

## First Sensory Room on a College Campus Creates Safe Space for Bridges Students

BY RACHEL SIERADZKI

On Monday, Jan. 22, Adelphi University, in collaboration with the non-profit organization KultureCity, unveiled the first ever sensory room on a college campus. The opening of the innovative sensory room is meant to provide students in the Bridges to Adelphi program with a new safe refuge and a place to relax.

The Bridges program supports individuals who are on the autism spectrum or have other learning disabilities. “But we don’t discriminate against anybody, so anybody could be in the program if they choose to be,” said Stephanie Dawber, social coordinator for the Bridges program.



Sean Culkin

Another part of the program’s mission is to promote the idea of diversity and inclusivity on campus, while also raising awareness for autism. It was founded by Mitch Nagler in 2007, with only three enrolled students in the first semester, but it continued to grow and, now, thrive.

“The Bridges program is to teach students that they don’t have a disability, they don’t have anything that should hold

back their quality of life,” said Sean Culkin, a former Bridges student who graduated last year. “It’s to teach them what they are capable of. It’s not about working against who they are, but working with them.”

Culkin said that Bridges has helped him substantially since he left. He currently has a job at Northwell Health, working on cancer research. Faculty in the Bridges program helped him apply for an internship there during his time at Adelphi, and that later turned into a permanent job.

“I like Bridges,” said Laura Madtes, a freshman environmental studies major. “It has helped me manage my work and get involved in social events. It has been a big help to me.”

The sensory room is another asset for Bridges students, in addition to the social gatherings, vocational training and academic supports already provided to them.

“We understand and respect that everyone has different sensory needs,” said Dawber. “The idea of the Bridges program is to provide a safe space for students to go when they are feeling overwhelmed.”

The sensory room is a quiet room off to the side in the Bridges office. Inside, there are squishy beanbag chairs, a small trampoline, mesmerizing bubble walls and a sensory swing hammock. The dim lighting provides a relaxing atmosphere. It took a little over a month, just about the length of winter break and intersession, to put it all together.

“We have a 3D mural that a Bridges student created the digital version of,” Dawber said. “We sent it to this artist Robbie Gilbert, who works out of Arizona and creates these really cool interactive walls.”



Faculty and students cut the ribbon to the newly unveiled sensory room.

Photos by Claudio Papapietro

According to Dawber, the sensory room could not have been created without the organization KultureCity. Dawber reached out last summer to Michelle Kong, the co-founder of KultureCity, asking if she would help Bridges to create a sensory room on campus.

“Michelle identified an anonymous donor who funded the room for us, so all this stuff is donated,” Dawber said.

Kong’s husband, Julian Maha, the founder of KultureCity, said, “Kulture city is an organization that was started when our oldest son was diagnosed with autism. Our oldest son is nonspeaking. What we wanted to ensure was a better future for all people with autism worldwide so that ev-

eryone can be accepted and treated equally regardless of our abilities.”

He added that KultureCity had created sensory rooms at zoos and NBA stadiums, but never before at a college campus. This is to be the first, and hopefully not the last, he said.

The initial ribbon-cutting ceremony took place in the lobby of the Performing Arts Center, with speeches by Adelphi’s president Christine M. Riordan, Nagler, now the director of Bridges, Dawber, Culkin and Kong. Afterwards, guests were offered refreshments and invited to the Bridges office for a tour of the sensory room.

## Adelphi Greek Life Undergoes Changes Following Racial Incidents

BY DANIELLE MCDUGALL

Back in November 2016, the Adelphi community was shaken when several social media posts captured some members of Greek organizations using the n-word in a derogatory fashion. In the wake of the posts surfacing, administrators opened an investigation into Pi Lambda Phi and Sigma Delta Tau, two of the organizations implicated in the posts. Additionally, students from the Latino Students Association, Black Students United, Levermore Global Scholars, and the Inner Light Society staged a demonstration outside of the University Center after the incidents surfaced in order to express that the offending posts were part of a larger phenomenon of discrimination that several Adelphi students experience due to their

race, religion and gender.

*The Delphian* recently spoke to the Assistant Vice President and Dean of Students, Jeffrey Kessler, and the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, Perry Greene, about what changes have come of the work they had been doing with the administration in order to address the organizations involved in the posts. Going into these talks, Greene explained that the main objective was to “create a more diverse and inclusive climate on campus.”

Speaking about the results of the investigation into both Greek organizations, Kessler explained that “despite the upsetting nature of the social posts, the organizations had not violated University policy because the Greek organizations themselves did not plan, control or approve these actions. Despite the lack of a violation, plans to address the incidents and be-

havior of their members were developed. In addition, both Greek organizations continue to reach out in a transparent manner to identify ways they can make positive change to both the Greek life and the larger Adelphi communities.”

The Office of Student Conduct and Community standards also conducted investigations into the specific individuals implicated in the incidents, but the results cannot be disclosed on account of them being private.

Both the Adelphi and its Pi Lambda Phi chapter requested that their international headquarters send representatives to campus so that they could all discuss bystander intervention, use of insensitive language and inappropriate behavior, and the chapter’s future together. Additionally, the chapter co-sponsored a bystander intervention event on Nov. 28, 2017 attended by

150 Greek life members, according to Kessler. He explained that Jason Spradley, the assistant director of the Center for Student Involvement, is working with the chapter in order to plan two “Elimination of Prejudice” events for this semester.

