Carolina with her husband, son, and two daughters.

On September 19, 2017, Paluch opened The Leaf Boutique alongside her daughters Payton and Landry.

“Then, the timing was just right. We had moved to Raleigh and I was like ‘yeah I think we can do this,’” said Paluch, “Basically, it was just sitting around the kitchen table, talking about it, and next thing you know, we were hiring a graphic designer to do a logo, doing the website, and getting a URL set up. We literally just did it all in just a couple of weeks.”

Inspiration for their business name came from a project that Paluch created during her time at Marshall. The trio reworked the name and crafted their business motto. “Be a trendsetter every season.”

“When I was in college, I had to design my own store and logo. I was going to name it ‘Autumn’s Leaf’. When we decided to do this together, we changed it to ‘The Leaf Boutique’. It goes with our motto, and the leaves change with every season and so do the clothes. We try to make all of our customers the trendsetter,” said Paluch.

Though, this is not the first business Paluch’s family has owned and operated. Her grandmother owned her own business, “Tots and Teens” in Hinton. Her mother is still running the Hinton Floral & Gift, and her father owns the Pivont Funeral Home that he runs alongside his brother.

From her parents, Paluch credits her for their emphasis on creating personal connection with their customers and drive for their customers’ satisfaction.

“My parents go above and beyond for everyone, so they have just kind of instilled that in me,” said Paluch, “We try to do the same, like if a customer sends us a DM or calls us asking when their item is going to ship, and they have a wedding or a birthday party, we try to get it there.”

Another personal piece of their brand is their color scheme. Purple is not only Paluch’s favorite color, it was also her grandmother’s favorite.

“We have this bright purple couch on the bus, so I just know that if she were still living she would be sitting right on that purple couch,” said Paluch, “She worked until she was 96 and passed away at 100. She would have loved to see me and the girls following in her footsteps.”

In addition to their website, Paluch and her daughters travel in their Leaf Bus, a 26 passenger van that they renovated in April of 2019 to take to shows and host their pop-up shops. It is fully furnished with a fitting room, multiple racks for clothes, an armoire showcasing their jewelry and accessories, and a the purple couch. They have traveled across North Carolina and brought the bus back to West Virginia, but the farthest they have traveled was for a pop-up shop in Ashland, Kentucky where Paluch had lived for 12 years. In addition to taking the bus to shows, they travel to different universities for pop-up shops and partnering with sororities, where they give 10% of the proceeds to that sorority’s philanthropy.

Paluch was a member of the Alpha Xi Delta at Marshall, and her oldest daughter, Payton, also attended the same sorority “I was an Alpha Xi Delta at Marshall, and so was my oldest daughter Payton. Then, my younger daughter, Landry, is an Alpha Delta Pi at East Carolina University,” said Paluch. “That is always a good cause to donate back to the different philanthropies and we love to be able to do that.”

Though, Paluch’s favorite place to take the bus and her daughters is back home to Hinton.

“When I take the bus to Hinton, I just love giving back to that community. I get to see who I went to high school with, my mom’s friends, and everybody knows everyone,” said Paluch,

“They have a couple little small boutiques there, but they don’t have anything like the bus, so when I pull into town, they just get really excited.”

They have also taken the bus to Girl Tribe in Charlotte, NC to sell their items, which was a two-day event right before the holidays and were able to pull it into the civic center to set up and sell their items out of it as well. Paluch is excited to go to the Southern Women Show in Raleigh this year, since it was cancelled last year due to the pandemic.

ALUMNI cont. on 10

Mark Your Calendars

2021 Marshall Football Schedule

SEPT 04 @ NAVY	OCT 16 @ NORTH TEXAS
SEPT 11 N.C. CENTRAL	OCT 30 FIU
SEPT 18 EAST CAROLINA	NOV 06 @ FLORIDA ATLANTIC
SEPT 23 @ APPALACHIAN STATE	NOV 13 UAB
OCT 02 @ MIDDLE TENN.	NOV 20 @ CHARLOTTE
OCT 09 OLD DOMINION	NOV 27 WKU



Congratulations, Kathryn Gonzalez

*for being selected to play on
the Dominican Republic
National Team*



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THE PARTHENON

The Parthenon, Marshall University's student newspaper, is published by students Wednesdays during the regular semester and every other week during the summer. The editorial staff is responsible for news and editorial content.

