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The Parthenon, April 19, 2023

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Over 800 Expected to Walk at Spring Commencement

By **CONNER WOODRUFF & MATT SCHAFFER**
MANAGING &
NEWS EDITOR

The spring 2023 commencement ceremony, the third for the University's 38th president Brad Smith, will take place throughout the day on April 29.

The ceremony will be divided

into two services, one at 9:00 a.m. and another at 2:00 p.m. for different colleges, with roughly 800 students of the 1330 who are graduating attending the ceremony.

Students don't have to attend commencement to earn their degree, but the commencement ceremony is a traditional part of the college experience.

The ceremony will take place at the Mountain Health Arena on Third Avenue, formerly the Big Sandy Arena. Visitors can use the university shuttle bus, also referred to as "The Green Machine," to get to and from the event.

The University stresses that graduates who are late to the event could be subject to removal from the ceremony, with the expected

arrival time being 8:00 a.m. and 1 p.m. respectively.

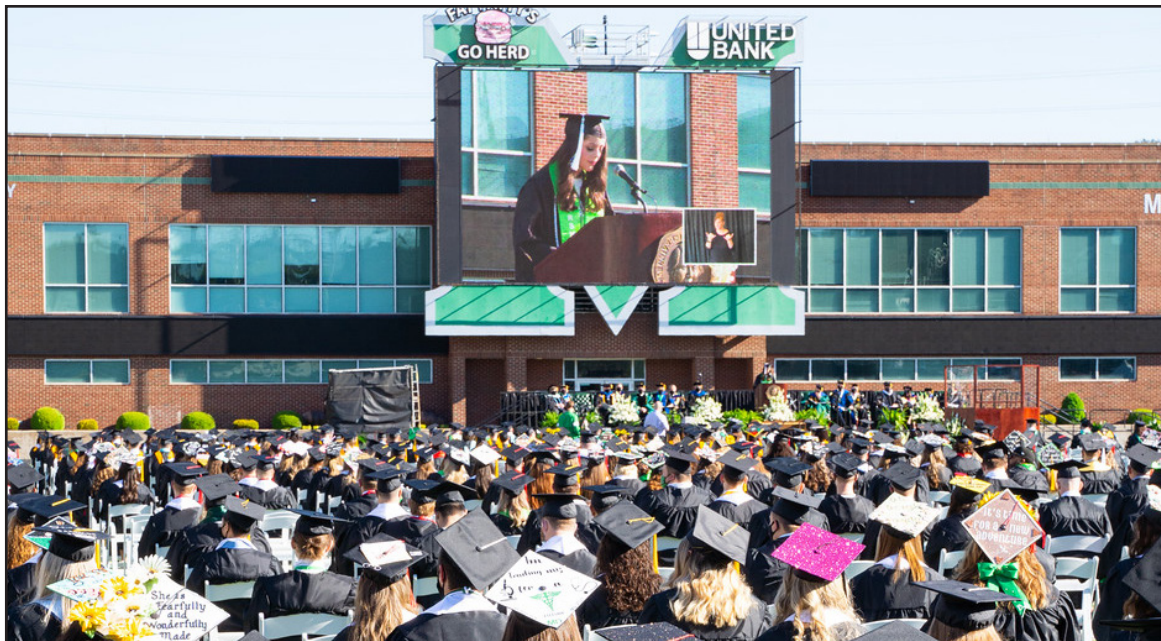
John Donahoe, president and CEO of Nike Inc., is set to be the keynote speaker.

Smith called Donahoe a "titan of industry" and "a visionary" upon announcing the speaker on March 14.

"His business acumen is top tier, and his daily actions at Nike show

he genuinely cares for people, the planet and community success," Smith said.

Donahoe, a Dartmouth College and Stanford School of Business graduate, has served on Nike's board of directors since 2014 and was selected to become the CEO on Jan. 13, 2020. Previously, he led companies including eBay, PayPal and ServiceNow in various



Students gathered during the spring 2021 graduation ceremony.

Courtesy of Marshall

Twitter

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Abortion Protests Erupt on Campus Again

By **MATT SCHAFFER**
NEWS EDITOR

Chanting and singing echoed across campus as counter-protesters came together to oppose the message and graphic images displayed by pro-life campaigners on Monday, April 17, marking a two-day demonstration.

The images used by the anti-abortion group, Center of Bio-Ethical Reform, included photos that claimed to be aborted fetuses, images of the Holocaust and depictions of the a massacre of Native Americans with captions comparing abortion to genocide.

“Abortion destroys a million of human beings every single year, so we identify it as a genocide,” said Jacinta Robin, media spokesperson for the Center of Bio-Ethical Reform. “We don’t know what else to call it with numbers so high.”

“They know they won’t change our minds, but if they can radicalize someone on the fence, that’s huge.”