Sigma Delta Tau (SDT) is currently on “supervision status” with its national organization, and its national leadership visited the chapter on campus to “facilitate a meeting about the incident and how and why it was problematic in light of their values and mission,” Kessler explained. Moreover, SDT will also be creating two programs focused on bystander intervention and diversity training. And its on-campus leadership has agreed to reach out to Spradley to have him host a Safe Zone Training for the whole chapter.

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## A Word from the Editor

Hello all! I realize that we have been back on campus for about three weeks now, but I would still like to welcome you all again for another semester at Adelphi and with *The Delphian*. All of us here are happy to be back.

Every day, walking from class to class, I feel like we're in a deep freeze, but I'm starting to feel like there's love in the air. Valentine's Day is near. After the holiday gift guide in our last issue, we realize you may be left wondering what to get your significant other or your friends for the special day. Our staff came together to create a mini Valentine's Day gift guide to assist you with your shopping needs.

It's also been about a month and a half since New Years. Have you kept up with your resolutions? Though being busy forces me to keep my schedule organized, my personal spaces are always a mess. At least once a year, I have to reorganize my drawers, my closet and sometimes my bookshelf. Our graphic designer Lauren Tew has turned writer in this issue and discusses the ways in which you can start the process of getting and staying organized.

This semester, we are excited to continue our Panther's Podium series, where Adelphi student athletes write about their personal experiences on, and sometimes off, the field. In this issue, Libby Mercuri writes about her study abroad trip to Guatemala and how it put her own struggles as both a nursing student and dedicated athlete into perspective. It is always a pleasure to have new voices telling stories they are passionate about. For more from and about our athletes, like a preview of spring sports, you can find our sports section on page 7.

Speaking of people passionate about telling stories, "Unheard Voices" is a short feature produced by Acting Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Cindy Maguire and communications professor Terrence Ross and was filmed by Adelphi alumni. The film is being screened for the first time in the United States later this month, and it focuses on Saharawi refugees and their stories of displacement. The documentary gives a platform to those who are often silenced. To learn more about the process of traveling to Western Sahara and shooting the film, take a look at our story about it on page 3.

Also, support our advertiser, Wayback Burgers, by using the coupon on our back page featuring an exclusive off for Adelphi students.

Today, a professor reminded me that there are only four-fifths left of the semester, and I realized that I only have about 12 more weeks here at Adelphi. While there are things that I definitely will not miss, like having to park on one side of campus and running to class on the other, there are professors and friends I've made who I will miss - but can always visit since I only live 15 minutes away. However, I wanted to also wish my fellow seniors a productive and happy last semester on campus, and don't forget to apply for graduation.

Now that my days as editor-in-chief are also numbered, I'm committed more so than ever to bringing all of you quality content for the next three and a half months. I hope I have done so by the time I walk across the stage in May. Though it is a time-consuming and stressful job at times, it is also very rewarding to see the final product of all of our hard work.

On that note, happy Valentine's Day, and have a good week!

-Gabrielle Deonath  
Editor-in-Chief

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## Journalist Donna Ladd Will Visit Campus to Talk Alternative Journalism

BY GABRIELLE DEONATH

On Wednesday, Feb. 21 at noon in Nexus 155, the Communications Department and *The Delphian* will host a talk by Donna Ladd, editor-in-chief, CEO and co-founder of the alternative weekly paper "Jackson Free Press." Through the talk, titled "Solutions Journalism in Crime Prevention and Investigative Reporting," she will explain what "alternative journalism" means, the type of work it entails, how it differs from traditional journalism and why it matters. This opportunity is open to students from all departments.

Ladd is also a freelance writer for the "Guardian" and teaches narrative nonfiction workshops and seminars, called "Writing to Change Your World," empowering writers to write with purpose, while also providing them the tools to tell compelling stories.

As a recipient of a John Jay College "Preventing Violence" fellowship and a Solutions Journalism Network



Grant, she focuses on researching, analyzing and reporting the differences between violence prevention programs and initiatives created by local law enforcement and communities in New York City and others around the country. On her website, Ladd states that her goal is to "uncover and write

about the smartest policing practices and reforms in a balanced solutions-oriented fashion by telling rich and honest stories about the people on the front lines of this difficult, but predictable, rift between communities of colors and the men and women who police them." She has also received the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Leadership Network Fellowship and the Packard Future of Children fellowship.

She has won a number of awards for her work, including the Fannie Lou Hamer Humanitarian Award, a Dress for Success Women of Strength Award in 2009, the 2009 Angel Award from the Center for Violence Prevention and the 2006 Friendship Award and formerly served as the diversity chair of the Association of Alternative Newsmedia.

Now a former New York City resident, Ladd lives in Jackson, Mississippi, but still frequently visits the New York area. Ladd spent her undergraduate years at Mississippi State, where she earned a Bachelor's of Arts in political science, and

she went on to pursue her graduate education at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism.

For more information, contact the Communications Department at 516-877-4905 or check *The Delphian* Facebook page.

**Want to join *The Delphian*?**  
**Join us for our meeting Monday, March 5 at 1 p.m.**



## Faculty and Alumni Collaboration on Forgotten Story of the Saharawi to Debut in U.S.

BY GABRIELLE DEONATH

What started as an exploration of the individual ancestral histories hidden within a Western Sahara refugee camp evolved into a feature about the collective story of the displaced Saharawi people. On Feb. 21 at 7:15 pm, “Unheard Voices,” a shortened version of the longer film titled “When the Sun Came for Them,” will be screened for the first time in the United States at Anthology Films in Manhattan.