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THE PARTHENON'S CORRECTIONS POLICY

"Factual errors appearing in The Parthenon should be reported to the editor immediately following publication. Corrections the editor deems necessary will be printed as soon as possible following the error."

THE FIRST AMENDMENT | The Constitution of the United States of America

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceably assemble; and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

OPINION

Herd Reads

By **BRITTANY HIVELY**

Omen of Stones by Casey Bond

Genre: Young adult royalty fairy tales & folklore; fantasy

Spirit and stone. Song and Sky. Fate and Future all align. Casey Bond takes readers on a magical journey of secrets, lies, and self-discovery with Omen of Stones.

While Omen of Stones can possibly be read as a stand-alone without much issue, it is the sequel to When Wishes Bleed. Omen of Stones follows the story of the son of Sable from When Wishes Bleed.

Omen does not know where she comes from or why she has such a connection with the stones, but it is who she is. River, the prince, who has been sheltered for his protection has started to discover he takes after his mother with witchy powers.

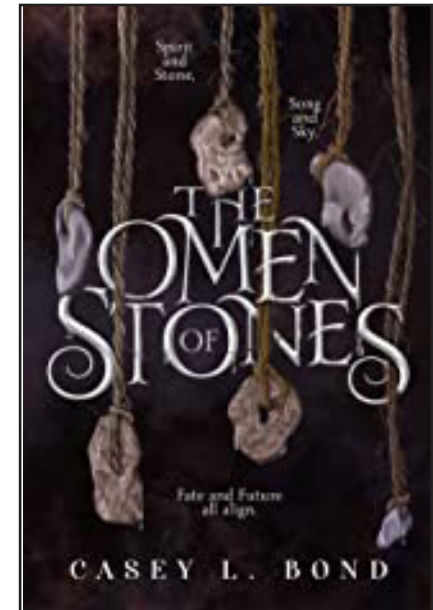
Both start hearing Fate in a way they have never heard anything else. Strong and loud, the calling outweighs everything else.

River follows Fate's call and is faced with a life-altering situation of death by purists or salvation from a mysterious girl.

The two go on a journey to discover who Omen truly is, save River's kingdom and to discover why the pair feel stronger when together, all while gaining better footing on their own abilities.

Bond paints a tangible picture that makes the reader almost feel as if they were standing with the characters. Her descriptions are just enough to give readers a vivid visual without being too much.

Not only does Bond give us an adventurous journey with the characters, she gives just enough romance to appease the romance seekers, but does not go overboard to the point non-romance readers will be turned off.



The story is unique and unlike anything I've read before, an intriguing fantasy world full of adventure.

Bond takes creative worlds to a new level with this series.

A magically phenomenal tale with a bewitching modern spin. A highly recommended read for readers who love fantasy, adventure and/or magical stories.

Casey Bond lives in West Virginia with her husband and their two beautiful daughters. Her favorite books are the ones that contain magical worlds and flawed characters she would want to hang out with. Most days of the week, she writes young adult fantasy and paranormal fiction, letting her imaginary friends spill onto the blank page.

If you have an Appalachian book to recommend for Herd Reads, please email hayes100@marshall.edu.

Column: Your person is coming

By **Brittany Hively**
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

BFF. Best friends forever. Is that still a thing?

With the increase of social media induced fantasies and drama, some may argue that it seems like true best friends are getting rare.

But I would argue that. I think we all have best friends. They sometimes change throughout life. They sometimes remain the same. But they are there.

Everyone my daughter meets is her best friend. My son has had the same best friend all three years of school. My husband has had the same best friend since preschool. I have had the same best friend since I was 20-years old.

While most 20-year olds are in college and on a journey of life and self-discovery, I think it's important for you to remember, it is okay to have more than one best friend and it is okay if that best friend changes throughout different seasons of life and it is also okay if we keep that same friend for life.

Just know, your person is coming.

I always dreamed of having that true best friend who I could trust with all of my secrets, who I could trust with my life. That person who I could always count on to be there for me and who would know I would always be there for them. Someone for the small and big things.

