



4-6-2023

The Grizzly, April 6, 2023

Layla Halterman

Chase Portaro

Jenna Smith

Marie Sykes

Kate Horan

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.ursinus.edu/grizzlynews>



Part of the [Cultural History Commons](#), [Higher Education Commons](#), [Liberal Studies Commons](#), [Social History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

[Click here to let us know how access to this document benefits you.](#)

Authors

Layla Halterman, Chase Portaro, Jenna Smith, Marie Sykes, Kate Horan, Ava Compagnoni, and Vaughn DiBattista



The Grizzly



Collegeville, PA.

Thursday, April 6th

Vol. 50, Issue 8

In this Issue:

- » Letter from the Editor
- » Humor Writing
- » Men's Lax Article
- » FLB Analysis

Grizzly Statement:

The Grizzly staff is saddened to hear about the passing of a fellow Bear, Damiano Rotolo '26. Our deepest sympathies go out to Rotolo's family and friends for their tragic loss. If you or anyone you know is interested in making an appointment, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Wellness Center at (610) 409-3100 or visit the Bear-Care portal.

What's to come in Issue 9...

- » New Rain Garden
- » Photo Essay from Georgia Gardner
- » Student Engagement Lackluster?

The "Super Bowl" of Admissions



Chase Portaro
 chportaro@ursinus.edu



Courtesy of Chase Portaro

Move over Eagles, it's the Bears' time to shine! On Friday, March 31st, Ursinus College hosted its annual Admitted Students Day event to welcome prospective students of the Class of 2027, which Director of Admissions Diane Greenwood described as "The Super Bowl of Ursinus Admissions." Greenwood explained, "Admitted Students Day is one of the most important admission events of the prospective student cycle, and its purpose is to give prospective students a chance to come to campus and experience everything, inside and outside of the classroom." With over 430 prospective students expected to attend and over 1,000 people expected total, including the family members of the high school seniors, Admitted Students day proved to be one of the liveliest campus events of the year.

The event kicked off in the Floy Lewis Bakes Center with a showcase of the college's clubs and organizations. Greenwood said, "The whole point is to give prospective students a chance to experience clubs, campus offices, organizations. Most of the time, students are down to their final choice, so Admitted Students Day can really be the deciding factor for them to choose Ursinus." Over 100 clubs were represented

at the fair, including your very own Grizzly, trying to recruit prospective students to strengthen their organizations and ensure a lasting legacy that will live on after current members graduate.

Living up to the Super Bowl-like atmosphere that Greenwood and other admissions staff members offered, the activities fair also included a confetti machine and an impressive spread of food. Also, the entrance to the event in the Bakes Center was in the form of a human tunnel made up of the Ursinus Mascot, "Zachie Bear," alongside several students on the admissions staff with posters celebrating the arrival of the Class of '27. Nicole Cullura, the Assistant Director of Student Engagement and a member of the class of 2016 at Ursinus, remembers her own Admitted Students Day back in 2012. She said, "My admitted Students Day was a little less elaborate, so this is just awesome to see!"

Current students at the event also recalled their Admitted Students Day experiences. Kate Foley, '23, said "I distinctly remember coming to my Admitted Students Day and I went right up to the Breakaway Student Productions table where I met my very first person at Ursinus... It all feels





very cyclical because I remember being in [the incoming freshman's] exact same position." Another senior, EB Bradigan '23 said, "I remember meeting Ali Wolf at my Admitted Student's Day, and now I'm sitting at a booth with her doing the exact same thing, just from the other side. So, it's all come full-circle."

Ali Wolf, '23, an executive board member of Breakaway Student Productions said, "It's just really exciting because I've seen a lot of energetic interest – and that's what we thrive on – people who are excited about the theater and the idea of a student-run organization... As a senior, it feels good to know that the org will be in good hands."