Produced by Cindy Maguire, acting associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and communications professor Terrence Ross, the film was shot in 2014 on two iPads too old for continued use at the university. Behind the camera, even with little training in filmmaking, were three recent Adelphi alumni, Enas Elmohands, Lara Hnizdo, and Bec Everett.

“When we got the footage, we realized that it wasn’t so much individual stories of past, although they do [talk about] that,” Ross said. “It was more a story of the Saharawi people, their past and how this happened. We decided to try to make it into a movie, and there was enough footage to make it into a feature.”

The Saharawi, the name meaning “inhabitants of the desert” in Arabic, are native to the Sahara desert, as they are of mixed Arab and Berber lineage. They were nomadic until the 1950s, but the Western Sahara territory was maintained under Spanish colonialism until 1975.

This withdrawal of Spanish control left the region in conflict, as the body of the Saharawi effort, the Polisario Front, began its battle for sovereignty against Morocco. The dispute remains unresolved, preventing the Saharawi refugees from returning home. Saharawi lands occupied by Morocco and the small percentage of area controlled by the Polisario Front are physically divided by a wall of sand, more than 2,000 kilometers longer. According to the U.N. Refugee Agency, there are over 90,000 Western Sahara refugees housed in five camps near and around Tindouf, Algeria.



“Something to bear in mind is that they’ve been in these refugee camps for over 40 years, and the flight of that community – half the population – was due



to a war,” Maguire said. “They’ve been displaced for a long time, but part of their identity is fight of return. Even the camps are prefiguring what it would be like if they were back home.”

Maguire became familiar with the camp the previous year when she participated in ARTifariti, an arts festival held in the camps to raise awareness about the plight of the Saharawi people, with her nonprofit called ArtsAction Group. Then she met Ross, and they learned they had complementary interests.

“Dale Flashner [director of Adelphi’s graphic design and production studios] introduced us, and we just started talking,” Maguire said. “Terrence showed me his work around ‘Shared Roots,’ and I was like I go to these places, we should get these stories. It just came out of that.”

Ross teaches a seminar in the Honors College where each student picks one ancestor from 100 years ago to research through the semester. That information is then turned into a narrative, usually in video format, that can be posted on a university-sponsored website for others to view and respond to through their own ancestor profiles, allowing participants to appreciate their common heritage.

“Someone had said if you want people to talk about their ancestors, don’t talk to Americans – they only go back one or two generations,” Ross said. “[The person said] go talk to nomads. They can go back hundreds of years. It’s part of their culture to remember their past.”

While explained as an enriching project for all involved, the 10-day trip to the refugee camp was not without its hurdles. The three alumni and Maguire arrived to find there were issues with their housing arrangements; their request to interview people within the camp had been lost in translation, forcing them to spend the first few days ironing out the kinks and figuring out how to get exactly what they needed. They were caught in a sand storm at one point. And Maguire said that the minimal filming equipment caused some frustration.

However, once filming began, all involved were able to thoroughly enjoy the experience, according to Maguire. She also said that she was entertained by their remarkable sense of humor and touched by the hospitality of the women she met. One woman told the team from Adelphi that any time they wanted to visit again, they could stay with her in her tent in the refugee camp, a gesture embodying the “my home is your home” sentiment.

For Ross, one of his favorite stories from the feature involves one woman who said her father was a scholar who many traveled to study under. She explained that he learned from his father who was given that knowledge by his father, speaking to the custom of knowledge and tradition being passed from one generation to next. When asked what he taught, the woman replied, “how to live a good life.” One of his principle teachings was to treat neighbors like family, and he preached that one should never be eating better than their neighbors, believing that the wealth should be spread.

“It’s not ‘keeping up with the Joneses,’ it’s making sure the Joneses are keeping up with you,” Ross said. “I love that, but it also explains why they got screwed. They’re poets and philosophers, not fighters. The cream only rises to the top if it’s armed and dangerous. It doesn’t rise just of its quality, unfortunately.”

The longer film was well received internationally, winning awards at the Jakarta Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights and the Barcelona International Film Festival.

To help the Saharawi people, there are various nonprofits dedicated to the effort in Spain and in London. For those who would like to help a Western Sahari artist who needs support for an art school in Camp Samara, another Western Sahara refugee camp, contact Maguire at [cmaguire@adelphi.edu](mailto:cmaguire@adelphi.edu).

*Photos provided by Cindy Maguire and Terrence Ross.*

## Greek Life Changes

(Continued from page 1)

For the purpose of addressing Greek life as a whole, a representative from it has now become a part of Adelphi’s Diversity Committee. Representatives from Greek life also share with Greene the work of the Diversity Athletic Council; that work includes a diversity pledge and a diversity statement.

Concerning the entirety of the Adelphi community, no changes or developments have been made to the student conduct policies at this time. However, there have been multiple resignations from both campus employment and leadership positions. Kessler explained that he could not divulge more information about this due to privacy concerns.

Each of these developments seem to be part of what both Greene and Kessler want to see Adelphi strive towards being, that is, “a university without prejudice, hatred or bias.” Only time will tell what changes will come of these developments, and if they will begin to make Adelphi a truly inclusive campus for students of all identities. In the meantime, it goes without saying that undoing what students has observed as a pattern of discriminatory behavior and language will take strenuous work from every corner of the campus.

