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The Student Movement Volume 105 Issue 15: SASA's Saris Shine at Cultural Celebration

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SASA's Saris Shine at Cultural Celebration



Photo by Noah Allyn

News

NEWS

SASA Hosts "Once Upon a Time in Bollywood"

Caralynn Chan [04.13.2021](#)



Photo by Noah Allyn

On Saturday, Apr. 10, the Southern Asian Student Association (SASA) hosted a celebration entitled “Once Upon a Time in Bollywood.” On the walls of the front of the Newbold Auditorium, various flags represented different countries in the South Asian diaspora, such as India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Maldives and Afghanistan. AU students socially distanced in Newbold Auditorium to experience the cultural event.

Steven Injety (junior, data science), the president of SASA for the 2020-2021 school year, thanked the club members, the sponsors for the event and the attendees. He shared that the purpose of SASA cultural night was for South Asian students to partake in joyously expressing their culture so that the audience had the opportunity to get a glimpse of diverse cultures that have existed for roughly 6,000 years. He added that there were around 1.9 billion people in the world who

identified as South Asian, which solidifies how diverse the culture truly is.

The SASA members performed various South Asian songs. The first number was the Tamil song “Vaseegara” by Bombay Jayashri, from the movie Minnale. The Tamil culture originates from Tamil Nadu and is present in South India and the north of Sri Lanka. Members accompanied the singing with the flute, cajon, and piano. Another group of SASA members presented the Tamil song entitled “Kolaveri,” which discusses pain and struggle. Various percussion instruments, the trumpet, the guitar, and the piano provided the upbeat background music for the lyrics of the song. Mr. Injety taught the audience the lyrics, and they joined in during the second rendition of the song. The final song was “Tujh mein rabh dikta,” Hindi for “I see God in You.” In this song, the love interest tells the woman he loves that he sees God in her eyes. The two gentlemen who were singing that song gave roses to two individuals in the audience.

Next, club members participated in the Bhangra Challenge, a Punjabi dance from the Sikh-influenced culture. First, SASA showed a Bhangra Challenge TikTok, then informed the three audience-member participants that the winner would receive a monetary prize. There were four different dances of various difficulty levels. The audience voted on who the winner of the challenge would be. The audience actively supported the dancers by enthusiastically clapping and cheering.

Following the challenge, various TikTok videos highlighted the beauty of South Asian culture touched on topics such as weddings, clothing and makeup, Desi snacks, dances and differences between Bhangra and Bollywood dances. SASA club members also created their own Tiktok videos to share with the audience as well.

During the intermission, SASA members handed out pre-packaged warm samosas, chai and mango lassi. After the intermission, the next item of the program was the fashion show. It was complete with vibrant multicolored stage lights and music. Then Timmy Duado (junior, marketing) shared information about the models, where they were from, and cultural facts about the clothing they were wearing. The audience clapped in support.

Joya Dean (freshman, biochemistry) was one of the models in the fashion show. She expressed, “I enjoyed my experience in the fashion show. I thought it was fun and a good experience even though it was out of my comfort zone. I was thankful that my friends told me to do it. My friend picked [my outfit] out for me, and I thought the colours were alluring.” She wore an elegant blue and white sari, with an embellished skirt, separate skirt, and scarf.

Two dance numbers were performed at the event. The first dance was presented by Solana Campbell (freshman, business administration). She wore an exquisite outfit with a swirling skirt. The final dance number was a choreographed upbeat number involving various partners. The ladies wore black shirts and brightly colored skirts, while the gentlemen wore crisp white dress shirts and black pants. The audience cheerfully clapped to the music while the partners danced across the stage.

Michael Brodis (sophomore, computer science) was an attendee at the event. He commented, "I thoroughly enjoyed the event. The dancing was invigorating, and the place exuded great vibes. I was glad that the event could happen despite COVID-19."

Rithesh Ram (junior, speech-language pathology) is the current assistant event coordinator of SASA for 2020-2021. He declared, "I love being a part of SASA and bringing awareness to the AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islander) community, and I desire to show that we are more than a stereotype. We must come together for a bigger cause and for people to show their support for our community."

For more information about upcoming SASA events, follow the SASA Instagram page @au.sasa_.

NEWS

Vaccinated: Andrews Students Receive First Dose of COVID-19 Vaccine

Taylor Uphus [04.13.2021](#)

The wait is over. On Thursday, Apr. 1, the COVID-19 vaccine became available for individuals 18 and older across the state of Michigan. After months of waiting, college students received the opportunity to get their first dose of the vaccine. Spectrum Health Lakeland in Niles, Michigan, was the closest vaccination center for Andrews students to book appointments. Consequently, over the last week many Andrews students have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and have taken a step closer to normal.

Currently, there are 26 colleges and universities across the state of Michigan serving as vaccination centers for college students. In providing vaccinations to students on Apr. 1, the Michigan Health Department hopes to get students fully vaccinated before they leave for summer break. About 1.8 million individuals have been vaccinated in the state of Michigan. However, as cases continue to rise it has become increasingly important that college students have access to vaccination centers.

Last week many Andrews students booked their appointments at Spectrum Health Lakeland online. Upon arrival, they were quickly checked in, were escorted to vaccine stations, and required to wait 15 minutes after getting the vaccine to make sure there were no problematic side effects.

Several Andrews University students shared their experience getting their vaccine. Nellie Karengo (senior, English) expressed her excitement for finally having access to the vaccine. “Getting the vaccine was an exciting experience for me, largely because it was something I had been looking forward to for many months. I know many have their hesitations, but after doing research I was confident in my decision to go forward with it,” she said. “Given that COVID-19 has majorly obstructed life across the globe for over a year now, I feel extremely lucky to have the opportunity offered to me, and I am beyond grateful for the history-making collaborative effort that the scientific community put into it.”

Alex Hess (sophomore, English) also shared his experience. He said, “Getting the first dose of Moderna was like a breath of fresh air—I finally felt like I could relax. It was one less thing I had to worry about. My experience at Lakeland Health was also extremely efficient. Their ease and confidence honestly were very highly reassuring for me, as someone who does not like shots!”

Additionally, Elianna Srikureja (junior, English) explained how getting the vaccine has helped ensure her ability to safely interact with her family this summer. “Getting my vaccination at the Lakeland clinic was a fun experience. The staff were helpful and overall the process was fast and stress free. Getting the vaccine was a huge relief! Being able to receive it before the end of the school year meant that I could visit with my aging grandmother this summer.”

Claire Fossmeier (sophomore, pre-physical therapy) also commented on how the opportunity to get vaccinated will contribute to the safety of those around her in addition to her own safety. She explained, “I am very excited to have the opportunity to get the vaccine. As a pre-PT major, being safe is something that I definitely care about, not only for myself, but also for others. I think we should all do our part for the safety of those that may be at a higher risk.”