- Kryss Smith

The pro-life group, based out of California, travels across the country, often displaying these images on public college and university campuses.

“We believe that abortion decapitates and dismembers a child,” Robin said. “We want the public to see that.”

The demonstration was met with counter-protesters led by the Marshall University Appalachian Liberation Collective, a student organization that hosted a sign-making party for counter-protestors and offered free condoms, Plan B and fentanyl test strips to students.

“We’re showing them that this is our campus, and they’re not welcome here,” said the community organizer with the collective who goes by the name E. “I think it’s disgraceful that they would display these very violent and misleading images to children.”

This demonstration comes just months after the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision to overturn Roe v. Wade and the resulting abortion bans that have swept across the United States, including West Virginia.

“They are also kind of rubbing it in our faces,” E said. “This is a state where abortion is illegal now, and I think this is not only redundant but also mean-spirited and cruel.”

The pro-life demonstrators also compared abortion to the Battle of Wounded Knee, a massacre of nearly 300 Indigenous people in South Dakota in 1890 by the U.S. Military, a comparison that E said is insensitive to Indigenous students.

Alongside the counter-protesters, the University’s Women’s and Gender Center set up a table to provide support, resources like condoms and informative pamphlets and information to students near the demonstration.

“The Women’s and Gender Center, and centers like it on campuses all over the state, are really important



Wild-West themed counterprotest from students against the Center of Bio-Ethical Reform



Center for Bio-Ethical Reform’s displays showcasing aborted fetuses along with visual comparisons, juxtaposing images of Holocaust and Wounded Knee violence.



Photos by Shauntele Thompson

for being able to give resources,” said Kryss Smith, member of the Women’s and Gender Center and Appalachian Liberation Collective. “So many of these graphic, gory images, they do that to get outrage. It is how they gain a profit.”

“They have a significant record

when it comes to suing the pants off of people as soon as someone touches their things or does anything against them that could solicit any sort of case they could figure out,” they said.

“They know they won’t change our minds, but if they can radicalize someone on the fence, that’s huge,”

Smith said.

This marks the second pro-life group to visit the campus this month with the Columbus, Ohio, group Created Equal visiting the campus on March 5. The demonstration also drew a significant number of counter-protesters on campus.

SGA Proposes Wi-Fi Improvements



Drinko Library

Photo by Evan Green

By **EMMA JOHNSON**
STUDENT REPORTER

Students could look forward to having more Wi-Fi access when outside under a new proposal by the Student Government Association.

“Marshall University [Wi-Fi] does not currently reach all outdoor spaces on campus,” apprentice senator Skyler Elliot said. “So, it is difficult for students to complete schoolwork without a personal hotspot, which all students may not have access to.”

This proposal supports the idea that Wi-Fi should be expanded to all outside areas that are popular places for students to gather on warm days so they can complete schoolwork while being outside.

“Students may want to sit outside when it’s nice and work on schoolwork, so it would be great to have as strong Wi-Fi signal as we have in the student center everywhere on campus,” senator

Rachel Pauley said.

Students have also shown their support for this proposal since it would allow them to complete schoolwork when they need fresh air or just want to enjoy the sun while being productive.

“I think this is a great idea because there have been times where I have wanted to study outside but in some places the Wi-Fi connection is bad, and the places outside where the Wi-Fi does reach tend to be crowded,” sophomore Jaden Keith said.

“I think expanding the Wi-Fi on campus is a great idea,” sophomore Alana Ortega said. “Especially places like the lawns where it’s nice to sit outside and get homework done on a warm day.”

While expanding the Wi-Fi to the lawns on campus is just a proposal, many students have shown their support for this proposal and hope to see it happen in the near future.

Pharmacy School and Rite-Aid Host Scholarship Program

By **ABIGAIL CUTLIP**
STUDENT REPORTER

A new scholarship program has started as a collaboration between the Marshall University School of Pharmacy and Rite Aid.

The program, titled the “Community Practice Rural Health Scholars” program, is for third-year pharmacy students who are interested in both rural community pharmacy practice and becoming employed with Rite Aid in the future. The students who qualify will receive up to \$10,000 over the course of the 15-week program.

“In many rural communities, a local pharmacist is the most accessible health care provider,” said Craig Kimble, the director of experiential learning and an associate professor at the Marshall University School of Pharmacy. “This program will advance patient-focused, clinical skills, including medication reviews and counseling, medication insurance coverage assistance and vaccine administration.”

To be eligible for this new program, Marshall University

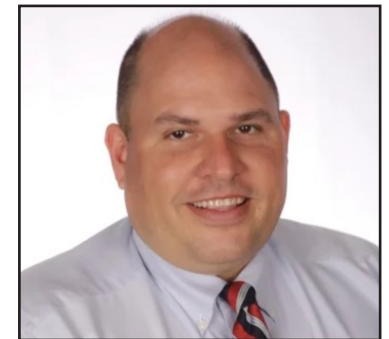
School of Pharmacy students must be in their third year, be in good academic standing, have a minimum 2.5 GPA, be eligible for hire at Rite Aid Corporation and licensure as an intern in Ohio and commit to working as a Rite Aid pharmacist in an agreed rural area after graduation.