## What’s on Your Phone?

BY DANIELLE MCDOUGALL

*The “What’s on Your Phone” series allows students and faculty to share their favorite and most useful apps that they cannot live without. Share your favorite apps with us at [delphian@adelphi.edu](mailto:delphian@adelphi.edu).*

**Phone owner: Janice Chuquitaype, a junior social work major**

**1. Spotify-Hulu Package** As a social work major, self-care is important, so I pay for the Spotify-Hulu package. Students only pay \$4.99 a month for Spotify Premium and Hulu. It’s amazing. So I get to listen to Spotify commercial-free on my way to school, which is an hour-long commute. Hulu is just a way for me to keep up with the latest shows like “This Is Us” and “Rick and Morty.”

**2. Group Me** I use this to communicate with groups I’m a part of. I used this app for group projects so the members in my group could communicate in a single app instead of blowing up my messages on my iPhone. I have enough group chats on iMessage. I also use it to talk to my eBoard for the Social Action Gateway Club.

**3. Snapchat** I use this app so I can see what kind of events are going on at Adelphi. I also use it to communicate with friends and learn about what’s going on in the news sometimes.

**4. AU2GO** This app is very useful because I use it to check for homework on Moodle, and I use MyAULife to see what events are happening on campus during the day.



## How Are Those 2018 New Year's Resolutions Going?

BY LAUREN TEW

At the start of each New Year, we promise ourselves this will be the year we stick to our resolutions. But we attempt to do the same resolution every year. What gives? Truth is, we are terrible at following through with these life changes—and we're not alone in that problem, especially when it comes to the resolution to be better organized.

In 2017, according to records pulled from Google by IQuant, one of the top resolutions was to get organized, but only about 8 percent of people actually achieved that goal. However, you don't have to be one of them. Follow these steps to ensure you are making one resolution in 2018 you can finally keep.

### Be in the Right Mindset

Not everyone likes to think or talk about their clutter. At the same time, physical clutter can be overwhelming and can ultimately make you feel a lack of control, and even start to affect other aspects of your day-to-day life.

"In order to change you have to be in the mindset where you're thinking 'I can do it but also I want to do it,'" said Mary Cornetta, a professional organizer and founder of Sort and Sweet, an organizing service based on Long Island. "Nobody can assist if you do not help yourself first by making the conscious decision to be in a really firm mindset of changing."

Becoming comfortable with the idea before making your goals is a great place to start to ensure your success.

### From Baby Steps to Strides

If you want to create a plan that will work best for you, figure out your main goal. "You must ask yourself, 'Do I want my home, office or other personal spaces organized, a complete overhaul, purged or de-cluttered?'" said Cornetta. "Once you have an answer, you have to make smaller goals that are directed towards what you need."

If you try to do it all at once you are going to be overwhelmed and unfortunately set yourself up to fail. "If your resolution is to have a clean, beautiful home, make a goal to do one drawer in your bedroom today, then tomorrow do the coat closet, the next day do the medicine cabinet," said Cornetta.

Jamie Hord, a professional organizer of Horderly, a professional organizing service based in Brooklyn, said: "You may want that magazine look of that ideal, staged room but make sure your goals are always realistic and functional with your lifestyle. Know that those pictures you see are usually not 'lived in.' Getting completely organized does not happen overnight and success comes with avoidance of setting too high of expectations - be realistic."

It is also important to note the fact that organizing is subjective; avoid comparing yourself to others because what some may see as organized, others may perceive

as clutter. Everyone's personal schedules, objectives and work space will also certainly be different from each other.

"Be sure to edit your goals as you go to ensure they are personalized for what you need, not what everyone else needs," advised Cornetta.

### Finding Time

With all that you have to do, it may seem impossible to have time for something like organizing every corner of your living space. Cornetta said that in order not to be overwhelmed, take baby steps. Look at your day and write a schedule to see how much time you have left to spare. This may mean taking some time away from other activities or finding ways to make other aspects of your life easier, but if you really want something, you will do anything to make yourself available. All you may need is 20 minutes to organize one drawer, and that is better than nothing.

"Organizing does not have to be seen as a chore," said Cornetta. "You can multitask: throw Netflix on in the background, blast your favorite music. You can make it fun."



### Telling Others

Telling others about your New Year's resolution could be helpful to some, but may put too much pressure to do well to a point where it becomes frustrating or embarrassing.

"I don't think it's a bad thing to share your goals. I believe it will help you stay motivated," said Hord. "Goals are always great to have. Someone may want to join you, which could then challenge you and challenge is always good."

Cornetta had an opposing opinion when it came to telling others. "I think it is better to keep it more to yourself because you will be satisfied without nosy people getting into your business," she said. "If you must tell someone, pick a coworker or one or two close friends."

Be sure to avoid those who play devil's advocate and instead have an upbeat, positive attitude. They will push you along, especially on days where you feel unmotivated.

### Recovering from Setbacks

Everyone is going to have setbacks; it is the main reason most resolutions fail and a feature that inevitably comes with life changes that most people do not handle well. Things like letting the dishes pile up or not putting away the laun-

dry will happen and are not a big deal. But according to Cornetta, avoid letting the little things pile up for too long because next thing you know, you have piles everywhere that you said you would get back to, but never do. In order to prevent this from happening, be sure to take before and after pictures to look back on. You will see the difference in the two areas of the home or office and remember how good it feels to be organized.

"There will always be setbacks in life, but this shouldn't stop you from getting where you want to be," said Hord. Once you get organized, especially with the help of a professional, there is a system in process so it does not feel like a project every time. It is the task of getting yourself to being organized. If you can get yourself that far you will not need motivation to continue because everything now has a dedicated spot.

### Contacting a Professional

If you feel like you just can't get organized on your own, you could hire a professional organizer.