If you have not received the vaccine yet and would like to set an appointment, Spectrum Lakeland Health still has appointment slots available on their [website](#). This is just one more step in ensuring a safer campus and community, and returning to a bit more normalcy.

Sources

ABC12 News Staff. "Michigan ramping up COVID-19 vaccine efforts on college college campuses, in Detroit area." ABC12, April 8, 2021,

Pulse

PULSE

AAPI Issues On Campus: A Dialogue

Recent events have heightened awareness of regular injustices toward the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community that have otherwise been ignored. To reflect on AAPI students' experiences on our campus, we interviewed two officers of cultural clubs: Ephraim Palmero (graduate, community and international development), the 2019-20 AFIA Cultural Vice President, and Steven Injety (junior, data science), the 2020-21 SASA President. In response to their accounts of friction between University policies and the cultural clubs, Masy Domecillo (senior, biology) and I (senior, psychology) reflect on these issues, as a part of the AAPI community on campus.

Jessica Rim 04.13.2021

"I was in charge of submitting co-curricular events for Filipino American History Month back in 2019. One of the events was to teach a native Filipino dance called Tinikling. This led to a conversation with the Director of Co-Curricular Education, who told me that in order to approve my co-curricular event, I couldn't call it a 'dance' and he had to rename it as a 'cultural movement or immersion' something of that nature. While it was eventually approved, I didn't give it much thought until I had conversations with officers from other cultural clubs and associations regarding similar experiences with how dances are treated and viewed by student life."

-Palmero

Jessica Rim (JR): Sometimes our goals to be both a culturally diverse campus and religious institution seem to conflict, especially when it comes to dance. I think traditional dance does not have to be repackaged and excused as a cultural experience when that is what it already is, and these name changes convey the message that cultural dances may somehow be offensive even when they are being taught in a fun, engaging way as a co-curricular event.

Masy Domecillo (MD): I really think that the naming distinction is arbitrary. I understand that the Adventist church has traditionally held a stance against dance, in general, but I think that particularly applies to secular dances. Even within our own religion, different churches worship differently. I've definitely been to churches with dancing, and I don't think that dancing, or "religious movements," has any indication of detracting from the inner spiritual life.

"For the Ice Cream Social, we normally apply henna to those who sign up. We have been doing that for years. We were then informed we would not be allowed to do it, because it looks similar to tattoos and the previous Student Life Director had said she received complaints. Henna is not a religious tradition, it is a cultural tradition. We campaigned for it via our IG and took the issue to AUSA and then to the Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion, who graciously assisted us in allowing us to continue our tradition."

-Injety

MD: Henna is ingrained in South Asian culture, and I particularly admire SASA for offering it to all their members during the Ice Cream Social. It's such an intricate art! Even if the complaints were about how henna can resemble tattoos, familiarity with the tradition shows that this is a cultural practice that is at most, semi permanent, and does not depict any offensive imagery. I think henna is a great way to introduce people to South Asian culture, and I'm glad that they were able to bring it back.

JR: I think the misunderstanding that henna is equivalent to tattoos shows how we tend to misperceive unfamiliar customs in the terms that make the most sense to us. Especially since people enjoy getting henna art during club sign ups and there are no conflicting religious meanings to this, I am glad that this tradition will continue.

“One can't help but think of the colonial, xenophobic, and imperialist behavior with which Western institutions historically viewed foreign practices and customs. It is also hypocritical that cultural dances are permitted for specific cultural nights; however for co-curricular events throughout the year, they must be rebranded. Language, food, and dances are essential to promoting authentic cultural experiences. Restricting one of them not only restricts the Asian American and Pacific Islander community in sharing our stories, but also limits other minority communities from sharing theirs as well.”

-Palmero

JR: I agree that cultural dances can bring discomfort to those who are used to a Western aesthetic, which has often designated anything foreign into the same dark, dusty corner. Rather than stick to more familiar aspects of sharing food and language, I think we should be able to more fully, and consistently, portray the vibrant uniqueness of each culture by including dance, which will show that not every group of cultures is one uniform mass.

MD: That is such a good point! The entire reason we have such a myriad of cultural clubs in AU is that we want to share and experience our own and other students' cultures. Experiences such as co-curriculars are meant to inform us, and such as in this case, rebranding cultural dances only adds to unfamiliarity. I agree that foreign traditions can be uncomfortable, but events such as these help people expand their own worldviews.

“I believe the issue with the henna, it made us feel like there was a bias against us. It was something we have been doing for years, and all of a sudden it got cut after one or two complaints. However, we also felt supported by the Vice President of Diversity & Inclusion, and the office of Diversity and Inclusion, as they quickly resolved the issue. That strengthened our faith in AU, and enabled us to express ourselves in a better manner.”

-Injety

MD: I definitely agree that although this incident may seem “minor”, this was an opportunity to open a dialogue about cultural differences. Perhaps a proactive approach that our campus could take with these issues is to have a dialogue about them, because I think these issues stem from a clash between cultural and

religious practices. I'm glad that we had the AAPI forum, but there's still a lot that we can discuss and reconcile.

JR: I also think this should be more regularly discussed, especially since we may have always ignored the issues in representing the AAPI community. And if these activities are so easily cut due to complaints, it feels as if they are avoiding the underlying issues, once again, about unfamiliarity. However, it is encouraging that we are surrounded by people sincerely attempting to make cultural diversity an aspect of our campus life.

Although these instances appear to be simple, isolated misconceptions - that certain cultural practices do not align with university guidelines - they in fact occur because non-Western cultures are perceived as foreign and strange. This is not intentional; however, this inaccurately frames traditions such as "Tinikling" and henna in religious connotations. As a community that values cultural diversity, it is crucial to expose our members to various aspects of different cultures so that we do not think of them as alien, nor make our cultural diversity merely nominal. Continuing this discussion with clear, timely attempts to address the ambiguity towards the AAPI community remains incredibly vital in educating others about cultural traditions and facilitating open-mindedness.

PULSE

Student Features: The Story Behind the Car

Interviews by Wambui Karanja [04.13.2021](#)

Would you mind telling me the history behind your car and if it has any sentimental value to you?

"Well, it's kind of a long story," Aimé Irumva (senior, medical laboratory science) says. "I bought my car after my first car stopped being dependable. I needed to head back to Mexico as soon as possible so I didn't have time to be picky. I knew Japanese cars were very dependable and durable so I just picked the first Honda I saw on the list. I drove it down to Mexico to renew my documents and

spent the whole summer there. I drove it back all the way to Andrews and it's pretty much held on."

Irumva continues, "I remember buying it on a whim but it's become a very big part of my life. It's attached to some of the best memories. My year in Monterrey and the friends I made there, the nights driving around blasting music with my friends, and even the events I've been able to go to that I would not have otherwise gone to had I not had a car. I have made tons of friends because of that (that's particularly important because I live off-campus and this is my first year at Andrews). I have had tons of deep talks in my passenger seat and loads more. Bottom line, my car isn't just a means of transportation, it's a vault of memories and experiences." He adds, "It may not be the Aventador but at least it's mine."