Kim Richardson, a regional pharmacy leader at Rite Aid, welcomed the first two participants of the program during an event the school hosted on Friday, April 7. The participants are Asam Mesleh from Dearborn, Michigan; and James Mills from Corbin, Kentucky. They will begin the “Community Practice Rural Health Scholars” program this summer in conjunction with their Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience rotations.

“Community pharmacists are not only the most accessible, but sometimes the only health care professional that patients see in rural settings,” Richardson said. “It is critical that these pharmacists are highly educated on a broad range of topics and are prepared to practice at the top of their license.”

“In many rural communities, a local pharmacist is the most accessible health care provider.”

- Craig Kimble



Final Exam Schedule Revealed

EXAM HOUR	MONDAY APRIL 24	TUESDAY APRIL 25	THURSDAY APRIL 27	FRIDAY APRIL 28
8:00 AM until 10:00 AM	Classes meeting at 8:00 MWF	Classes meeting at 9:30 TR	Classes meeting at 8:00 TR	Classes meeting at 9:00 MWF
10:15 AM until 12:15 PM	Classes meeting at 10:00 MWF	Classes meeting at 11:00 MWF	Classes meeting at 11:00 TR	Classes meeting at 12:00 MWF
12:45 PM until 2:45 PM	Classes meeting at 2:00 or 2:30 MWF	Classes meeting at 12:30 TR	Classes meeting at 2:00 TR	Classes meeting at 1:00 MWF



Dr. Leslie Heaphy for the Moffat Lecture Series

Photo by Shaun Thompson

Baseball Scholar Details Negro League History

By SARAH DAVIS
STAFF REPORTER

The Negro Leagues are an integral part of American sports history, according to a professor and baseball scholar.

In “A Journey Through the Negro Leagues,” Dr. Leslie Heaphy discussed the history behind America’s Black baseball league as a part of The Charles Hill Moffat Lectures. The lecture is an annual event hosted by Marshall’s history department in honor of the late Dr. Moffat, a professor of history.

Heaphy, a professor of history at Kent University at Stark, spoke at the lecture. Heaphy is a baseball scholar as well as an author and editor of many books and articles, including *Black Ball*, the only Black baseball history journal.

Heaphy focused on a timeline

during her lecture, beginning with the foundations of baseball.

“Baseball started as an amateur game. Baseball started as something for fun, which meant everybody played, regardless of who you were—age, gender, color—it didn’t matter,” she said.

Heaphy explained that as the game progressed, certain people were pushed away from playing, which, according to her, is a recurring theme in history.

The first person Heaphy highlighted was Octavius Catto, a man often only known for his activism in civil rights. However, he was also involved with the Philadelphia Pythians, the first Black baseball team to apply for membership in the National Baseball Organization. The team applied for membership in 1867.

Charles Douglass, the son of Frederick Douglass, helped

Catto establish the Philadelphia Pythians.

The team was soon denied membership due to their African American players.

The National Colored Baseball League, the first attempt at a Black baseball league, launched in 1887. The league was comprised of eight teams: the Baltimore Lord Baltimores, Boston Resolutes, Louisville Falls Citys, New York Gorhams, Philadelphia Pythians, Pittsburgh Keystones, Washington Capital Citys and Cincinnati Browns.

The league only lasted a month, allowing each team to play around eight games. The failure was primarily due to weather. Many storms made it difficult to play the scheduled games.

Continued on page 11

New School of Business Dean Starts July 3

By THE PARTHENON

Dr. Don Capener has been selected to be the new dean for the Lewis College of Business and will officially start on July 3.

Marshall benefited from a strong applicant pool, with 32 candidates from around the country representing experienced administrators, including endowed chairs, associate deans, deans and even a president.

The search committee narrowed the pipeline to nine semi-finalists who were invited to airport interviews in Columbus, Ohio, and the committee recommended the top three finalists who were invited for on-campus interviews.

While each finalist proved to be uniquely qualified, Dr. Capener emerged as the most qualified candidate to serve Marshall’s excellence in business education.

He has served at the highest levels of university administration for twenty years, including as vice president at Monmouth University in New Jersey, dean at both Jacksonville and Utah Valley Universities and as associate provost and graduate director at Utah Valley.

After serving for seven years as the dean of business at Jacksonville University in Florida, where he started the doctoral program in business and master’s in business analytics, Capener accepted an assignment as associate provost and graduate director of business at Utah Valley University.

He now leads all UVU

professional education and is the lead administrator at the Heber and Lehi campuses for UVU. Capener also started the tech management and healthcare master of business administration programs at UVU.