"People see the value in it and know it is worth every penny to have someone that knows what they are doing," said Cornetta. "They can have it done right the first time rather than messing it up and redoing it."

### From Resolution to Lifestyle Change

Just because resolutions have a start date does not mean they should have an end date. Resolutions should be a lifestyle change you stick with and work on for the rest of your life, not something that is forgotten along the way or changed when the calendar turns to the next New Year.

According to Cornetta, once you are organized and everything has its place, whether it is one room or an entire house, the lifestyle is there for you. You will now be in a habit of keeping things in order because you will realize how much easier your life has become and how much better you feel everyday. When you experience this, it is going to make you want to keep it up.

Both Hord and Cornetta agree that organizing is addictive. "De-cluttering is what is going to make the biggest difference," said Hord. "To maintain this organization, you will always want to keep a constant de-clutter going. If you like to shop or bring new items in, I always recommend the technique 'one in, one out'" This means throwing out or donating an item first before buying a new one."

Make 2018 your year to get organized and turn it into your new lifestyle; you never know what other positive changes you may see start to happen. "Getting yourself organized is not just about the physical stuff, it is about gaining control of your life," said Cornetta.

Visit [sortandsweetny.com](http://sortandsweetny.com) and [horderly.com](http://horderly.com) for more information on getting and staying organized.

## An Adelphi Alum's Tips for Success

BY GABRIELLE DEONATH

*In this column, established Adelphi alumni reflect on their own college experiences and the lessons they learned as they pass down advice to the current generation of college students.*

Steve Jones is the vice president and general manager at ABC Radio, where he has worked mostly in radio and audio for the last 30 years. There, he began as a freelance news writer and was given room to evolve into the roles of producer, senior producer, director, executive director and vice president. He began working at ABC in 1986, and for the first three years there, he was also a member of the Adelphi student body.

He graduated in the Adelphi Class of 1989, but according to Jones, the road to graduation was "not simple and straightforward" since he left the university twice to pursue full-time positions in radio, delaying his graduation by six years. After his freshman year, he was hired at WPIX FM, where he had been working freelance. After a year, he returned to Adelphi, but only for one semester because he was then hired at WLIR – a local Long Island radio station. After this job, Jones was never a full-time student again, but while at Adelphi, he was a staff writer for *The Delphian* temporarily, avidly reviewing new music releases.

Since then, Jones has been a mentor to younger Adelphi students and has organized visits to ABC for finance and human resources majors. He anticipated more involvement in the near future.

### Jones's Advice on Patience and Reputation in the Professional World:

1. "Now so more than ever, with the staff we have here and my engagement with younger staff, there is an anxiety over achievement and am I actually moving ahead and as concretely as I should be.

"That is one thing that I would encourage anyone who is in school is to not be so hurried in getting to the goal line because there is really no goal line. It's just a continuing evolution for all of us, including me today at this point in my career. Every day, it's something new I'm learning and some new challenge that I'm given the opportunity here to tackle."

2. "We all know that an angry tweet or a poorly thought out Instagram photo can cause damage that we can't anticipate and can't necessarily undo. I think the most important thing we have is reputation, and all of us get judged on that in ways that aren't always obvious to us.

"For younger people, I think it's incredibly important that they have an awareness of that and don't take for granted that they're at a point in their lives where it's probably going to be the most uncomfortable for them and also the most important. Things that they did or said may come back to work against them."



# Valentine's Day GIFT GUIDE



## ▶ “What I Love About Us” Fill-In Book | Barnes & Noble | \$9.95

For Valentine's Day last year, I bought this little fill-in book and gave it to my boyfriend as part of his gift. It's inexpensive, and you can make it personal and thoughtful or even just a funny momento to revisit. He recently came across the book again in his belongings, and now almost a year later, he says he finds it even more meaningful than the day I gave it to him and was a fun way to reminisce about our time together. If you want to show your loved one or best friend how much you care, take a moment to reflect on your relationship and complete these fun fill-in-the-blanks so they know how you truly feel. -Gabrielle Deonath



## ▶ Personalized Starbucks Travel Mug | Etsy.com | \$12.99

Here is a gift that's great for every coffee-loving Valentine in your life. I love that this is personalized with colors and names, to make it super special and fun for whoever gets it. This gift can be given to anyone that can use a travel mug, whether it's your girl, boy, mom, dad, sibling, bestie or someone else.

Not only is it super convenient, but it's also thoughtful and personalized to let your Valentine know you care about their coffee consumption. -Victoria Grinthal

## ▶ Rescue Chocolate Foster-iffic Peppermint | MyShopify.com | \$6



This will make a perfect gift for anyone who loves chocolate or puppies. Its perks are endless: for every purchase of a Rescue Chocolate treat, 100 percent of the net profits are donated to organizations around the country that promote animal rescue efforts. This flavor in particular combines dark chocolate with refreshing peppermint, and all its proceeds go specifically towards highlighting the importance of choosing pets from shelters over buying them from a pet store. Best of all, all Rescue Chocolate treats are vegan, organic and fair-trade, so you'll be sure to find something sweet for your loved one.