Francis Rundquist '25, said "I remember [Admitted Students Day] being an overwhelming experience and feeling a bit lost, so I want to make sure our booth is as welcoming as possible but also as informative as possible." Marie Sykes, Features Editor for The Grizzly and a member of the Class of 2024, remembers how Covid-19 affected her pre-orientation experience. She said, "I was on Zoom for my Admitted Students Day, but even then, I could still tell that Ursinus centered around community involvement." Evan Dietrich '23 recognizes that community aspect of Ursinus and made it a goal to emphasize that in his interaction with prospective students. He said, "There's an organization for everyone – it gives you a circle

of friends that you'll most likely be able to call family when you leave Ursinus." Matt Nieves-Hoblin echoed this, saying, "No matter what, they will find a sense of belonging on campus, there's literally a place and group for all students."

The activities fair was followed by a welcome speech from Michael J. Keaton, Ursinus's VP of Enrollment Management, given in the other half of the Bakes Gym, where hundreds of chairs were set up for prospective students to form a makeshift auditorium. He talked about what an Ursinus education is all about, while also not forgetting to give a special shout out to the Eagles, for which he received the crowd's roaring cheer of support for the local favorite. Following Keaton's speech, President Robyn Hannigan took the podium with Dropkick Murphys' "Shipping Up to Boston" playing over the speakers as her walk-up song, alerting the crowd to Hannigan's strong ties to New England. She focused on Ursinus's core curriculum and emphasized the value of an Ursinus education.

Following Hannigan's speech, the prospective students and their parents split off into two different seminars. The parents met separately to ask questions about campus life with a panel from the Residence Offices, while the prospective students met with a panel of current students to ask questions about Ursinus while

their parents were not there. This gave parents a chance to ask questions without embarrassing their children, and it also gave students a chance to ask questions that they may not have otherwise wanted to ask in front of their parents. A prospective student at the activities fair, Griffin Meanix '27, seemed to anticipate the separate panels. When asked what he was looking forward to most in college, he said, "Probably the freedom of parental release." Following the separate student and parent panels, students attended two sessions of a "Focus On Academic Excellence," where students learned about different majors offered and explored departments across campus.

In just about five short months, Meanix's wish will be granted, and he'll be able to enjoy Ursinus's campus by himself for the very first time. As Admitted Students Day concluded with a tour of the freshman residence halls, it is hard to believe that Ursinus will be welcoming the Freshman Class of 2027. I remember when "Class of 2024" felt weird to say. But, time flies in Collegeville, and while current students may not have realized all that lay ahead of them during their college selection process, they realize how valuable those moments have been in their Ursinus experience. Best of luck to the High School Classes of 2023, and even more luck to the Ursinus Class of 2027!

Honor Your Experience

As the Class of 2023's Ursinus Story comes to a close, they begin to reflect on their past four years. During the final year, Ursinus seniors have been encouraged to give back to their beloved institution. It is suggested that students make a donation corresponding to their class year, example: \$20.23. Seniors will make the donation in honor of someone who has made an impact on them at some point during their Ursinus career.

Alpha Delta Phi Society
Nick Balliro and Family
Julie Cherneskie
Will Cook
Samuel Mamber



Courtesy of Chase Portaro



Courtesy of Chase Portaro

Loose Change Takes Center Stage in Lower Wismer

Jenna Smith
jesmith2@ursinus.edu

Loose Change put on a stupefying concert in Lower Wismer on Saturday March 25th. The event garnered more than 200 attendees, from students to staff to friends of friends, all in support of Ursinus's banger band. This extraordinary event was put on in partnership with Ucrew and Student Engagement.

Loose Change consists of members Ali Lisanti '24, the band's vocalist, Luke Ammazzorso '24 on bass and drums, Kipp Ransome '24 on guitar and bass, Sam Grubb '24 on keys and guitar, and Joey Nolan '24 on bass, drums, and guitar.

Loose Change officially formed last semester in Fall of 2022. Lisanti had randomly texted Nolan, a longtime friend of hers, that they should start a band. They were sitting in Wismer when they received the text, and coined themselves as the WizKids. However, the band changed their name shortly after in their creative process, ultimately deciding they wanted to call themselves "Loose Change."

Throughout the Fall semester the group gather in their dorm rooms to mess around with Nolan and Ransome's acoustic guitars. They

started experimenting with singing whilst playing, drawing small crowds of their friends to watch as they tried new music. Eventually, they decided they could actually do something with their talents and knack for creativity and started to get serious.