Javann Zonicle (sophomore, aviation), the owner of a Honda Civic LX Sedan, tells us about the dependability of his car. He says, "I love my Civic and I have had minimal problems with it. It's very fuel-efficient and it has great handling. Even though it's a fairly small car, it definitely provides enough interior space for my needs. Since getting the car I've put about 19,000 miles on it and I've only scheduled routine oil changes and maintenance such as tire rotation, and fluid check. The Civic is a nimble little car that Honda has been offering to consumers around the globe since 1972."

Zonicle remarks, "One thing I love about mine is that it has a digital dashboard which makes it unique from other cars in its class. As a college student, I believed that a Civic was one of the most practical choices for a car hence, I went out to the local Honda dealership and acquired one. I love my car and I can confidently say that I'm a Honda fan."

"When I got back from my first year of college abroad, I was given an option by my parents," says Jonathon Woolford-Hunt (sophomore, sociology, global studies). "Corona was running rampant and I was told that I could either do school from home full-time or do school on campus full time. However, if I came on campus I would not be able to come back into the house until either the end of the year or until I got vaccinated. I was very conflicted and I finally made a bargain with them. I said if I have to stay outside the house I need a car. Being the loving parents that they are, they gave in and decided to give me a car. The choice was between my mom and dad's cars, and I ended up being given my mom's car."

Woolford-Hunt reminisces that "Between the two cars, I definitely got the better end of the deal but in saying that, this car had so many issues. It's steering

wheel would lock up and the heating wasn't working but at least it was mine." he adds appreciatively. "As time went on I learned how to accommodate for the issues and it drove pretty smoothly. If you would have asked me as a kid what my first car would look like I would have never thought of my little black beat-up wagon. But nonetheless, I am very grateful for what I have."

PULSE

Summer Plans: STEM Majors

Interviews by Masy Domecillo 04.13.2021

As a child, summer was a long expanse of freedom. It was almost too long, as the days would stretch on lazily, punctuated by the few vacations my family would take. I remember my erratic sleep schedule when I was younger, as school no longer would dictate my circadian rhythm. Summers were for sleeping in, waking up close to noon, and taking another cat nap late afternoon. Indulgent and relaxing, summers years ago always seemed to sprawl into an eternity.

As a university student, summers are barely a blip. Gone are the cat naps, the lackadaisical attitude, and the loafing around. Summers are now for summer classes, summer jobs, graduate school applications, entrance exams, internships, shadowing—the list never ends. Summer can be a chance to cram in all the vacation an individual did not take during the school year, or better yet, a chance to cram in more items on the academic agenda. The vacation is now seen as a chance to better oneself, and to get ahead of that college degree to get into the workforce. Although these objectives are undoubtedly necessary, it is important to keep in time that this free time is also a great opportunity to reconnect with friends and family.

I interviewed some Andrews University students to see what they have planned, academic or otherwise, for this upcoming summer.

What are your summer plans?

Isabella Tessalee (junior, chemistry): For some reason, I can only think in list format. This summer, I plan on studying for the MCAT, and taking the MCAT. Shadowing at a clinic, doing medical school applications, and recharging and

spending time with family in between. It can be overwhelming thinking about everything I have on my plate, but I recognize that starting is the hardest step.

Alec Bofetiado (junior, medical laboratory sciences): I will be taking summer biochemistry classes, then vacationing in Cancun with my family. We don't really have a plan about what we're going to do in Cancun; we're just going there and then seeing how it goes. Then I'll be taking the MCAT, and taking summer clinical chemistry, which is an MLS class.

Julianne Magakat (senior, medical laboratory sciences): I think my summer looks like shadowing dentists and some vacationing with family and friends before dental school. Probably with the Riverside Dental Group for shadowing, and my friends and I are trying to road trip up the California coast so we'll see if that happens.

Andras Muranyi (junior, biology): MCAT. And applying to professional schools and taking entrance exams.

Dara Atmadja (junior, biochemistry): I'm planning on taking a couple of summer classes for the first month; then I'll be shadowing a dentist while finishing up my applications for dental school.

Franky Paypa (sophomore, pre-physical therapy): Uhhhhh. But I have no plans. I'm going to lounge around and play with my baby brother.

Humans

HUMANS

A Quarter Century of Research

I have been doing research with Dr. Desmond Murray, associate professor of chemistry, for the last two years. In his time at Andrews, he has mentored numerous high school and college students and has been instrumental in my own growth as a researcher. In this

interview, we discuss his work over the last 25-plus years at Andrews University since he began teaching here in 1995.

Interviewed by Alyssa Henriquez 04.13.2021

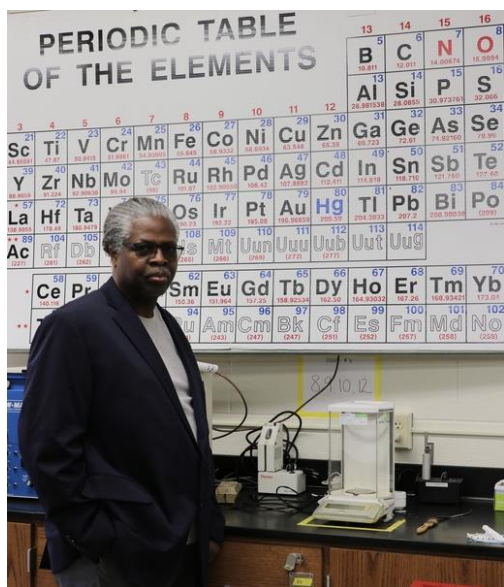


Photo by Htee Mu

Can you recall your early years of research at Andrews?

Well, first off, my research vocation is driven by an inner and innate curiosity and is part of my DNA and self-identity. I have always been poking around in nature. My mom can tell you those stories! However, my formal research journey as an undergrad began at Andrews in 1984 under the tutelage of Professor Dwain L. Ford investigating “The Hard Soft Acid Base Principle and Styrene Polymerization.” Later in '84, I also did summer research in synthetic methodology at Florida State University under Professor Martin Schwartz.

My relationship with Dr. Ford has been pivotal in my career in other ways beyond research. His enthusiasm for organic chemistry rubbed off on me and influenced my decision to pursue and obtain a Ph.D. in organic synthesis. My doctoral dissertation and research on oxenium oxyallyl chemistry—a method used to make seven-membered carbon rings found in nature—conducted at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan under Professor Albizati was based on an original

proposal and project I developed. In 1995, while seeking an academic job after completing postdoctoral research with Professor George Whitesides at Harvard, I applied for a teaching position in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at Andrews with recommendation from Dr. Ford. All told, I have now been at Andrews, as a student and a teacher, for just about 30 years.