-Danielle McDougall

## ▶ A Mixtape | Walmart | \$4.97



Anyone who's anyone in today's society likes music to some extent. For an efficient price, you can go to

Walmart and buy a stack of blank CDs to make something young Americans have been making for their significant others for decades: a mixtape or a collection of songs you know or otherwise think your special someone will enjoy. Compile your boyfriend's favorite theater songs from a variety of musicals from Tony-winners to the obscure, prepare your girlfriend's favorite rappers and their best hits, create a list of your best friend's preferred indie bands - or, best of all, combine multiple genres onto one CD. Nothing's more durably entertaining than you and your Valentine, blasting music with the help of this timeless, homemade, easy, thoughtful Valentine's Day gift. -Matthew Schroh

## Panther's Podium: A Breathtaking Experience Becomes a Poignant Education

BY LIBBY MERCURI

Life is full of experiences. The good, the bad and the ugly; we all have our fair share of them as human beings. Some experiences are in our control and others are completely out of it. To live a life rich in the “good” experiences is something that I strive for. I would like to share not only a good, but an amazing experience, that I recently had during winter break.

I am a senior from Massachusetts, home to the greatest city in the world, with the best sports too. I have been playing sports since the moment I held my first softball glove, and I continued on to play four incredible years of field hockey for Adelphi University. Being an athlete has shaped (and occasionally forced) me to be a better person with each passing day. This mindset is one that I carry with me through every obstacle and life experience.

I have grown up with a passion for social interaction and human connection. If you know me, you know that I could talk to anyone for any length of time. You also know that helping people, in any capacity, is one of my greatest joys. Since I was a child, I have found a sense of accomplishment and happiness in the simple task of making someone smile or improving their life in the simplest of ways. This is why, when choosing a college major my



Senior field hockey and nursing major, Libby Mercuri, has a life-changing experience after traveling and spending time in Guatemala. Photo provided by Libby Mercuri

senior year of high school, I decided to pursue nursing.

Being in my fourth and final year of the nursing program here at Adelphi University, I can say with complete confidence that I have found my place in this life. Over the course of this past winter break, I had my favorite life experience of the 21 years I've been alive. On January 6, I flew to Guatemala with 11 other AU students and two faculty members for a service-learning trip. After spending two days in the beautiful city of Antigua, we packed our things and traveled to a town called Panajachel, Guatemala, where the real service began.

We teamed up with a nonprofit

organization called Mayan Families, who works to educate, feed, shelter and heal hundreds and thousands of indigenous men, women, children and elders living in extreme poverty. The employees at Mayan Families educated us on the history of Guatemala, the severe poverty rates in the area and the struggle between the indigenous people and those who migrated there. We toured the organization, visiting the medical clinic and the education offices. We also visited the surrounding towns of San Antonio, San Jorge and Concepcion, where we had many different, memorable experiences.

We visited the first and only recy-

cling and compost plant in the entire province. Locals bring their garbage, food remains and recycling materials to the plant to prevent damage to the lake in the region. We also spent an afternoon with a handful of elderly men and women living in poverty who are provided free lunch on weekdays by the Mayan Families organization to prevent nutritional problems that could inhibit their ability to survive.

One of Mayan Families' favorite buildings is its animal shelter, where they nurture rescued strays from their desolate lives in the streets. After spending only two hours at this shelter, I fell in love with one of the dogs and actually just signed the paperwork to adopt him. He will arrive in the U.S. in early February.

Lastly, we spent the majority of our time in Panajachel building and installing wood-burning stoves into the homes of families living under the poverty line. Nearly all of these families were comprised of three or four adults (mom, dad, grandparent, etc.) and at least four children. Nearly all of these homes consisted of only two or three very small rooms, some with four beds that sleep nine people and others with barely enough room to hold a sack of corn kernels and a sink with running water. Installing stoves for these families seemed like such a mundane task until we

(Continued on page 7)



## Catching Up with Trump's Problematic Past: Has This Gone too Far?

BY VICTORIA GRINTHAL

As Trump's first year as President of the United States ends, new allegations and rumors have spread about his personal relations. The pornographic actress and director known as Stormy Daniels has publicly claimed to have had an affair with



Trump back in 2006. This would have been soon after his marriage to current wife and

First Lady Melania, which is adding to the controversy of the issue. Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, is now using this claim to boost her live shows and various films, and has talked to various news sources, including "The Washington Post" and tabloid "In Touch Weekly." It was also found that during the election in 2016, she was given \$130,000 by Trump's attorneys to keep quiet about the alleged affair. Since her claim was released, Melania's speakers were quick to dismiss them. However, some reports also noted that the First Lady rejected the opportunity to join the President while visiting another country soon after the news broke.

Whether you love or hate Trump and his actions, everyone is able to see what is wrong in this whole occurrence. I personally am confused by Melania, as she is the one stuck in the middle with what seems to be the best intentions for the country. Yes, she has been criticized for some of her decisions as First Lady, but she is the mother of his youngest child and has stood tall for her entire duration in this position. Regardless, the idea that Trump's personal affairs have become this publicized and transparent baffles me. What is

even worse is the idea that not much is being done upon learning this information. Previous presidents have been accused of sexual affairs, and their reputations have subsequently deteriorated. However, this accusation, as is lots of others concerning Trump, has somehow fallen to the wayside when examining him as a suitable person for his current job.

Many public opinions call for Trump's impeachment for numerous matters unrelated to his personal life, but it seems that nothing will change. How does this latest news prove him to be a good fit for the presidential position? How does this action look when viewed upon in other regions around the world? I just can't understand why he is not held accountable for such acts that he is accused of. If Daniels/Clifford is telling the truth, and the financial records are correct, this cannot be just viewed as another one of the President's antics. The fact that we even have a prostitute in the nation's view because his actions are just now being discovered makes me worry for what else we may find over the next three years.