Capener is an active volunteer leader for the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, where he has led peer-review teams in China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Japan and nine U.S.-based business schools.

He successfully led UVU’s Woodbury School of Business through AACSB re-accreditation in June 2022.

Capener has published 12 peer-reviewed journal articles in publications such as *International Economics* and the *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* as recently as February 2023.

He earned his doctorate in international business, a master of business administration in marketing and a bachelor’s degree in political science and economics.

Capener also founded several companies including his own successful San Diego-based marketing agency and Above the Rim Apparel. He was also a C-suite level executive with Netcentives and Chang Industrial.

Through his administrative experience, knowledge in business, professional demeanor and engagement, he elevated his candidacy from the other contenders.

'Create Narratives,' Says Jessica Huff



Jessica Huff speaks at a community event.

Courtesy of the Jessica Kern Foundation

By **BETHANY JARRELL**
STUDENT REPORTER

Jessica Huff says she believes every day is an opportunity to serve others. Since coming to Huntington in 2021 when her husband, Charles Huff, became head coach of Marshall's football team, she has tested that statement by becoming active in the community.

Saying she believes in the potential of everyone willing to work to reach their goals, Huff encourages people to "create their own narrative." Through her Jessica Kern Foundation, she seeks to help people achieve their dreams and open opportunities by using her life experience as a model.

Before she was a coach, businesswoman and public speaker, Huff grew up in a blue-collar family in Milwaukee. She credits her family for her work ethic, describing her parents as hard-working people who defied social norms for the time.

"My parents were doing things that people just didn't do—to be an interracial couple was taboo—so we kind of lived our lives knowing it was against

the grain, and that was okay," Huff said.

This inspired an open mindedness in her; she said, "My biggest takeaway from my upbringing would have to be that an educated woman is a free woman, and an open mind is a free mind."

Huff has always lived an unconventional life, she said, adding that "It's challenging and uncomfortable but is necessary. If we want something different, we have to be different."

When others asked her how she felt about the move to Appalachia, she noted she had experienced many cultures throughout her career. Such exposure makes a well-rounded individual, she said.

"It doesn't matter what side of the fence you stand on. Having an open mind gives you a whole different perspective on the life that you want to live," Huff said.

Like her husband, she has had an athletic career that began at Penn State on the track and field team.

As an undergrad, she studied journalism before pursuing professional basketball and

playing internationally in Australia, Germany, Switzerland, Romania and Poland.

Huff continued her athletics by coaching women's basketball at Lincoln University, Mississippi Valley State University and Tennessee State University. She was also assistant coach at Arkansas-Pine Bluff University and Wisconsin-Milwaukee University.

"To be in coaching, it almost has to be your calling in life," she said. "It's a job with high stress and oftentimes little gratification. We coaches are outcome driven, and losses

measure our success even though that isn't always the case."

Through coaching, Huff said she developed a sense of empathy that she didn't have in her early seasons. She would apply these kinds of skills for motherhood and her marriage.

"When I stopped making it about me and instead how I could serve others, things became much easier," Huff said. "Pour yourself into others, and it'll come full circle."

Huff said her final season coaching at the collegiate level was a transformative period that prepared her for her life

today.

"My last season at Tennessee State was the hardest, most gut wrenching, faith testing but joyous time of my life," Huff said.

Calling Marshall a new chapter, she said, "I knew God was shifting me to somewhere else."

"My top priorities are Christ, family and staying positive," Huff went on to say. "Three to five things will probably go wrong before you even wake up, so it's important to remain positive and keep moving forward."



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Texas State Sweeps Marshall Baseball in Three-Game Series



Senior Kyle Schaefer looks to advance to third base.

Courtesy of HerdZone

By CHAYCE MATHENY SPORTS EDITOR

Marshall baseball was swept by Texas State in a three-game series over the weekend.

In game one on Friday, April 14, Marshall lost 5-1.

“Give their pitcher credit. He obviously pitched his tail off and was really tough on us,” Head Coach

Greg Beals said about opposing pitcher Levi Wells’ complete game. “We didn’t play clean enough on defense to stay in a tough game like that.”

Kyle Schaefer went 3-3 and hit his fifth home run of the season, which leads the team.

Christian Lucio went 2-3, which were two doubles.

Luke Edwards also brought in a

hit.

In game two on Saturday, Marshall was shutout 6-0.

Starting pitcher Raymond Pacella had six strikeouts in 5.0 innings. He gave up two hits and four walks, allowing two runs.

Edwards, Lucio and Kelber Peralta all got base hits.

In game three on Sunday, Marshall lost 5-4.

Marshall had a 4-2 lead going into the bottom of the seventh.

“Tough weekend again for our team,” Beals said after the final game. “We are so close, but need to find the winning edge – the edge that allows us to make great pitches, plays and hits in crunch time. This is a very strong baseball conference. It is often a very fine line that separates the winning and losing

team. We will continue to work hard to find that edge.”