These research experiences serve as catalyst and inspiration now as I provide opportunities “early and often” for high school and college students to engage hands-on, minds-on, in the full processes of laboratory experimentation, discovery, innovation, and critical thinking. For me, research is not just about “what” but just as importantly about “who.” This is partly what drives my early research initiatives at both the high school and college levels. It also addresses the national problem of underrepresentation and underfunding of early researchers in the research enterprise.

My research project with you is a collaboration with Dr. Denise Smith on the Synthesis and Anti-glioblastoma Activities of Temozolomide Derivatives. What other research projects are you currently conducting? What type of research do you do and how has it evolved over the years?

Your project is part of a new research area that Dr. Smith and I have started that we think holds great promise. However, there are a lot of other projects ongoing right now. For example, I am currently supervising just over 100 independent research projects being conducted by Grade 12 students and college students. This interlevel “high school–college” approach creates a unique synergistic feedback research system.

My area of research is organic synthesis and my approach focuses on designing, synthesizing and utilizing small novel functionally dense organic molecules. This approach is inspired, in part, by the fact that most biologically important and relevant molecules are small and functionalized. An example is glucose—where every carbon has an oxygen group attached—compared to many molecules that make up hydrocarbon-based fuels, like octane, which generally have little or no functional groups attached to the carbon framework or structure. Most often, functional groups are attachments of non-carbon atoms to carbon chains or rings.

Many of the specific projects are curiosity-driven research with potential

applications in areas such as anticancer, antibacterial, and antifungal agents, agglutinators (“clumps” blood), dyes and sensors, hybrid drugs and hybrid pesticides, fragrances, transfectors (molecules that transfers or delivers DNA etc into cells), drug delivery systems, “green” non-polluting processes, enzyme catalysis, fruit puree catalysis, dendrimers, novel surfactants, and new methods of organic synthesis.

How important have research collaborations been for you over the years?

Research collaborations are very important for any practicing scientist. It takes a village! While researchers have individual independence and responsibilities, it is also true that interdependence, teamwork, and community are essential to the research enterprise. I have had many research collaborations on and off campus. My collaborations tend to be ones in which the curiosity-driven projects developed in my lab find applications in biomedically or biologically relevant areas. For example, in addition to the Smith collaboration on anti-glioblastoma, I have a current collaboration with Biology professor Marlene Murray in developing new full-spectrum anti-bipolar agents. I also have an off-campus collaboration, building on methods developed from my research program, with Professor Shawn Hitchcock of Illinois State University to make and study a new class of rare compounds.

I know you mentor lots of students in research. Do you have a selection process?

Not really. The majority of students that do research with me are based on curricular labs that I have re-designed and re-purposed to have an independent research focus. My two re-designed lab courses are the year-long Berrien RESA Grade 12 class and second-semester Organic Chemistry Lab II. Together each year they have a combined total of close to 100 students. I began re-configuring the sophomore organic chemistry course in 1998 and the Grade 12 class in 2006.

Other students that choose to work with me outside of these two classes do so as Honors, graduate, independent or summer research students. These students are generally self-selected by their own curiosity, interest, and passion. Many are majors outside of chemistry, such as medical lab science, music, religion, business, journalism, art, pre-law, and pre-med. They all benefit from the fact that chemical research is great training in critical evidence-based thinking. This is a

cross-disciplinary, marketable skill. To be more specific, after every experiment in a research project, the question that must be addressed by any researcher is, “what do I do next?” The answer always comes from gathering and analyzing data; the answer is always evidence-based. There are hunches and there is imagination, but those too are informed by data and evidence.

What is the inspiration and the process for coming up with your original research ideas?

My mind is pretty much open to inspiration, stimulation and creation 24-7. Ideas come from multiple sources, such as reading old chemistry papers, brainstorming with colleagues, learning about new chemical reactions and processes, or simply asking the question, “what if?” This is not work for me but a joyous calling. But, it does take time to go from idea to experimental procedure. So, imagine trying to come up with 100 individual research projects each year. Many, of course, build upon previous years' research and results, but each still seeks to address something different, something new, something significant. We generally try to optimize reactions and processes using green chemistry principles. For example, that means using nontoxic solvents and catalysts, and has taken us in the last three years into an exciting research area that I call “fruit puree catalysis.” This latter research area involves using common fruits, plants and their juices to catalyze important organic chemistry transformations. Under this project theme we are investigating, for example, the use of lemon juice, mango puree, “dumbcane” puree, avocado puree, and ground-up black hornet’s nest!

What are some research highlights and discoveries you and your students have made over the years?

There are many. Here are some thematic highlights: (a) development of several underutilized reagents and catalysts for organic reactions and green chemistry processes, (b) synthesis and sensor development of a new class of azo compounds, which are among the most common commercial dyes, and (c) development and utilization of a new class of carbonyl functional group reactions and derivatives. I often tell my students that if a synthetic organic chemist is lost and alone on an island, the only functional group they would need is a carbonyl. It is carbon double-bonded to oxygen and is found in an astonishing array of important molecules like carbohydrates, amino acids, proteins, pharmaceuticals, polymers, on and on. Anyway, there have been and continue to be discoveries and advancements in

these and other areas of our research efforts.

As a Seventh-day Adventist research scientist, what role does belief play in your approach to science and research?

First, it is important to note, I think, that there is not a unique fully articulated Adventist philosophy of research. I believe there should be, at least, some serious thought and scholarship should address it. However, my philosophy of research begins with a constant and deep recognition of the divine spark that gives rise to human insight and creativity. Research is, for me, an intensely sacred calling that winds through inspiration, revelation, and imagination. In the deepest sense, I believe research is ministry, not just philosophically but pragmatically, in and for the real world. For me, research is not a secular activity, it is peering into the mind and mysteries of God. Secular and sacred define two different states of human consciousness towards life. Research is fundamentally a journey of discovery, including self-discovery, as implied by the Middle French root word, *recherch*, “to go about seeking.”

“Seeker” is our earliest archetype and our most viral meme. Our innate curiosity, the foundation of all learning, is embedded in our primal genes and neurotransmitters. Curiosity is the inexhaustible stream that helps us to be conscious of and be the consciousness of the universe. Before hunter-gatherers, we were explorers, we were seekers. Before we were civilized, we explored. Indeed, before we can read, write and count, we “go about seeking.” This is our path to being modern and beyond. We explore inward to discover consciousness and soul and language. We explore the heavens for gods and earth for elements and atoms.

I believe the attitude of a relentless researcher is eternally embedded in the Old Testament archetype of Jacob wrestling, and in the New Testament text “Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” This text is to me the Researcher’s Creed. In addition, Emily Dickinson’s poem tagline, “This World is Not Conclusion” expresses a powerful reason “to go about seeking.” Nature does not reveal all her secrets all at once so we must persist, continue to research, and go about seeking. You cannot help but be hopeful as a researcher that up ahead lies a discovery waiting patiently upon your persistence. That the best is always yet to come.