## Is the Entertainment Industry's View of Rape and Murder Changing?

BY VICTORIA GRINTHAL

The drama film "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" was released in November 2017 and has received lots of acclaim in the forms of Golden Globe and SAG Awards, among others. The story focuses on mother Mildred (played by actress Frances McDormand), whose daughter was raped and murdered by an unknown person in recent months. Mildred's emotions are soon aimed at the town's police chief, who has done little to solve her daughter's murder. She consequently rents three billboards in her small town to bring light to his lack of action.

***With movements like #MeToo and #TimesUp, these cruel actions are finally being discovered as what they really are.***

I personally never heard of this movie until watching the Golden Globes, at which it was named Best Picture in the Drama category. Upon further examination, it seemed that the movie represented more than just an acclaimed drama film. The ideas presented in the film of rape, murder, abuse and other dark topics can easily be understood in the times we live in.

This kind of story isn't new for

movies or entertainment, as pop culture focuses on lots of different adult themes on screen. However, we might be viewing rape and other themes in a different light than in the past. TV and movies have never had the best reputation when it comes to portraying rape and murder within stories. Specifically, rape is a hard thing to portray in entertainment because it is such a devastating occurrence in someone's life. The entertainment industry has grown from its days of cruel treatment for art's sake, like 1972's "Last Tango in Paris," in which an actress was infamously raped on film without prior knowledge.

However, with all of the recent allegations of sexual abuse comes the idea

that this theme can't be just a plot point for a storyline, just as many movies and shows of the past have used it. "Three Billboards" doesn't only portray rape as a devastating act, but something that can change relations beyond the victim. As Mildred's life becomes a desperate effort to solve her daughter's murder, the whole town is affected by her actions and left to face this reality that rape is a killer and a destroyer of worlds.

So, does this mean that we are now viewing themes differently throughout society? With stories in the past and present like "Fifty Shades of Grey" (in which lines are blurred for the sake of romance), the answer to this seems unclear. However, "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" shows that rape and murder are real issues that can be neglected by officials and overlooked by the public. Though this is a fictional drama, the point still stands that people do not see these issues in the correct light. This isn't the only movie in recent years that gives these themes a proper story. "Spotlight," which was 2015's best drama, focused on survivors of childhood abuse. I believe that these stories deserve to be told as they are in both movies, as they are depicted as real issues that can be destructive and devastating. With movements like #MeToo and #TimesUp, these cruel actions are finally being discovered as what they really are. I just hope we as a society can keep up.



## HQ Trivia: Fun, Frustrating or a Fraud?

BY VICTORIA GRINTHAL

The iPhone (and developing Android) app HQ Trivia is one of the newest game fads on mobile devices. At 9 pm EST every night and 3 pm EST on weekdays, HQ starts a live stream from New York City in which they ask a series of 12 questions to all participants. If you succeed in getting all 12 right, you get to share the cash prize with everyone else who also got all questions right. As host Scott Rogowsky calls them, hundreds of thousands of "HQ-ties" (like cuties) take part in every edition of this contest, and they have reached millions of participants in a single game since its Apple release this past August.

The jury about the game's popularity is divided: Some love logging in every day for their shot at some money, while others roll their eyes and call it a waste of time. Personally, I believe it's truly a fun game, no matter how many people play. It's something that is just meant to be enjoyed and shouldn't be taken seriously. However, some things don't really add up--literally. When splitting the usual cash amount of \$2,500 in each game, the amount received depends on the size of the winner's circle. In other words, if you're sharing your hard-earned reward with 250 other people, you won't get too much money from the game after all. Of course, that amount changes every time you play. Even if you do win a game, people have reported that they have reached lots of difficulties when trying to receive their earnings.



When searching the app, you find only its Twitter account and a very blank Wikipedia page before the scores of news articles calling it a scam that suddenly came out of nowhere. Many people question the app's financial sources, which are still undisclosed at this point. The app was created by Intermedia Labs, which says they are still looking for sponsors to fund their lavish prizes.

So much of this is unknown that you have to take it with a grain of salt. If the information is so limited, you can't get angry or frustrated at its gameplay. Sure, the questions come from anywhere and everywhere, so the facts may be unknown. Besides that, it's just a game. Free to play, and if some money is gotten out of it, it's even better. With everything going on today, this app, whether it's a stress-reliever or a nuisance to you, is just meant to be played and shared, not stressed over.

## Sports Kick-Off for the Spring Season

BY NICOLETTA CUCCIO

“It feels great to be named a pre-season All-American, but it’s always nice when things like this come out and I get to share it with my team. Awards like All-American do not come without the support and the talent of a team, so this coming out right before my senior season is a reminder of that – a reminder that it’s what we do as a team on the field that counts. I feel incredibly lucky to call myself a Panther and to be able to spend my last year on the field with my teammates and coaches.” –Brenna Martini, senior softball player.

Here’s a look at the sports teams that will be playing this season, their new additions and their upcoming games:

### Softball

The softball team has welcomed three new members to their squad for the 2017-‘18 season. The Brown and Gold finished last season two games away from

heading back to the World Series. Going into their third week of practice, the team is looking forward to their trip to Florida to begin their first games of the season. The team will play their first home double header on March 4 against New York Institute of Technology.

### Baseball

The Adelphi baseball team is coming off a .500 campaign from last spring. Shooting out of the gates with a 13-7 record through their first 20, the Panthers looked to get back to the playoffs and fight for their second NE10 title. Injuries and late inning blunders kept the Brown and Gold from fighting for a title. With Steve Withers being a Preseason All-Region Selection, the Panthers will bring back a core and, quite possibly, the best defensive infield in the northeast region for Division II teams. A bright future seems to lie ahead of this young Panther squad. Here’s to hoping that the future begins March 3.