Edwards and Lucio recorded each a hit, making it three straight games with a hit for both.

Schaefer and Gio Ferraro brought in the four runs for the Herd.

Zac Addkison pitched 5.0 innings, giving up four hits with five strikeouts and allowing two runs.

The Parthenon, Thank You



Sports Editor Chayce Matheny

Photo by Lucy Bell

By CHAYCE MATHENY SPORTS EDITOR

In the spring of 2022, I would make one of the best decisions of my life.

I was just a journalism student going to class, doing nothing outside of it. I told myself I needed to change, get the ball rolling and get some experience.

So, I asked a few of my classmates who worked for *The Parthenon* if I could join the team. To my surprise, one of the classmates, Tyler Spence, the executive editor at the time, told me to come to the next meeting, so I did. And that decision is one of my best.

After the first meeting, I was labeled as a student reporter, helping the team in any way possible. It would be the start of many great friendships and opportunities.

That following school year, in the fall of 2022, I applied for the Sports Editor role, and, happily, I got the position. It was an honor

I did not take for granted.

As a lifelong Notre Dame fan, I got to travel to the game between Marshall and the Irish, which Marshall did win in an upset against the No. 8 team in the nation. And as a Notre Dame fan and a Marshall student, I was torn. Going onto the field and working in the press box was an experience I will cherish forever.

Also, traveling to the bowl game between UConn and Marshall with Tyler and Shauntelle is one of my favorite memories as Sports Editor.

Getting to cover Marshall sports for *The Parthenon* has been one, if not the most, incredible experience I have ever had.

To my friends and colleagues: thank you for making me a better journalist and, mainly, a better person. I wish you all nothing but success, and I can't wait to see what you all accomplish in the future.

The Parthenon, once again, thank you.

Softball Bounces Back After Losing its First Game at Coastal Carolina



Pitcher Sydney Nester

Courtesy of HerdZone

By LUKE HAMILTON STUDENT REPORTER

Herd softball improved to 35 wins and five losses on the season in the 5-3 win against the Coastal Carolina Chanticleers on Saturday, April 15. The victory gave Marshall the best start in program history for its first 40 games.

The game was tied 2-2 at the top of the seventh inning as Grace Chelemen hit a deep sacrifice fly ball to score Alex Coleman and Sydney Bickel.

Erica Holt scored the fifth run of the contest in the seventh on an

error following the two-run hit from Chelemen.

Savannah Rice started off in the circle for the Herd in five innings of play, and freshman pitcher Bri Godfrey relieved Rice in the sixth.

Sydney Nester pitched in the final two innings to secure the win, striking out the first Chanticleer at bat and receiving the game winning double play.

"Many players stepped up this weekend, and I am extremely proud of the resilience and grit that our team displayed," Coach Megan Smith Lyon said after the 3-2 win on April 16.

Marshall started off behind one run in the first inning, but Brooklyn Ulrich had an RBI single to left center field that scored Rielly Lucas.

In the third inning, Camryn Michallas hit out to left field for her third home run of the season to put the Herd on top 3-1.

Nester allowed one more run in the contest and struck out three Chanticleers in her 20th win of the season.

Marshall returned home to take on the Alabama Crimson Tide on Tuesday, April 18.

Defamation is at the Heart of Dominion's Lawsuit Against Fox News - But Proving it is no Small Feat

By **NICOLE KRAFT**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

The aftershocks of the 2020 presidential election continue to reverberate in politics and the media, building to an crescendo in a high-profile defamation lawsuit. The trial is slated to begin the week of April 16, 2023, in the case of

U.S. Dominion, Inc. v. Fox News Network. The lawsuit rests on whether false claims Fox hosts and their guests made about Dominion's voting machines after President Joe Biden was elected were defamatory. Dominion is suing Fox for US\$1.6 billion.

Fox News hosts said on air that that

there were "voting irregularities" with Dominion's voting machines – while privately saying that such claims were baseless.

The statements have already been proved false. Delaware Superior Court Judge Eric M. Davis ruled on March 31, 2023, that it "is CRYSTAL clear that none of the Statements relating to Dominion about the 2020 election are true."

The question now is whether the statements harmed Dominion's reputation enough to rise to the level of defamation.

I am a longtime journalist and journalism professor who teaches the realities and challenges of defamation law as it relates to the news industry. Being accused of defamation is among a journalist's worst nightmares, but it is far easier to throw around as an accusation than it is to actually prove fault.

Defamation happens when someone publishes or publicly broadcasts falsehoods about a person or a corporation in a way that harms their reputation to the point of damage. When the false statements are written, it is legally considered libel. When the falsehoods are spoken or aired on a live TV broadcast, for example, it is called slander.