We moved a lot growing up, so I had a different best friend all throughout elementary school. Two different ones in middle school and I think two in high school. The one in high school, I had random interactions throughout some part of adulthood, but has since become a nonexistent relationship.

It seemed like I would never find that person for me as I watched people have the same best friends all throughout these years.

But sometimes things are not always what they seem, we do not get to decide the timing and finding that true best friend, that person is the same thing...

Because one day while working in a Cracker Barrel at 20 years old, my person showed up. I didn't know it then, but I think she did.

Almost 11 years of friendship now, many arguments, many life events, many boyfriends, two marriages, five children, deaths, moves, school and the list goes on and on and on. We've been through it all and we're still standing.

So, if you're worried, just know your person is coming.

That person who answers your call for help at 2am. That person who sits with you while you cry because they know you do not want touched. That person who brings you food just because, that person who is there whenever you need them and who you are there for when they need you.

Through thick and thin, through life changes and personal growth and through all the ups and downs of life.

Sometimes we look at other people and think we will never get that. We think it is out of our reach and we could never have a friend like those people or those people, but they will come.

Your person is out there, just be patient. And while you wait, be a good friend to those you have now because in the end, you can never have too many close friends.

And since a celebration of her life is what inspired this piece, it only right to wish my person, my best friend, my Biff a happy birthday!



BRITTANY HIVELY | EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Brittany and her biff, during a previous birthday celebration.



Parthe-Pet

This is Evelyn. She is a 5-year-old rescue from the Cabell Wayne Animal Shelter. She loves to play with ice cubes and leave trails of ice all over the kitchen floor. Her favorite snack is bacon and drinking milk from her mom's cup when she isn't looking. She loves to play with feather toys and sponges.



Presidential Search Update: timeline set

Editor's note: The following was a press release was sent July 17

Citing the hope to have a new university president named by the end of October, the Marshall University Board of Governors today approved a resolution spelling out the search process and timeline.

Board Chairman Patrick Farrell, discussing the resolution after an executive session, said the process will steer the university toward selection of its 38th president.

"It is the board's intent to conduct the most inclusive and transparent presidential search that has ever been done at Marshall University," Farrell said. "We will keep our entire university community and the public informed through multiple media channels including a robust presidential search website, where you can find details about the process and any updates we have along the way."

President Jerome A. "Jerry" Gilbert announced in April that he will not seek an extension of his contract, which triggered the search.

Board members today approved an intent to plan a Bachelor of Science in Psychology degree. A student survey indicated the need for the degree for those students who wish to use their undergraduate degree to pursue certain graduate degrees like medical school. Additionally, the board approved that the Master of Science in Technology Management be moved from the College of Engineering and Computer Sciences to the Lewis College of Business.

Marshall continues to move forward with its aviation program at Yeager Airport. An official opening is planned for Aug. 10 at the Bill Noe Flight School. Board discussions today included

plans to purchase the school's first multi-engine plane for pilot training, as well as a briefing on talks with West Virginia State University to provide on-campus housing for aviation students who would like an on-campus living experience.

The board received a report from CarrSports, an independent consulting firm commissioned by the university, which said its overall impressions were positive with no signs of mismanagement in the department of athletics. The report recommends nine strategies for growth and expansion including the development of a facilities master plan and strengthened communications with constituents both internally and externally, as well as an improved management structure for revenue-generating capacity.

Interim Athletic Director Jeff O'Malley, in his first meeting since being appointed, told the board the revised timeline for the university's new baseball stadium is that it will open for the 2024 season. The expected price tag is slightly over \$25 million, revised downward approximately \$6 million from the original estimate. Fundraising continues for the project.

The board approved revised 2021-2022 budgets for both athletics and the university, an earnings update and a capital projects list for the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC)

In other action, the board approved officers for the next fiscal year running from July 1 to June 30. Patrick Farrell will remain as board chair; Toney Stroud will serve as vice chair and Bill Smith will serve as secretary. The terms are for one year.

WEBINAR cont. from 2

she was in the past—she is not doing her job as well. As it turned out, she got things done quicker and our clients loved it because we wider, as in geographically," Bryan said. "It doesn't matter if she's in the office, what matters is her issue communicating with our clients. We have to change our mindset of what our performance measure associates with it."