For the time being, Loose Change just wants to keep playing, having fun, and see where this journey takes them. They are not putting pressure on any long-term goals for their group, but their short-term goal is to play at some off campus venues sometime in the future. The band members all really enjoy seeing how many individual people they are able to reach.

Last semester, Ucrew hosted Loose Change's first concert in Lower Wismer. This initial event garnered quite a bit of attendance and a riveting crowd, but nothing in comparison to last weekend's success. The event went off without a hitch, and attendance boasted more than 200 at one point of the night. Public opinion of the event stated a large appreciation of the performance and musical talent from the members; the excitement from the crowd reverberated through campus. In hosting these

concerts Loose Change partners with Ucrew. This partnership seeks to further spread Ucrew's mission statement—cultivating education, respect and wellness—and, in doing so, host a fun and sober campus-wide event. Luke Ammazzorso, a member of Ucrew himself, liaised between Student Engagement, Ucrew, facilities and tech to successfully facilitate the night. Ammazzorso enjoys throwing these events not only because he loves to perform, but he recognizes how an event like this can help change the campus culture and positively impact his peers. In working on spreading Ucrew's mission, Ammazzorso explains, "I understand what it is like to be a student on this campus, and I felt like Ucrew allows me to use that knowledge to help my peers around me."

In all, Loose Change's partnership with Ucrew and Student Engagement allowed them to spread a positive message about sober fun and creative expression! Look out for future concerts from Ursinus's favorite band and be sure to follow them on instagram at @loose_change_uc.

An April Note from the Editor

Layla M. Halterman
lahalterman@ursinus.edu

Dear Ursinus Family,

For as long as I can recall, I've always been a wisdom wackadoo. Call me crazy, but more than half of my camera roll is stored with tidbits of inspiration. The verbiage is comforting, especially now that graduation is merely five weeks away, and even though I have a tangible idea of where I am headed, I still feel anxious and uneasy. And so after debating this month's topic of discussion, I thought there was no better way to combat negative feelings than to request perspective from a venerable sage.

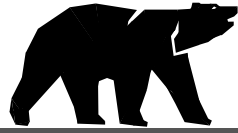
Mr. Harry Milne, a close family friend, and WWII veteran who lost his leg at the whopping age of twenty-five is someone I cannot help but be in awe of. His spunk and determination are commendable, and after recently turning 104 years young, I was dying to know his secret(s) to living a fulfilled, long life. This is what he had to say:

1. Everyone has a story. Be kind. You never know the pain that plagues others' hearts. You may think you do, but you have no idea the extent, so be gentle.
2. Life is and never will be perfect, so do not wait until it is to be happy. Choose happiness now. Yes, now, in this present moment.
3. Embrace uncertainty. Let go of control. You do not have to have all the answers at one given time. Have faith. Everything works out. Easy for me to say, but I promise.
4. Be thankful for every chapter - even the ones that may bring you to your knees. Fight the good fight. Life is worth living.
5. Life is short. Forgive. Forgive. Forgive. It might be hard to do so sometimes, but it is much harder to keep carrying the weight of anger and resentment.

And now, we seniors are approaching the end of what we once felt would last forever. If you find yourself worried about the transition, know your feelings are valid. But do me a favor and live with the notion that each chapter holds the capacity to be better than the last, but much like Harry, it is up to us to make it one worth reading.

Yours truly,
Layla





Following the Trail to Oregon

Marie Sykes: masykes@ursinus.edu

The Trail to Oregon: known for a long arduous journey across the American midwest in a covered wagon with many dying of dysentery (and other causes), but also known for inspiring the hit 1971 educational game and the Starkid Productions musical. The Breakaway Student Productions performs The Trail to Oregon April 14th and 15th.

Breakaway Vice President Ali Wolf '23, is directing the show. She says Breakaway chose to perform The Trail to Oregon since they wanted a really fun performance. "It's hilarious, fast-paced, and something you can't not have fun with." Trail to Oregon is a fitting match for Breakaway. Beyond being described as "kooky" by both Wolf and Elliot Cetinski '24, who plays the Father, the original producers, Starkid Productions, is a theater company founded by University of Michigan college students putting on low-budget but high-quality shows.