To be considered defamation, information or claims must be presented as fact and disseminated so others read or see it and must identify the person or business and offer the information with a reckless disregard for the truth.

Defamation plaintiffs can be private, ordinary people who must

prove the reporting was done with negligence to win their suit. Public people like celebrities or politicians have a higher burden of proof, which is summed up as actual malice, or overt intention to harm a reputation.

The ultimate defense against defamation is truth, but there are others.

Opinion that is not provable fact is protected, for example.

Neutral reportage – a legal term that means the media reports fairly, if inaccurately, about public figures – can legally protect journalists.

But Davis rejected both of those arguments in the federal Dominion case.

Davis determined Fox aired falsehoods when it allowed Trump supporters to claim on air that Dominion rigged voting machines to increase President Joe Biden's number of votes. He also said that these actions harmed the Dominion's reputation.

The primary question for the jury will be whether Fox broadcasters knew the statements were false when they aired them. If they did, it would mean they acted with actual malice, the standard required to prove a case of defamation for a public person, entity or figure.

The U.S. Supreme Court established actual malice as a legal criterion of defamation in 1964 when L.B. Sullivan, a police commissioner in Alabama, felt his reputation had been harmed by a civil rights ad run in The New York Times that contained several inaccuracies. Sullivan sued and was

awarded \$500,000 by a jury. The state Supreme Court affirmed the decision and the Times appealed.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1964 that proof of defamation required evidence that the advertisement creator had serious doubts about the truth of the statement and published it anyway, with the goal to harm the subject's reputation.

Simply put, the burden of proof shifted from the accused to the accuser.

And that is a hurdle most cannot overcome when claiming defamation.

It is incredibly hard to prove in court that someone set out to do harm in publishing facts that are ultimately proved to be untrue.

Most times, falsehoods in a story are the result of insufficient information at the time of reporting. Sometimes an article's inaccuracies are the result of bad reporting. Other times the errors are a result of actual negligence.

This happened when Rolling Stone magazine published an article in 2014 about the gang rape of a student at the University of Virginia. It turned out that many parts of the story were not true and not properly vetted by the magazine.

Nicole Eramo, the former associate dean of students at the University of Virginia, sued Rolling Stone, claiming the story false alleged that she knew about and covered up a gang rape at a fraternity on campus. They reached a settlement on the lawsuit in 2017.

CORRECTION: In last week's edition of the Parthenon, No. 25, the headline on the front page was misleading. President Smith is introducing an initiative to get students to graduation without student debt. The pilot group of 100 students starts a four-year program in the upcoming fall semester, with plans to graduate in 2027.

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

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THE PARTHENON'S CORRECTIONS POLICY

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

Childhood Memories Explored in Art Capstones

By JOSEPH DICRISTOFARO
STUDENT REPORTER

Life-altering experiences, childhood memories and mythical creatures were all themes portrayed by the student artist capstones put on exhibition at the Marshall University Visual Arts Center on Monday, April 10.

Artiast Erin Waugh used the capstone exhibit as a chance to explain experiences with sickness in an artistic manner.

“In April of 2022, I was diagnosed with type one diabetes. This is a diagnosis that has completely altered my life, as I used to fly by the seam of my pants,” Waugh said. “Now, I must micro-organize my diet, sleep, exercise and my participation in activities and events.”

While the diagnosis was life-altering, Waugh’s piece looks to bring awareness to the ups and downs of having type one diabetes.

“By creating these sculptures and objects, I’m expelling my near-death experience with my diagnosis and giving it a physical form to the negatives and positives of living with it,” Waugh said.

“Through overwhelming highs and lows both with my sugar and with my outlook, I feel that much of my life has become a residue that pours over me and is stuck like caramel between my teeth,” Waugh said.

Waugh used dripping droplets (meant to represent the residue-like feeling that comes along with diabetes) as well as bright colors in the pieces on display.

Read the rest of the story online

Pictures on page 12

REVIEW: ‘The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee’ Delights the Senses

By RAFAEL ALFONSO
CONTENT EDITOR

Director Jack Cirillo and his cast turned “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” from an okay musical to a great one. On its own, the musical is a decent comedy with some standout moments, but the actors and crew really injected life into the show. I don’t know if I’ll go out of my way to watch another production of it, but I am glad I watched Marshall’s rendition.