This is our legend and legacy. Our first steps out of Africa, our first impulses in Eden, our first wanderings in the womb. This is what we do. This is who we are. We go about seeking. We are all natural-born researchers. Research is our birthright and inheritance. This means that all God's children, regardless of demographic—age, gender, race, sexual orientation or nationality, are born with the capacity “to go about seeking,” to research. The diversity of Andrews provides constant opportunities to engage all of God's children in research—one of the greatest adventures known to humans.

What qualities do you believe make a good researcher?

Going back to the idea that researchers are fundamentally seekers, I offer six characteristics of a good seeker. They “go about seeking” with 1. A sense of awe and reverence, 2. Humility, 3. Openness and imagination, 4. Persistence, 5. Exuberant curiosity, and 6. A sense of service and mission.

What advice would you give to students thinking about doing research? When do you think is a good time for students to get involved in research during their academic careers?

Just do it. Do it early and often. Do it in high school and in college. There are increasing opportunities for students to engage in hands-on, minds-on research. Search them out online. Speak to your teachers and advisors about research opportunities. A lot of research opportunities were also mentioned in my 2016 book *The Power and Promise of Early Research*, co-authored and co-edited with Dr. Sherine Obare and Dr. James Hageman, and published by the American Chemical Society and Oxford University Press.

HUMANS

An Interview with Taylor Biek: Next Year's AUSA Social VP

(senior, exercise science)

Interviewed by Abigail Lee [04.13.2021](#)



Photo by Taylor Biek

Where are you from?

Albany, NY. I was born and raised there.

What are some of your hobbies?

I honestly don't have a ton of time to keep a hobby, but a few things I like to do periodically are drawing on my iPad, I am a Starbucks fanatic (it's an unhealthy hobby), going for walks with friends, and I do love to swim. Like I said, my full-time hobby is work but I do have a fun side that I can bring out.

Where is your favorite place to eat around Andrews?

I LOVE Nikki's Cafe, but I haven't been able to get there much this year. I also love this smoothie bowl place called Purely Pressed, but it's more on the Mishawaka side—so not super close.

Do you have a favorite genre of music?

I like pop and R&B, my favorite artists right now have to be Why Don't We and Ciara.

What are some of your plans for this summer? Are you looking forward to anything specific?

This year, unfortunately, is my last year at summer camp. I have been at Camp Cherokee for the last five to six years, including my CIT year. This year I'll be finishing as the Programming Director for the second year, but in previous years I've been the pool director as well. I think I'm the most excited about driving the boats, especially since this will be my last summer to do so. I will also be working hard on AUSA as well since August will come before we know it.

What was the reason that you decided to run for AUSA Social VP?

I ran last year, and honestly, I told myself that if I was given the chance again that I wouldn't take it. But when applications came around, I kind of felt like I should and with lots of support and pushing, I did it. Now that I have the job for next year, I feel very excited and full and can't wait to serve the student body next year!

What do you think is the biggest need of the student body here at Andrews?

I think the student body, for one, is in need of some interaction. Humans thrive off of social interaction and we are really deprived of that, this year especially. In addition to that, I think they need more communication as a whole, from AUSA, ADMIN, each other, etc. That goes hand in hand with the social atmosphere of Andrews as well I guess. I am a very social person, so I see everything from that point of view. Not seeing tons of people out on campus, especially with this beautiful weather, is weird for me. Not being able to go and sit and talk with a ton of people in the student center is disheartening as well.

Do you have any goals for next year about your new role?

I would like to have as many events as possible and try to pull the students back together, in holistic terms. We've had a really tough year and not a lot of socialization and I know that people are struggling. I'd like to create safe and fun events that everyone can enjoy because we really need it!

How do you plan to help revive the campus from the last year of COVID restrictions and isolation?

I know I can't do much about the restrictions within campus, but I am going to be diligent in making sure that we can have events that are as free and open as possible. If we need more events more often, then so be it. I want to make sure that

there is more communication and that people know what's going on in their student government as well; people need to know that there are things actually going on. I can say that we are looking into banquet venues for an off-campus AUSA banquet next year, in hopes that we can actually go through with that.

HUMANS

Makarios Easter Passion Play

Interviewed by Ben Lee [04.13.2021](#)



Photo by John Jackson

Loren Manrique (LM)
(sophomore, animal science) Makarios drama sub-director

Esterady Caamal D'Vicente (EC)
(senior, Spanish studies) Makarios drama director

When did you start practicing, and how many rehearsals did you have for the Easter Passion Play?

LM: We started rehearsals with a first reading of the whole play on Friday, March 12, and our first official practice was Sunday, March 14. We had a total of 7 practices of about two hours each.

The stage really looked amazing. Can you tell me about who made the stage props and costumes and how long that took?

EC: Thanks to Chase (the religious vice president of AUSA), we had a budget, and whatever we would ask him for he would do his best to get it for us. Some costumes were ours (the Makarios team) and the rest were from the Spanish Church (Chase helped us get those). Loren and I also had the help of our props team. Imani Cousins (freshman, Visual Arts Education) helped us a lot with the ideas for the props. Then we had Paola Padulla-cisneros (senior, psychology and French), Nathaly Manrique (senior, Biology and Spanish), Karla Torres (freshman, graphic design and Spanish), and Ari Maheda (junior, international business and French). On the last day we got help from Grecia Castillo (senior, Spanish), Konnor Adema (alumnus, flight instructor), Yulian Tinoco (senior, psychology and Spanish), and, thank God, we were able to finish on time. We started working on the props the Friday of the week before the passion play, and we worked on them on Wednesday and then Friday, so we had only three days to work on them.

LM: There were also some props that, because of technical difficulties, had to be made the day of. But it all worked out in the end.

What were your favorite/most rewarding parts of putting on the production?

LM: I have to say that my favorite parts were the practices. Even though they were long and difficult, being with everyone was great, and there were also a lot of really funny moments during practices that made them okay. The most rewarding parts as a director had to have been seeing everything come together and seeing all of my actors grow and take on their characters. Definitely seeing Brandon take our writing and bring it to life has to be one of the most rewarding moments of the whole production. Also, the final performance of the play is our proudest moment.

EC: The most rewarding times were having all the actors memorize their parts and show their excitement for the passion play! All of the actors were wonderful! I can't thank them enough for what they did. We also had some actors who were not part of the drama group, and I appreciate their willingness to help!

What were the most difficult parts of putting on such a big performance?

LM: The most difficult thing was the little time we had to put everything together. From the moment the idea was proposed to the day of the performance, it was all "go, go, go." The long hours and trying to figure everything out was pretty difficult and exhausting. But at the end of the day, all of those hard moments gave us a great program and bonding experiences with everyone involved.