When it came time for Wolf to draw design inspiration, she said she took plenty from the original game, wanting something "super nostalgic." But as for other aspects of the show choices, she said "directing a show is kind of like co-parenting a child with like twenty or so people. You all work together to create something from nothing, sometimes it's harder than others and you're terrified of messing it up, but in the end, everything is worth it as you have made something you are so incredibly proud of. And I am so ridiculously proud of this production."

Due to Starkid Productions posting their musicals on YouTube, with other notable

titles being A Very Potter Musical and Twisted, plenty of the cast has had prior exposure to their work. Sadie Walker '25, who plays General Store Guy's Wife amongst other roles, said that she had seen the show before and had "always wanted to be in a Starkid show" but never thought she would due to how "obscure" they are. Annie Zulick '25, Baby Ox/Bartender, said she had seen it "multiple times" and had played the game plenty as well. Other members had some familiarity with Starkid in general, but had never seen it. Gianna Daiuto '26, Mother, had seen it years past but upon rewatching it after being cast said "oh god this is what I have to do."

When asked about what the cast and crew's favorite moments of the show were, many answered with a particular song. "Caulk Your Wagon," has plenty of choreography associated with the piece, Kendra Melniczek '25, McDoon, said. "Dysentery World" was another popular song, with Emelia Reed '26, dancer, saying the audience will be "bewildered." "It Pays to Be an Animal" is a favorite of Zulick's. Daiuto said her favorite song was "When the World's At Stake" especially since she's "not really angry like I am [in] 95% of the show."

Beyond songs, others added their love of the structure of the show, with Walker saying her favorite part was the "community we all have." Ben Little '24, General Store Guy, said he enjoyed "watching everything come together from all ends like design and music and [taking what] we've learned from doing department shows and different classes." Kate Foley '23, Executive Producer, replied that she

loved the "improvised elements" of the show. Every run the ending of the show changes as well as the family member names, so no one ever really knows how the show will run.

For seniors, this is one of their last Ursinus productions. Foley said that she was "excited that we finally have the chance to do a full musical. I feel like this is something Breakaway's been working towards since I started as a freshman." She also said she was "ready to pass the torch" along to the next generation. Austin Brzezicki '23, Family/Horny Ox, said that "it's pretty surreal I'm going to be leaving soon" and "bittersweet." Bradigan said that "it's a great show to go out on."

One important thing to keep in mind is that it is the audience's responsibility to pick the names of the family members each night for Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, and Grandpa. Brzezicki made sure to remind the audience. Names have ranged during rehearsal from anything from "Celery" to "Papa Johns" to an attempted "Sadie Walker Doing the Griddy" and more. The more ridiculous the better. "It establishes the run," explained Emily Bradigan '23, who plays the brother and said that this was their favorite part.

The Trail to Oregon runs April 14 and 15th in the Black Box Theater at 7pm. Tickets are \$3 for students and seniors and \$5 for general admission. Tickets will be on a first-come, first-serve basis, though last year's production of Rocky Horror quickly sold out. To stay up to date with Breakaway, be sure to follow them on Instagram @uc_bsp.



Courtesy of Breakaway Student Productions

Humor Writing: Not Just Something to Laugh at

Kate Horan: kahoran@ursinus.edu

Most everyone loves to laugh. Sharing jokes is not only fun but allows people to connect through shared aspects of humor and humanity. The Grizzly's love for jokes can be seen in our previous issue, a satirical issue titled *The Goofly*. Expanding upon the importance of humor and educating students, Dr. Talia Argondezzi is currently teaching ENCW-216 – Humor Writing. ENCW-216 is the blanket number for special fiction writing topics and the class's title changes each semester as the topic changes. According to Argondezzi, "Humor writing is synonymous with comedy writing – any writing whose main purpose is to make others laugh, even if it also has additional purposes of elucidating something about the human experience or critiquing a social problem." This class focuses especially on what might be considered "pure" humor writing – short satire.

Argondezzi asserts that the most important aspect of humor is originality, due to the fact that all comedy relies on surprise to elicit laughter. She states that it is helpful to see what themes and jokes are already circulating so that people can find a place for their own original ideas, which is why the class spends a good amount of time reading and analyzing contemporary humor.