Chapman, a Marshall alumna that was named—twice—one of the Most Powerful Women in Accounting by CPA Practice Advisor twice, said that her own firm uses and highly recommends the Microsoft program.

"You can communicate instantly in one button and if that isn't good enough you can hit a button and do what we are doing right now—a meeting," Chapman said.

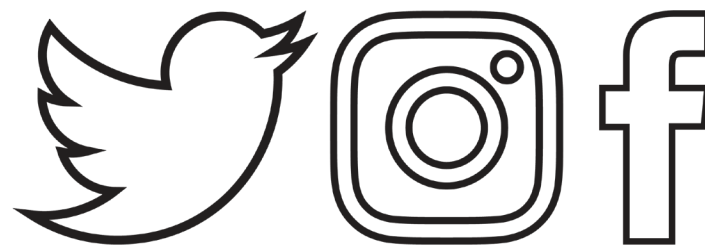
Chapman said that last week she was able to be in Florida—compared to her typical work setting in Ohio—and still submitted a full week of work while being remote. She said she enjoys the flexibility of remote working, but that is also allows a paperless and more organized workspace.

"This all ultimately leads to a competitive edge," Chapman said. "Don't let your accounting system hold you back."

Chapman provided several cloud programs but says that all businesses are different, and every company should take the time to find one. Some program recommendations are Microsoft 365,

Google Workspace, Paychex, Clio, Patriot software, Slack and Shopify.

Xena Bunton can be contacted at Bunton2@marshall.edu.



@MuParthenon

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As for how the business is run, they each have different tasks and responsibilities that showcase each of their skills in fashion, public relations, and marketing. Paluch covers the business' finances, stays on top of inventory, and drives the bus. Her older daughter Payton does the designing of their email newsletters and flyers on their social media pages and website. Her younger daughter Landry handles the editing of all the images that go on their website and social media pages and editing their TikToks.

"But we all do the buying, whether we do it at market, or a lot of times vendors will Facetime us from their showroom and show us new pieces," said Paluch, "We all are in the camera looking and deciding and agreeing. That is what we all do together."

They have gone to Atlanta for markets three to four times a year to meet vendors and look for new pieces to add to their boutique and will be going to Dallas for the first time this year.

One special tradition that they have is to start each year with a blank map of the United States to color in each state that they get an order from. They restart each year to be able to look back and see how their business has grown and expanded across the country. They even send a free gift to the first customer from a state that

they have not colored in yet.

"So far this year, we have shipped to 26 states. We get so excited, like last night right while we were packing, and we got a sale from Illinois. We all screamed and colored it in, so we know what states we have shipped to so far and which ones we still need to color," said Paluch, "It is just so fun when we are all home and something like that happens that we can share that moment."

Payton and Landry handle all social media for their business, from managing their Instagram to staying up-to-date on the latest TikTok trends. They also do a majority of the modeling for the website, with occasional new friends and part-time models. They reach out and work with various social media influencers across these platforms to market and advertise their shop.

"We are constantly going through our personal feeds and looking at what other boutiques and influencers are doing, like different Instagram story ideas with so many filters to choose from," said Payton Paluch, "I am always going through and saving stuff on my personal account and on our boutique account for inspiration."

Creating that personal connection through their social media as well, showing behind the scenes videos and images, posting photos of themselves at events with the bus and at events to take a break

from solo product photos. Their social media pages also act as their main form of advertising.

"We like to show our daily life on our social media, like being real and down to earth. Like one time Landry was steaming some new arrivals and she burnt her arm so bad, so she put that on our story to announce new arrivals that would be in the bus but also showing that she had burnt her arm so bad trying to get it all ready," laughed Payton, "Just being ourselves and showing the good and bad, so it is not just us always selling our clothes."

They are now actively looking for a small storefront to open up a smaller version of their shop, while still keeping the online store and the Leaf Bus to travel in.

"We've grown a lot in 4 years. I want it to be small and quaint," said Paluch, "I think it is time and both of my girls have graduated from college. I think we're ready for it."

They have already rented out a small space on a local salon this past May and are working with the salon owner to expand the partnership.

"She has also approached me about her new salon that is opening up in another town about our interest in setting up some of our items there as well," said Paluch.