EC: The most difficult part was always having every person at every rehearsal, but we managed! And each person was able to memorize their parts perfectly. Another difficult part was that on the day of the passion play, that Saturday, the wind was so strong that we weren't able to have the stage we had dreamed about, but God helped us and with the help of all Makarios and Chase's team, we were able to set up and it all looked wonderful.

Is there anyone else that you would like to credit for the success of the play?

EC: Besides God, obviously, Loren really helped me a lot with writing the play and I put the rest together, gathering from the Bible and from the spirit of prophecy. There were also some adjustments made along the way by Yulian and Chase. Also, the last monologue that Jesus said after he had risen was written by Nathaniel, and my brother as well helped me a lot. Lastly, the actors helped me suggest here and there, pointing out some of the things we could add to their parts to connect them more.

I also have to thank the props team, which includes some people that I already mentioned, like Paola, Natalie, and Karla--they helped a lot. Additionally, on the day of the passion play, we got so much help from the proximity team and AUSA, and I really appreciate that because without them, honestly, it would have been really hard to manage. Like putting all the props in each scene and everything so it was such a big ayuda en equipo (team effort) that I really appreciate.

LM: I have to thank my fellow directors Esterady and Ari, and my logistics team, which consists of Nathaly Manrique, Paola Padulla-Cisneros, Grecia Castillo, Vany Carballo (sophomore, speech-language pathology and audiology), Karla Torres, and Imani Cousins. Additionally, our biggest support is our president Yulian Tinoco.

Is there anything else you want to share about being in Makarios?

LM: Makarios is the best decision I have made here at Andrews. Is a wonderful Hispanic ministry, and it is an amazing community of Hispanic and non-Hispanic people that want to share the word of God with programs in churches outside of campus and on campus. Our programs consist of drama, music, and poetry. Being part of Makarios and being the drama sub-director is a privilege that I will always cherish in my heart and be thankful for.

Can you tell me how the Passion Play play fulfills your mission as a club?

LM: The Passion play fulfills our mission as a ministry in that we are following the mission that Jesus gave us, to share his word with others. In the passion play, even though it is a known story, we got to remind people what happened and how all of these stories are real; Jesus really died for us and he is calling us to go back to him, because his plans for us are greater than we could ever imagine.

EC: I think the main purpose of this was just to share and to remember what we all know but we sometimes need a reminder. As I told the actors, Ellen White mentions that if we could think about everything that Jesus had to go through, because of His love for us, we would really be better Christians. I think this was a great reminder for all of us to just meditate more on Jesus's life, and continue doing our best as a club and as a ministry.

Arts & Entertainment

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

April Current Favorite Songs

Hannah Cruse 04.13.2021

1. "Merry Go Round of Life" from "Howl's Moving Castle" - Crystal Collins (sophomore, psychology)
2. "Vitali Chaconne" as played by Sarah Chang - Noelle Koliadko (sophomore, mathematics)
3. "Hold Us Together" by H.E.R. And Tauren Wells - Tuma Gabasiane (junior, pre-physical therapy)
4. "Good Days" by SZA - Alyssa Susssdorf (senior, psychology)
5. "Just the Two of Us" Grover Washington Jr. - Andre Crayton (sophomore, pre-physical therapy)
6. "Passacaglia, op. 20 no. 2" as played by Itzhak Perlman and Pinchas Zukerman - Noah Koliadkon (freshman, physics and computer engineering)
7. "Blue Jeans" by Gangga - Patricia Jennesha (junior, computer science)
8. "Heartbreak Anniversary" by Giveon - Nathalie Batres (sophomore, psychology)

9. “Deserve You” by Justin Bieber - Megan Napod (senior, speech-language pathology and audiology)
10. Lastly, my personal recommendation: “In a Week” by Hozier and Karen Cowley

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Celebrating National Poetry Month

Alannah Tjhatra 04.13.2021



Photo by Public Domain

I have always loved words - especially words that made me feel something. I love tragedy, love stories, long, flowing sentences that cascade across clean pages like songs riding on the wind.

We have a name for these strings of words, and that name is “poetry.” It’s been around since the beginning of creation, really. Remember that Adam spoke bars when he first met his soulmate: “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of ‘man.’”

And there were many poets after Adam - from King David and King Solomon, to Dante and Shakespeare, to more recent poets like Maya Angelou, Emily Dickinson, Langston Hughes, and the wonderfully talented Amanda Gorman.

Over the years, poetry has been a means of expressing humanity’s deepest desires for love, joy, and connection. It has been a means of sharing opinions and viewpoints. And, within the last century, it has become an important platform for addressing important social and cultural issues.

I find poetry convincing in the honest beauty it presents. It is at once simple and intricate, straightforward and thought-provoking. It's sometimes flowery, sometimes raw, at times joyful, at times sad - but always beautiful. It has the ability to give you the chills, and there's always something for every individual.

April is National Poetry Month. Launched by the Academy of American Poets in April of 1996, National Poetry Month "reminds the public that poets have an integral role to play in our culture and that poetry matters. Over the years, it has become the largest literary celebration in the world, with tens of millions of readers, students, K-12 teachers, librarians, booksellers...and, of course, poets, marking poetry's important place in our lives." This April marks the 25th annual celebration of poets and poetry, and as such, it seems appropriate to highlight just a few of the many talented student poets on the Andrews University campus. They answer a few questions about why they believe poetry is important and why they personally choose to use this creative form as a means of expression.

Why do you believe that poetry is still important today? Do you believe that poetry holds power?

An active member of the Scriptorium, the creative writing club on the Andrews campus, Karena Lee (freshman, English, business administration) responded: "Poetry holds power because it invites you into someone else's experience in a very small amount of space. It's the human element of historical events and current issues, because as it brings awareness, it carries with it the author's emotions. Like most forms of art, it creates the impact the facts need to inspire empathy and change."

Marcel Mattox (sophomore, graphic design), who also enjoys writing and sharing poetry, says this: "Poetry is a way of expressing emotions. Painting them, in a way. You can see and feel them in such a raw way. Poetry can be rhythmic, like a song flowing and harmonizing from stanza to stanza. I find poetry important because it's a way of expressing how I and how others throughout history have experienced this human adventure we call life."

Andrew Pak (freshman, music) a musician as well as a writer, goes in depth: "Poetry is unique to me in that it's the manipulation of language, the very tool we use to think. In that sense, our thoughts can only be as complex as our vocabulary. Additionally, as the Observer Effect in physics describes, the act of observing can change reality - in the same vein, observing and describing reality through language changes reality. Subjective perceptions of reality are often more relevant to the reality of our actions than objective reality. If we can change our perceptions

of reality by using different language to describe it, then we can effectively change reality through mere words.” He adds, “I think poetry makes something new out of the old, and through this transformation of ideas, poetry can make a real change in the way people think. By reimagining the way people think about reality, poetry can make us more conscious and aware of certain things we usually already have an idea of, whether these be stereotypes, simply generalizations/presumptions, or mundane things we don’t usually give attention to. Otherwise, it can be a form of self-expression that links humans in fellowship of a universal or specific feeling. It’s always comforting to know, ‘Hey, someone else out there in the world knows this feeling too.’”