### Men’s Tennis

The men’s tennis team welcomed three freshmen to their 2017-‘18 roster. Last year, the team finished the season 7-2 in the conference and 9-5 overall. The Brown and Gold will play home on March 6 in their first NE10 match against Saint Michael’s College.

### Women’s Tennis

Adelphi women’s tennis finished their fall season winning the NE10 Conference Championship. The team returned to campus at the start of the semester and is lifting and conditioning, but their real training in preparation for their NCAA tournament, beginning in March, will start in a few more weeks.

### Women’s Lacrosse

These 2017 national champions are back and ready for more. They welcomed eight new faces to their roster and are looking forward to another successful season. They returned to campus a couple

of days prior to the start of the semester to start their preseason workouts. The team is now on a regular practice schedule and is preparing for their trip to Florida in a couple of weeks to begin their schedule. The Brown and Gold will play their first home game of the season on February 28 against American International College.

### Men’s Lacrosse

The men’s lacrosse program finished one game shy of qualifying for a National Championship in 2017. Bringing back their core characters in 2018, the Panthers look to edge out a similar mark. As road warriors in 2017 with a 7-1 record, the Brown and Gold sits before six away match-ups this season. The team will have three more tune-ups before starting their regular season schedule on Saturday, Feb. 24, when they will face Long Island rival LIU Post.

## Panther Pup: Katie Murphy Debuts as New Addition to Women’s Basketball

BY NICOLETTA CUCCIO

Our featured Panther Pup for this issue is Adelphi women’s basketball’s very own Katie Murphy. Wearing number five on her back, the freshman averages 25 minutes per game. A pesky defender, Murphy is tied for the most steals on the team with 38. Read more and learn about the pride and passion that Murphy has for her academics and the success of her team.



Meet number five, freshman Katie Murphy. Photo from Adelphi W Basketball Twitter

Q: Why did you choose to play at Adelphi?

A: First of all, the location of Adelphi is great. AU is near New York City, which is helpful for future job opportunities, and also it is close to my home, allowing my family to come to many games. Secondly, the NE-10 is a great conference to be able to play in.

Q: How has your experience as a Panther been? Explain.

A: Thus far, my experience as a Panther has been great. I have really enjoyed my first semester both academically and athletically. It has been a lot of fun traveling and competing with this team, making memories and having fun along the way.

Q: How long have you been playing basketball for?

A: I’ve played basketball since the first grade, joining the boys’ league since there was not a league for girls.

Q: What is it that you love about playing the sport?

A: I love the team aspect of basketball. In order to succeed, you need to execute and play as a team. I also love the different lessons I have learned throughout the years from basketball. I have learned how to be a leader and the importance of hard work and mental toughness, to name a few.

Q: Is there someone that you have looked up to or someone or something that you play for?

A: I play for my parents. They are the ones that have had to take me to practices, tournaments and training all throughout the years. They would spend weekends just driving from game to game for me and my other siblings. Every time I get out there, I want to make them proud to thank them for all that they have done.

Q: Do you have something that you do before every practice or game that you will continue to do here?

A: I always wear my hair the same way for games.

Q: Is there anything that you are looking forward to throughout your college career as a student athlete?

A: I am looking forward to the continuing competition athletically, and as far as academics, going on more trips that the Honors College has to offer.

Q: What are your expectations for your freshman season, and how has your freshman season been so far?

A: I did not have many expectations coming into this season. So far, my freshman season has been fun. The girls on my team are great and playing with them is a lot of fun.

Q: What has your favorite moment been as a Panther?

A: So far, I have loved my time as a Panther. I truly feel that my favorite moment is yet to come.

Q: Do you have any advice for student athletes going through the recruiting process like you were just last year?

A: I would tell them to be patient throughout the process. The recruiting process can be very long and nerve wrecking, but everyone will find his or her fit.

Q: Do you have a goal for your time here at Adelphi?

A: My goals would be to get as close to a 4.0 as I can every semester and to win a NE-10 championship. I want to represent myself, my family, my team and this university as best as I can.

Q: Anyone that you would like to thank?

A: I would like to thank my parents and family for all the support. I love you guys.

## Panther’s Podium: A Breathtaking Experience Becomes a Poignant Education

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completed the project and realized just how meaningful it truly was. We were not just providing these families with a safer method to cook their meals; we were also providing them with a sliver of hope that there are in fact people in this world who want to help them and improve their lives.

To sum it up, I witnessed a level of poverty and a lack of healthcare that I did not fully think could exist in this world. But somehow, I also witnessed the most incredible thing: bliss. These people were not sad, they were not defeated and their heads did not hang low. The families I met were the most appreciative, gracious and kind people I have ever met in my life. Their physical health was weak without a doubt, but their mental health was so strong and apparent to those who interacted with them.

Balancing the life of being a nursing major and an athlete can be a real challenge at times. I have had to learn a great deal of time-management strategies, teamwork skills and, occasionally, ways to try to preserve my sanity.

However, by doing service for others and going to Guatemala to work with Mayan Families, those challenges became nonexistent to me. I am eager to see what “challenges” life will throw my way after I graduate in May, and I look forward to my next life-changing experience.

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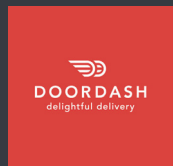


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