PAGE EDITED AND DESIGNED BY ISABELLA ROBINSON | ROBINSON436@MARSHALL.EDU

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12:00 Noon, 5:30 pm
Confessions
Saturday 8:25 am
Saturday 3:30 pm-4:25 pm
or by appointment

Behavioral health training aims to bridge gap in state mental health care

By **Brittany Hively**
Executive Editor

Two local organizations have come together to provide behavioral health professionals additional health equity and trauma-related trainings.

The West Virginia Department of Human Resources Bureau for Behavioral Health and Marshall University have partnered to offer free training for behavioral health professionals throughout the state.

“All of our trainings are going to be available to anyone. Students can take them. Professionals in the field,” said Keigan Aabel-Brown, the coordinator for the West Virginia Behavioral Health Workforce and Health Equity Training Center.

“The continuing education creditors are only relevant to West Virginia providers, but if providers from other states were really interested, they could,” Aabel-Brown said. “Really anyone that provides direct services or engages with their community, especially around disparities.”

Aabel-Brown said proper behavioral healthcare is important to keep the state diverse.

“It makes West Virginia a more inclusive state,” Aabel-Brown said. “We already know West Virginia has the trends of young folks leaving the state, but this will make it, so it is a more inclusive place.”

Ensuring every person has equal rights to healthcare is a large focus from the program Aabel-Brown said.

“Behavioral health disparities is addressing those differences and outcomes related to engagements. So how are certain populations relating to their socioeconomic status, their race, their sexual orientation, their gender and even their geographical location,” Aabel-Brown said.

He said it is important for specialists and providers to know how to provide appropriate services.

“How does engaging with them look different than the dominating group. How does their health outcomes differ. Do we see more mental health disorders in certain populations because we’re unable to support them or due to generational trauma,” Aabel-Brown said.

“Health equality is the idea of being aware of the difference and outcomes for the population and then doing all we can to raise awareness and make sure how we provide services is culturally appropriate, cultural sensitive, is aware of the challenges they face, meeting folks where they are at and letting them make decisions on the care they’d like to receive.

Aabel-Brown said the program will work with different areas focusing on behavioral and mental health around equality and traumas. He said this is especially key post-covid and in West

Virginia with things like the opioid epidemic in play.

“Essentially all of the trainings and content we are going to be providing are under that lens of trauma informed care and trauma informed practice, which is essentially making the general assumption that most people have experience some level of trauma,” Aabel-Brown said.

Aabel-Brown said the hope is to ensure everyone has access to behavioral healthcare.

“As someone who has lived in West Virginia a majority of my life. I’m a queer person, I’m a person of color,” Aabel-Brown said.

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Aabel-Brown said the group hopes to bridge the gap and have the needed services available.

“Even if they don’t understand what you’re dealing with, understand your trauma, they have the skills and the understanding and the background to be able to support any population that seeks services,” Aabel-Brown said. “We really hope this project makes it so folks have more providers that they can go to that understand what they’re struggling with and have skills that can respond to their needs.”

Aabel-Brown said these skills are also essential in helping fight thing substance abuse problems in the state.

“Hopefully we are getting ahead of the curb of substance abuse. We know a lot of the highest groups that experience substance abuse disorder and that use substance are groups that have expe-

rience in historical discrimination or marginalization – LGBTQ kids, folks with color, rural folks without access to decent jobs and education,” Aabel-Brown said. “West Virginia wants to get ahead of the curb of the ‘drug problem’ then we need to be addressing those root causes, the mental health of the community and not just focusing on stopping drugs from coming into the community.

The summer training series is just the start and Aabel-Brown said the series will be virtual to offer people access.

“We’re kicking off our training series in July and August, but we will be doing additional work in the future,” Aabel-Brown said. “They’re all going to be available online, is a big important thing we want make sure is out there. Folks can continue to access the trainings online.”

According to a press release from Marshall, “Funding for the center was provided through the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration’s Treatment Block Grant and the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant.

The \$425,000 grant aims to increase behavioral health workforce excellence by providing training in evidence-based practices statewide to reduce behavioral health disparities related to mental health and substance misuse. The center encourages professionals throughout the state to sign up for the free virtual trainings that will run through the summer months.”

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Keigan Aabel-Brown, coordinator for the West Virginia Behavioral Health Workforce and Health Equity Training Center.