What forms of poetry do you enjoy writing and why? What got you started on writing poetry?

Karenna says, “I haven’t pinned down what kind of poetry I like to write yet. Generally speaking, I haven’t explored much in terms of rhyme or structure. I have so much respect for people who can correctly use things like the heroic couplet, but right now, I work in free form. It’s mostly because I never planned to write poetry. So far, it’s served as a simple way to get thoughts on paper, but I’m very open to learning more!”

When asked what got him started on writing poetry, Marcel explains, “I started writing poetry [as] another way of expressing myself. In a catchy way, too - the way others could show their emotions and tell stories through poetry. I think I wanted to experience that [as well].”

Andrew describes his experience like this: “I started writing poetry in the spring of 2020, during my senior year of high school right before the pandemic shutdown. I was inspired by this writer I found on the internet named Savannah Brown, whose poetry really resonated with me [because of] its accessibility and modern style. I decided that I could start writing some of my own poems as modes of self-expression and an outlet for my bottled up feelings. I think that poetry for me personally is just a method of pouring out my thoughts and emotions in an eloquent and relatively structured way. Writing things down also helps me process ideas, because there’s only so much I can hold in my brain.”

This April, I encourage you to explore poetry in all of its forms. Discover newer poets, older poets. Explore modern poetry and classic poetry. Try writing some poetry yourself, if you haven’t already!

I guarantee that you will find something to fall in love with.

Creative Spotlight: Karen Garcia

Interviewed by Megan Napod

Article no longer exists.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Signal Boost: Rookie Historian Goo Hae-ryung

Hannah Cruse 04.13.2021



Photo by Public Domain

I am a sucker for a period drama, even more so a Korean period drama. When I started “Rookie Historian Goo Hae-ryung,” I expected the usual aspects you would see in K-drama: romance, humor, and the classic enemies to lovers. I got that part, but I also received so much more. It’s a story of standing up to those who would keep people in darkness, breaking old, misogynistic traditions, and being true to yourself.

The show opens up with the titular character, a 26-year-old upper-class orphan with a penchant for speaking her mind, without care of who she is talking to. She also has a love for reading and works as a reader for upper-class women, who prefer to hear steamy romance stories rather than the books she prefers to read. She is unmarried, a strange thing at that time for a woman her age. She finds

a posting from the palace about the hiring of female royal historians, typically a male position. A royal historian is a person that writes the lives of the king and royal family to keep as a record generations, and she found this as an opportunity to escape marriage and make money for herself. Hae-ryung and the other female historians find themselves fighting against the male historians who feel as if their positions are being jeopardized and the other court ladies who don't approve of their presence. She encounters several events that were erased from the historical records and sets out to right the wrongs that were incurred.

What I enjoyed so much about this show was the force of a character that Hae-ryung was. She did not care if she was talking to the crown prince or a little boy, she always spoke frankly and to the point. She was confident in her intelligence and her abilities, and through every trial she faced she stood up for herself and her colleagues. Her passion for the truth really shone in the 20th episode when she delivered this message: "Even if you slash my throat, our brushes will not stop writing. If I die, another historian will take my place; if you kill that historian, another will take their place. Even if you kill every historian in this land, and take away all the paper and brushes, you won't be able to stop us. From mouth to mouth, teacher to student, elder to child, history will be told. That is the power of truth." Goo Hae-ryung is one of the best female characters I have had the pleasure of watching and I hope I can see more like her in Kdramas in the future.

"Rookie Historian Goo Hae-ryung" is available to stream on Netflix now.

Ideas

IDEAS

A Birthday Boy's Reflections: What I'm Learning Now

Adoniah Simon [04.13.2021](#)



Photo by Adoniah Simon

A lot of my writing and idle thinking tries to make sense of personal and collective struggles and triumphs. What does it mean to live a good life, and how can I get closer to it? It's a question that sits at the foundations of my wonderings. There are times where I discover things that give me comfort in it all—a statement that becomes belief, or a work of art. They are the seemingly small victories that pepper a life full of questioning, doubt, and wonder for the miracle of being alive.

A current struggle has been the fact I'm getting older. With that comes oncoming

expansions in responsibilities. Here comes another step into adulthood—ready or not. While I’m decades and decades away from the potential of experiencing the declines of old age (which comes with its own anxieties), right here and now there’s a fear that I’m not up to the task of being a real adult.

For the past few days and weeks, I’ve felt rather down. Among many thoughts, the thought of turning another year older felt intimidating. At the time of writing this, on the morning of April 13, I’m finally 21. While I don’t plan to, I’m old enough to partake of the liquid hallmark of adulthood. This is the year, or least it’s supposed to be. This is where I’ve been told that life really picks up.

I didn’t quite feel big enough, or ready for the start of this 21st year of life. That feeling has been shifting as gratitude has taken a hold of my heart. Thankfulness is actively changing my misgivings about how the future could be. It’s changing my fears into hope and action.

I don’t spend enough time noticing the good, and letting it fill me. I haven’t made enough space for God to be all that he could be in my life. So now, I want to take a moment to celebrate life, and the things I’ve done and hope to do in next year of mine.

In the last year I’ve learned:

- What quality time feels like and how much I need to receive and provide it.
- How to be a better listener—hearing what makes my friends come alive makes me happy!
- The joys of my friends are my joys as well, not just their pain.
- There are friends and family in my life that love me and are proud of me even when I’m not.
- I’m capable of doing difficult things.
- Sometimes my best looks different in different seasons of life. I have to be kind to myself and readjust accordingly.
- To fill the fullness—the highs and the lows—of my emotions and of life itself. It’s either everything or nothing at all. I’ve learned, and I’m continuing to accept and move through it all.

I’m continuing to learn:

- To stand up for myself, to be my own ally and treat myself as someone I am

responsible for helping or—more simply put—like someone I love.

- How to see things for what they are; to not minimize my own accomplishments and joys and magnify problems and woes.
- There's a lot of life to live outside of my own head and so much to experience outside of my own inner world.
- How to respect the boundaries around my time, health, and responsibilities.
- When to say no to good things in order to say yes to great things.
- How what I know and what I love fit into the life and career paths God knows would be the greatest blessing to the world and bring me the greatest fulfillment.

Here are just a few of the first things that came to mind that is the stance I'm learning to return to above everything else: of generosity, gratitude and growth. Today, I rejoice that life is returning to the trees and daffodils all about campus. I'm so happy to be greeted by clear blue skies. The sun shines for the whole world, but for one day, I remember that it shines for me, too.