Giving us the inside scoop on humor writing, Argondezzi lets us know that "there are a few comedy secrets that are easy to pick up once you know them. The rule of three, for example: establish a list where the first two elements are conventional and expected, and the third is the joke, which disrupts the rhythm or expectations established by the first two." She suggests usually placing jokes at the ends of sentences and paragraphs and, "hard consonant sounds almost always land more hilariously than soft ones, and the hard /k/ sound is the funniest. I know it doesn't seem possible, but I promise it's true – some words have an inherently funnier sound than others!"

It is commonly believed that comedy is related to happiness, but it is so much more than that. Argondezzi finds humor to be very important to her as a coping mechanism. She explains, "Most of the best comedy I've written has been inspired by an emotion usually considered negative: anxiety about aging, fear of death, frustration at a current

event or social problem." With her Humor Writing class helping her, Argondezzi wrote a recent piece that was inspired by her anger at an aggressive driver on the road. Although some people assume that the purpose of humor is to deflect serious topics, Argondezzi sees it differently. "At its best, comedy gives us a way to spend a little extra time with bad feelings, but in a way that diffuses them and makes them harmless, and helps us to realize that bad feelings are not only normal, but can even offer us an insightful way to understand our world," says Argondezzi.

Through the Humor Writing class, Argondezzi has shared with her students a different approach to life. "A college education is or should be about learning how to be a more complex and reflective person, and I can think of no more important intellectual and emotional habit than the ability to understand the human experience, including its darker sides, from a secure and positive position. Humor can do that for us," explains Argondezzi. However, when discussing why she enjoys teaching humor writing, this is the fancy answer. The other thing that Argondezzi enjoys about teaching humor writing is the students.

Argondezzi describes her Humor Writing students as smart, funny, and generous, with Argondezzi and her students all working together to become better writers. "They crack each other up each class. One of the concepts we've discussed a lot is that no one ever runs out of jokes; the more funny ideas you generate,

the more new ones you get. So, I encourage everyone never to 'save' a joke for a future piece, and never to hesitate to 'waste' a joke by suggesting it to someone else to use in their piece," states Argondezzi. She describes how the students are very attentive to each other's ideas and love to offer each other new angles to take and new jokes to use. Argondezzi enjoys teaching Humor Writing as "it's such a fun class to experience, because of what the students bring."

Argondezzi has demonstrated that humor is not just something to laugh at, rather, it is also an approach to life. Humor allows us to understand complex emotions and the human experience, further allowing humans to connect to one another on a deeper level. Humor can be funny and can make important statements through a comedic medium, but additionally it brings people together, whether it be bringing people together through the joke itself or through the creation of jokes such as in the Humor Writing class.



Talia Argondezzi with Mekha Varghese '23
Courtesy of Ursinus College



What is that building called?

Ava Compagnoni: avcompagnoni@ursinus.edu

Helf, FLB, the Bakes, the Gym, Helferrich, the FieldHouse, Floy Lewis Bakes Center, the list goes on and on. Why are there so many different names for this one building? It serves many different purposes, the basketball gym, the strength and training gym, the sports medicine clinic, the dance studio, the multi-purpose fieldhouse, Naturals, the list goes on and on.

I asked students, and a few professors, what they called this building, varying between majors, interests, but most importantly if they were a student-athlete or not. As the hub for all things athletic at Ursinus, student-athletes spend a large portion of their athletic career in 'the building.'

However, disregarding the debate about whether Ursinus considers dancers student-athletes or not, dancers also spend a

lot of time in 'the building' throughout the year.

Another group who spends a lot of time in 'the building' are the Health and Exercise Physiology majors, minors, or people who take those classes as electives. With a decent HEP major population on campus, coincidentally also being student-athletes, 'the building' is the powerhouse of that academic field. I asked 83 Ursinus community members, 42 student-athletes, 31 students, and 10 professors!