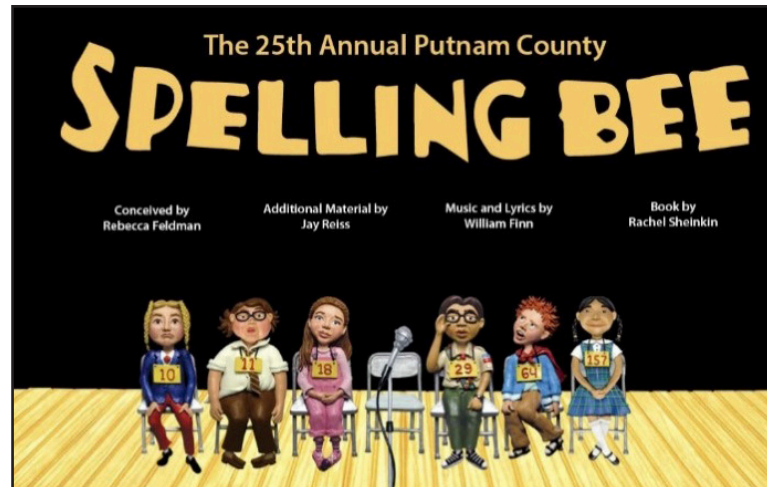
Plot: 3.5/5

“The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” follows six students (and four audience members) competing in the titular spelling bee for a \$200 prize. It is jam-packed full of humor from all the characters’ quirky personalities and the writing’s willingness to go political or vulgar (like having an entire song literally titled “My Unfortunate Erection (Chip’s Lament)”).

At times, though, the humor felt too frequent or like it was trying too hard to be funny; meanwhile, the writing made the characters more like caricatures rather than relatable people (which, I will say, is a reasonable writing decision with so many characters). However, the cast’s phenomenal acting still made these otherwise flat elements interesting and impactful.

I heard the audience gasp when Schwarzy’s (played by Sierra Lutz) father (Gavin Spiewalk) poured soda on the floor to disadvantage one of the other competitors. They also audibly reacted when Leaf (also played by Spiewalk) was eliminated from the bee after misspelling chinchilla. In fact, despite my critique of the show’s constant comedy, I found myself genuinely invested in the winner of this fictional spelling bee by its end and was sad whenever someone was eliminated.

What really made “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” stand out to me, though, was the music. The show uses leitmotifs (repeated melodies) to highlight



“The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” poster

Courtesy of the School of Theatre and Dance

certain character moments and to make the plot feel more cohesive. For example, the melody of “Pandemonium” often plays when a character is about to be eliminated from the bee or feels they’re being treated unfairly—ideas that are explored during the actual “Pandemonium” number.

The show also taps into varying musical styles—from waltz to balladic to jazz and more—meaning there’s practically at least one song for everyone to enjoy.

Favorite Songs: “Magic Foot,” “The I Love You Song” and “Pandemonium”

Performance: 4/5

Each member of the cast brought brilliant physicality and vocals to the show. I never caught any actor out of character; with everyone reacting to what was happening onstage with the same energy that they delivered their lines with. The cast also adapted well to the audience volunteers, interacting with them in character the whole time, making sure they knew what was about to happen and keeping the show moving even when the volunteers didn’t act exactly as the script expected.

I also commend the cast for the different voices they used throughout the show.

techniques to “My Unfortunate Erection (Chip’s Lament).”

Favorite Dance Numbers: “Pandemonium,” “Magic Foot,” Barfee and Olive’s (Nikki Riniti) dance in “Second”

Production: 4.5/5

By far, what dazzled me the most about Marshall’s rendition of “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” was the lighting. The show flashes back and forward in time a lot—sometimes slowing or stopping it entirely—to develop its characters, and the lighting in those scenes made them easy to follow.

The lighting was also aesthetically beautiful. During “Pandemonium,” multicolored lights dance across the stage to highlight the chaos of the scene and the characters’ emotions. In “Magic Foot,” the lighting is less dramatic, but the star-like projections on the floor during that number do create a fitting magical feeling.

A real triumph of the production, though, was when time slows down during “Spelling Montage.” To the actors’ credit, they did an excellent job of sounding like they were being fast-forwarded in real life; however, the change in lighting and all the time-related sound effects (like the stereotypical slow-mo sound) really made the scene make sense.

Additionally, the set was well-designed and really made me feel like I was back in my own middle school gym, complete with a fire alarm and an exit sign on the fake wall of the set. It was also very clever to make the band a part of the set by having them on the stage in the back like a real middle school band.

Favorite Costume Items: Leaf’s cape and helmet and Olive’s sparkly pink shoes

Total: 12/15 | *The cast and crew really made the musical for me and compensated for some of its written shortcomings.*

US Supreme Court's Abortion Pill Order Spares Safe Havens

By **GEOFF MULVHILL**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Before the U.S. Supreme Court stepped in Friday, access to an abortion pill was in line to become more cumbersome in California, New York and some other states that have positioned themselves as safe havens for those seeking to end their pregnancies.

The order keeps in place federal rules for use of mifepristone, one of the two drugs usually used in combination in medication abortions. The legal saga isn't over: The Supreme Court suggested it will decide the issue by Wednesday.

The high court's position at least pauses a ruling issued last Wednesday by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans that would have allowed mifepristone sales to continue, but under rules adopted by the Food and Drug Administration in 2000, before a series of changes that relaxed access.