IDEAS

Biden's Jobs Plan: The Latest Example of Government Investment in Our Future

Lyle Goulbourne 04.13.2021



Photo by Public Domain

I was recently listening to a podcast that brought up an interesting [statistic](#). When the Baby Boomer generation first began to enter the American workforce in 1962, entitlement programs to assist aging populations (which includes healthcare, welfare, and government pensions) comprised 31% of government spending. The remaining budget was spent on discretionary spending, which includes national defense, transportation, education, housing, social service programs, as well as science and environmental organizations. Today, government spending has reversed, with entitlement programs representing 61% of government spending. The Baby Boomer generation reaped the rewards of a government focused on investing in the future and providing pathways to the middle class. Following this, they proceeded to shut the door and pull up the ladder for subsequent generations. Biden's massive proposal entitled the American Jobs Plan is a \$2.7 trillion dollar program designed to employ [2.1 million](#) Americans by

mid-decade, increase our global economic power, and provide new ladders for us to succeed. The entire piece of legislation is extremely wide ranging, so I will only discuss the parts I found most intriguing.

Biden's plan includes a significant increase in investment for research and development (R&D), which includes investments in AI, advanced nuclear energy, electric vehicles, and several other fields. America is one of the only major economies whose public investments in R&D have declined as a percent of GDP in the past 25 years, with China ranking #2 in global R&D [investments](#). An increase in American investment would improve access to higher wage careers and increase America's global competitiveness. As America quickly progresses into a future dominated by technology and AI, Biden is also calling for a \$40 billion investment in a new Dislocated Workers Program and sector-based training. This fund will support those who lose their jobs through no fault of their own, such as truck drivers replaced by automated vehicles.

A major aspect of the plan is an increase in government spending on infrastructure. According to Moody's [Analytics](#), in a weak economy like we are experiencing now, public investment in public infrastructure produces the greatest increase in national income compared with other types of federal government spending and tax policy. The plan contains provisions for \$621 billion of spending on transportation infrastructure. Included are funds to incentivize the construction of 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations by 2030, invest \$80 billion to improve American railways, and invest \$85 billion to modernize public transportation.

Biden plans to pay for this by increasing the corporate income tax from 21 to 28 percent and closing various loopholes corporations use to evade paying taxes. This corporate income tax would still be around its 21st century average from before Trump's 2017 tax law and well below where it stood before the 1980s.

The American Jobs Plan represents one of the greatest opportunities for our nation to invest in our future and maintain dominance in the global economy. Ezra Lane (junior, undeclared) commented "The topic is so complex it is hard to discuss in a student paper. It is difficult trying to explain why this is a good or a bad plan, or what the real impacts of it will be for AU students. But I believe it is necessary to discuss several positive aspects of the legislation and why it may be worth raising the corporate tax rate." After decades of neglect, I personally believe now is the time to support America's next generation.

The Last Word

THE LAST WORD

My (Last) Last Word

Daniel Self 04.13.2021

We're close. Close to finishing another scholastic year, close to being globally healthy, and maybe close to giving ourselves grace for not always being at our best. It's been a tremendous battle, as the continent shut down, as the economy plummeted, and as the planet collectively went into shock because of the pandemic. For recent or soon-to-be graduates, it's an incredibly stressful time coming into a difficult job and professional school environment. We're plagued with constant sense of immediacy, and in a year where our societal institutions ground to a halt, it becomes all-too-easy to feel guilty for not making more progress. I've been personally trying, somewhat unsuccessfully, to be able to look at life for the immediate moment—if something brings joy, fulfillment, and a sense of peace in and of itself, it's worthy of your time and brings value inherently. It feels like an unnatural concept when those things that bring joy and peace don't directly connect to your longer term aspirations.

I wrote earlier this year that I was applying to law school during the fall months. Now, nearly five months later, I'm still hearing back from law schools. In the law school admissions world, this application cycle was drastically impacted by COVID-19 and its impact on the economy. With a 30% increase in applicants from the previous year, the competition for the limited number of law school seats greatly intensified. It drove nearly all of the top-25 schools in the US to waitlist hundreds of applicants—with some programs, such as U of Michigan Law and Georgetown Law, waitlisting thousands. It's part of a larger issue of yield protection, basically that law schools do not want to accept too many students that ultimately reject their offer. Normally, a law school waitlist would have a 100~ applicants, now thousands of prospective students remain caught in limbo.

What makes this application cycle all the more difficult is LSAT inflation; when LSAT, law school's standardized test, was moved virtually, scores increased within all score brackets. This led to law school median LSAT scores increasing across the board; in short, the schools that would have been safety schools for me going into

the cycles became reach schools. God only knows what happened to any reach schools that I applied to. It's unfortunate that this year happened to be the year I was applying in – it's been incredibly stressful and painful having to reevaluate my aspirations. Even with the acceptances I received, the increase in applicants and LSAT scores makes scholarship money even more difficult to attain—the prospects of signing up for a quarter-million dollars of debt don't excite me. Broadly speaking, every element of this admissions cycle that could have gone terribly wrong went terribly wrong.

Why do I say all of this? Recently, I've been struck by the length of time we have in life. Maybe it's just a defensive reaction to disappointment and perceived failure, having a mindset where acknowledging that you've done poorly in the immediate future but knowing that you can always try again helps. As a member of an intramural basketball team for three consecutive years that has only won a single game, I'm familiar with the adage, "we'll get 'em next year." But if there's something profound, and hopefully to an extent universal, I've taken away from this year, it's that almost all things that plague our mind with anxiety and stress today mean so much less than the weight we give them. The missed assignment, the late meeting, or the unsuccessful job application all pass; if Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is correct, that death is the great equalizer, I'm beginning to think that the passage of time is life's great neutralizer. And by this, I mean you will return to your normal, or at least your composite normal of however long since your normal began. For better or worse, time passing will not inherently change your larger teleological path. Yet, time will gently guide you back to your normal life progression.

The next few years of my life's trajectory has experienced a shift backwards. Instead of going directly to law school, I'll be working at a South Bend Probate Court as a detention officer for their juvenile center. It's not the immediate prestige of attending a top law school, but it'll allow this cycle to pass, provide me a year to R&R and retake my LSAT, and reevaluate where and why I really want to attend law school. I'm not a particularly optimistic person, so I won't say this happened for the best. I'd genuinely be much happier knowing my professional school aspirations were secured; however, I'm convinced that it's alright to give yourself time. In my closing paragraph, to any people who feel a similar anxiety for their futures, I want to affirm that I've probably felt something similar. There's no guarantee that life will become better, but I want to believe that when our societal normal returns, so will yours. For all of those reading this and wondering how they

will be able to make back this year and a half that feels like they've lost, I wish you the absolute best of luck regaining your footing.