Why is this? How can one building have so many different names? Freshman Bella Vassalluzzo has been influenced by her tennis practice culture to call it 'the Bakes.' "Our rain day practices are in the fieldhouse but I have only heard my teammates call the building 'the Bakes' and

it's infectious. Now I consider the whole building under that name, even when we go to the locker room, I say we're going to the Bakes," says Vassalluzzo. Some students have no affiliation with the building at all, but merely pass through the enormous complex from time to time. "I have just always called it the FLB. I am not an athlete, I go to Planet Fitness down in Royersford, I attend a sparing amount of sporting events there, and I have never had class there," says senior Emily MacKinnon.

So socially, we will never decide on a name for the building. Even though it does have a proper title, the Floy Lewis Bakes Center, it has subsections that may define it more or less for a student or member of the Ursinus community.

	Floy Lewis Bakes Center	Helf/Helferrich	FLB	The Gym	The Bakes
Student-Athletes (42)	0	9	13	5	15
NARPS (31)	3	10	9	9	0
Professors (10)	2	3	0	5	0

What will you miss about Ursinus?

Kate Horan: kahoran@ursinus.edu

We asked students what they will miss about Ursinus after they graduate:

"Meeting up for coffee in The Commons with my friends."
- Haleigh Olsen

"Having all my closest people within walking distance! Leaving college and all going different places is something I am so not ready for!"
- Katie Cressman

"Professors and how pretty the campus is in the fall."
- N

"Not being in walking distance of my friends for game nights."
- Amanda Marley

"Having all my friends so close, and being able to see them whenever I wanted."
- Jenna Smith

"The eggplant parm panini at Cafe 2020."
- Miles Noecker

"Friends."
- Sarah Fales

"All of my amazing friends and faculty mentors - Ursinus is a one-of-a-kind close-knit community and it's bittersweet to leave it behind."
- Kate Foley

"Boolin in Hobson."
- Alyssa



Cont. from page 8

As a backup on the team, I commonly find myself in an observer role of the team's dynamics, and it's often that I find myself as being the biggest fan of Ursinus lacrosse while also being rostered. It has been three months since Coach Shaffer's inaugural season kicked off, and I and many others can confidently say that this season has taken a turn for the better for the program. It was in this eight week stretch that we found our identity as a program, and more importantly, we grew confident in who we were as lacrosse players. This team showcases a high-powered, score-at-will mentality, with the offense riding behind star senior Tyler Neal, who is solidifying his case as the Centennial Conference player of the year. While Neal has been spectacular this season, do not be mistaken, this team is certainly not a one-trick pony. In just eight games, the team boasts 6 players with more than 10 points, and better yet, three of those players have tallied over 15 goals so far. The attack duo of Jeremy Calabro and Erik Ojert has been nothing short of a spectacle, as the pair display a chemistry that could have very well been crafted in a lab. The two attackmen have combined for 30 points on the year, and their offensive contributions have led to 1/3 of the team's scoring this season. Along with Calabro and Ojert, we're seeing a breakout season from midfielder Tyler Falco, who has notched 15 goals in his senior campaign. Falco demonstrates a staggering lefty shot, and as a goaltender myself, it is overwhelmingly hard to prevent that ball from hitting nylon whenever he shoots. Along with Falco, the midfield unit is seeing some astonishing play out of sophomore Chris "Pooch" Pucciarelli and senior Jake Ojert. Pucciarelli is second on the team in assists, as he displays the

most impressive footwork that I and many others have ever seen. "He is so hard to guard," said Junior defender James Rapp. "Sometimes you think you have him locked up, but next thing you know, he's five yards past you." While you may not commonly see Jake Ojert on the stat sheet, he is hard to miss when watching the game. Jake Ojert, twin brother of Erik Ojert, is debatably the most valuable player on this Ursinus College team, as he does just about everything. He scores goals, makes great passes, plays exceptional defense, and showcases a 40 yard dash comparable to some division 1 wide receivers. If this Ursinus team was a vehicle, Jake Ojert is the engine that keeps this team moving.