The 5th Circuit ruling, which overturned another recent federal court order halting mifepristone sales nationwide, was set to take effect Saturday. It would have required the drug to be taken in the presence of a physician, ruling out mailing it to patients.

"That's not good for all of these states that are trying to help other people," Jolynn Dellinger, a senior lecturing fellow at Duke Law School who has been following the mifepristone litigation, said before the Supreme Court ruled.

None of the rulings affect the

other abortion pill, misoprostol, which can be used alone to end pregnancies but is more effective when taken in combination with mifepristone.

For the 13 states with bans on abortion at all stages of pregnancy and the one with a ban on abortion after cardiac activity can be detected, reverting to the old rules would have had little to no effect on abortion policy.

At least 10 other states had restrictions that already placed limits on medication abortion, according to an analysis by the Kaiser Family Foundation. For instance, in Georgia, it's legal only in the first six weeks of pregnancy; in Kansas, an ultrasound at an office visit is required before it's dispensed; and in North Carolina, it can't be prescribed via telehealth.

On the other side, 17 states controlled by Democrats apparently would not have been affected by the change either; in a separate but closely related case last week, a judge sided with them in their request that mifepristone access not be changed there.

That would have left just eight states where returning to the pre-2016 rules could have had a major impact: Democrat-controlled California, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York — all states that have protected abortion access and welcomed out-of-staters seeking abortions — Republican-controlled Alaska and Montana and politically divided New Hampshire and Virginia.

California, Massachusetts and New York have stockpiled abortion pills in case of restrictions, and Maryland's governor announced Friday that his state was doing the same. New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy has said he's considering doing so.

Maryland Gov. Wes Moore, a Democrat, said his administration has partnered with the University of Maryland Medical System to ensure access to mifepristone.

"As a member of the Reproductive Freedom Alliance, Maryland will not stand for this assault on women's health care," Moore said. "This purchase is another example of our Administration's commitment to ensure Maryland remains a safe haven for abortion access and quality reproductive health care."



Bottles of the drug misoprostol

Courtesy of AP/Allen G. Breed



Protesters march past the U.S. Capitol following a Planned Parenthood rally.

Courtesy of AP/Nathan Howard

Continued from page 4

Heaphy suggested that Andrew Rube Foster, often called the father of Black baseball, helped establish the Negro Leagues. Foster was active in the league as a player, manager and eventually president.

The Negro Leagues kicked-off in 1920 in Kansas City, Missouri at a local YMCA club. They lasted until the 1960s.

Heaphy explained that the teams faced many challenges, such as transportation, racism, funding and The Great Depression. However, she suggested that two factors helped these teams survive: the establishment of the World Series and the East-West Classic.

"They had an East-West classic game from 1933 to 1954, and on

many of those years, the East-West classic outdrew the major league All-Star game, by a lot," she said.

This reality, according to Heaphy, debunked the theory that people were disinterested in watching the Negro Leagues.

Heaphy went on to highlight a few key Negro league players: Satchel Paige, Cool Papa Bell, Smokey Joe Williams, Martín Dihigo and Oscar Charleston.

"These were major league caliber ball players, and there is no doubt that that is true," she said.

The Negro Leagues also included women baseball players, including Olivia Taylor, a West Virginia native. There was some speculation that the league only signed on these women to gain publicity, but Heaphy concluded that is not the case.

Drinko Academy Fellow Named

By **MATT SCHAFFER**
NEWS EDITOR

Dr. Luke Eric Lassiter is named the 28th Distinguished John Deaver Drinko Academy Fellow, one of the University's highest recognitions.

Lassiter, a professor of humanities and anthropology and director of the graduate humanities program at Marshall, will be awarded a stipend, financial and clerical support for research and scholarly projects over the next two years.

Joining the University in 2005, Lassiter, along with colleagues Dr. Elizabeth Campbell and Dr. Brian Hoey, previously won

Appalachian Studies Association's 2019 Weatherford Award for their work on "I'm Afraid of that Water: A Collaborative Ethnography on a West Virginia Water Crisis." He was also named as Historic Glenwood Foundations president.

Lassiter earned his doctorate in anthropology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill before teaching at Ball State University in Indiana then joining Marshall.

The honor was awarded during a dinner on Saturday, April 15 that also featured art by Sandra Reed, the 26th Drinko Fellow and professor of art.



Dr. Luke Eric Lassiter

Courtesy of UComm

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Sunday: 8:00 am, 10:00 am,
12:00 Noon, 5:30 pm

Confessions

Saturday 8:25 am
Saturday 3:30 pm-4:25 pm
or by appointment

HD-486492

HD-486890

Childhood Memories Explored in Art Capstones

Story on page 9



Capstone art by Erin Waugh



"Savannah Venom Belly" by Vanessa Amankwah

Photos by Joseph DiCristofaro

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