On top of the star-studded offense, the Ursinus defense has had a very successful first half of the season, besides a hiccup against York College in February. With alum Nolan Sachs coming back to the team to govern the defense, along with coveted USILA All-American goalkeeper, Marc Poust, the Ursinus defense has found its footing. Goaltender Jon Singer has been having a career year, as he is currently sitting at #2 in the conference in total saves. His dominance and energy in the net has truly solidified this Ursinus defense as some of the best in the conference, and this squad has contributed to some amazing outcomes. The unit boasted a second-half shutout against DeSales University, and held them to just three goals on the day. The talented DeSales roster found it nearly impossible to put the ball in the net, and the Ursinus defensive unit paved the way for the lowest scoring opponent total in quite some time. The squad has seen excellent play out of their returners Chase Rondeau and Paul Army, as the two have carried over their dominant mentality from last season. Along with the pair, the team

has seen a drastic improvement out of bench player-turned-key contributor Jeff Douglas. The Junior came back from winter break this year with a willingness to advance amongst the ranks of the team, and Douglas has worked tirelessly to solidify himself as one of the best that this Ursinus team has to offer. Seeing Jeff climb the ranks has been nothing short of inspirational, as he serves as a prime example that it's never too late to improve.

While this Ursinus team oozes talent on both sides of the ball, it isn't the talent that leads to their success. It's the brotherhood and the drive to be better that leads to those Saturday afternoon wins. They don't win games on gameday, they win them in the fall during those dreaded team lifts. They win them in the winter during those weekly Wednesday 5k runs. They win them on weekends, when the boys spend every waking hour together because they all can confidently call each other family. Coach Corey Shaffer has done a great job maintaining the family dynamics that Coach Mercadante instilled into this program, and this lacrosse team has only seen the tip of the iceberg of success that's in place for them.

"To put it plainly, Coach Corey Shaffer is a phenomenal lacrosse coach, and it was nothing short of a blessing that the cards fell into place as they did."

***- Vaughn DiBattista '24
(page. 8)***

46 Deep: Ursinus Men's LAX Story from a Player's Perspective

Vaughn DiBattista
vadibattista@ursinus.edu

It was July 22nd, 2022, and I was boarding a train to Connecticut to visit my teammate, roommate, and quite genuinely one of my closest friends, James Rapp. James and I scheduled this trip weeks in advance as a way to stay in touch over the long summer break, because the last time we spent time together was when our lacrosse season ended that May. It was on this train that I, and every other member of the Ursinus Men's Lacrosse team, received an abrupt email from Head Coach Gary Mercadante asking all of us to attend an emergency Zoom meeting that night.

It was from there that the rumors started circulating. Some people thought one of our assistant coaches was announcing that he was taking a job with another program and others thought that he would be announcing the hiring of another assistant coach. One of my good buddies even thought that he was announcing new jerseys for the team. Out of all of the theories that came about, no one predicted what would actually happen on that Zoom call that summer evening.

After four years at the helm, Coach Mercadante announced that he would be leaving coaching altogether, citing that he had an opportunity that would allow him to spend more time with his family, while also being in a better position to provide for them. It was a decision that all 46 members of the team understood, and it was met with tremendous respect. Everyone understood that Coach Mercadante was a family man, and every member of the men's lacrosse team was thankful for his



Courtesy of Will Schwartz

contributions to the program. However, in the midst of this decision, everyone had one question on their mind: What next?

It was on that same Zoom call that Associate Coach Corey Shaffer was announced as the next Head Coach for the Ursinus Men's Lacrosse team, a promotion that brought ease to the worry of the men's lacrosse team who had just said goodbye to their leader of the past four years.

To put it plainly, Coach Corey Shaffer is a phenomenal lacrosse coach, and it was nothing short of a blessing that the cards fell into place as they did. Shaffer showcases an elite lacrosse IQ, one that commonly leaves a relatively smart lacrosse

player such as myself and many others dumbfounded at the concepts he puts forth. He can confidently teach every detail of the sport of lacrosse to the players on offense, defense, the goalies, the faceoff specialists, the backups, the starters, and probably anyone within a 30 mile radius of wherever he's located. Shaffer was widely regarded as one of the best assistant coaches in the Centennial Conference, and many thought it was but a matter of time before he took the head coaching mantle at another institution desperate for a great lacrosse mind. Luckily, Shaffer received the opportunity to stay exactly where he wanted to be.

Continued on page 7