



## University no longer offers COVID testing

Carson Folio  
Editor-elect

Point Park has stopped providing tests for COVID-19 and no longer recommends symptomatic students to isolate for more than 24 hours after symptoms end.

Current CDC guidance recommends that symptomatic people return to their normal activities after one day of improved symptoms, with “additional prevention strategies such as wearing a well-fitting mask” for five days after symptoms improve. The university, which follows CDC and Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) guidance, adopted these guidelines on March 1 of this year.

Asymptomatic people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 are not recommended to test for the virus.

With this change, the isolation floor in Lawrence Hall,

floor 19, has been discontinued. This is not the first time the university has relaxed restrictions, as the COVID-19 vaccine requirement was dropped during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Current university guidelines suggest that students who show any viral symptoms such as a fever, chills, or fatigue should not go to their classes until they have gone a full 24 hours without symptoms.

Rebecca Harper, director of Student Health Services, says that financial reasons contributed to the loss of COVID-19 testing.

“Truthfully, now that a lot of the grants and things like that are gone from COVID, they are truly cost prohibitive,” Harper said. This mirrors what much of the U.S. has seen as emergency orders around COVID-19 have expired.

Harper only recommends someone to take a COVID-19

test if they are immunocompromised. However, she notes that this practice is uncommon for those with the flu and that COVID-19 should be treated similarly to the flu.

“As scary as it sounds, it doesn’t matter anymore,” Harper said. “I know that is a big thing for people and that is scary, I appreciate that it’s scary to people that now we kind of are like ‘oh it’s fine, it’s all over,’ but we have to get to the point where it is.”

According to the CDC, PA’s test positivity rate is 14.9% out of 3,103 tests, which is considered mild. The positivity rate is down 2.6% from two weeks ago. However, emergency room visits caused by COVID-19 are at 1.8%, which is considered low. This follows current trends of the disease, which is causing less hospitalizations than it did

COVID page 2

## FULL-TIME FACULTY UNION STILL WITHOUT FAIR CONTRACT



Cassandra Harris | The Globe

(Left to right) Full-time faculty members Karen Dwyer, Miliq Ayache, Bob Ross, Marybeth Irvin, J. Dwight Hines, Mark Voortman and Jeff Seaman organize outside of Village Park hoping to rally folks in support of the faculty negotiating a fair contract.

## ID center shifts to Public Safety Department

Michelangelo Pellis  
Co-News Editor

To offer 24/7 availability and ensure ID-related issues are resolved promptly, the ID Center is now integrated into the Department of Public Safety, according to Point Park Chief of Police Jeffrey Besong.

The change reduces the risk of unauthorized access and streamlines the ID process, making updates and fixing problems more efficient, he said.

“This move enhances cam-

pus security by providing better access control and monitoring,” Besong said.

The ID Center’s transition from the Physical Plant Department to the Public Safety Department allows for real-time adjustments to access levels. Rather than sending an officer in person when a student calls public safety, they can unlock any ID-accessible door from dispatch remotely.

“[It] provides a much more immediate response to any security or access concerns,” Besong said.

In addition, turnstiles, like the ones found in Lawrence Hall and West Penn last semester, were added to the University Center’s entrance and Student Center entrances.

Robert Stancampiano, a librarian at the university, says the new turnstiles come with an added responsibility.

“If we have deliveries or mail we have to let that person in. Also, if someone forgets their ID we have to help that student,” Stancampiano said. “There’s also the issue of students piggybacking, and then an alarm will sound in the library.”

Stancampiano said, like anything new, it’s an adjustment,

with the turnstiles bringing both distracting noise – as the machines beep whenever someone scans their ID – and added security.

“We’ve had people come in off the street in the past piggybacking off of students, so we’ll probably see less of that or at least they won’t be able to fully enter the library,” Stancampiano said.

Besong said that these changes will significantly enhance public safety’s ability to secure the buildings.

“The primary purpose of installing turnstiles is to prevent unauthorized access, such as piggybacking, and to ensure the safety of our campus community,” Besong said.

First-year acting major Taylor Atwara said that, in her first few weeks on campus, she has had to call public safety due to concerns caused by street harassment.

“I’m glad that turnstiles were added to the library, however, I noticed that they’ve been left open and I notice this in a lot of places,” Atwara said. “I feel safe when they are closed, but they also break in Lawrence

ID CENTER page 2

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Khalil Johnson | The Globe

The suspect that harassed multiple students sits inside of a university police car outside of Thayer.

## Student physically harassed by male outside Lawrence

Peyton Martin  
Staff Writer

On the evening of Friday, Sept. 6, just outside of Lawrence Hall on Wood Street, a few Point Park students had a run-in with a combative male. Although no one was injured, the man is now facing harassment charges.

Around 7 p.m. that evening, Hailey Garibay, a first-year criminal justice student, and her friend were walking back to campus after seeing Beetlejuice 2 at the AMC CLASSIC 10 theater at South Hills Village Mall.

“We saw a guy that we’ve seen before down at the smoke shop down the street -just lingering around,” Garibay said.

The man was instigating with two other Point Park students identified as male and female. The man got close and up in their faces, pushing them Garibay said. He saw that the male student started to push back while the female student fled into Lawrence Hall.

CRIME page 2

## HARRIS STOPS IN JOHNSTOWN



On Friday, Sept. 13 Harris landed with Airforce Two in Johnstown. After greeting supporters on the tarmac, she left to visit local businesses.

Photos by Caleb McCartney



Cassandra Harris | The Globe

A turnstile inside of the Student Center that is still stuck open.



# Large compensations revealed in 2022-2023 990 forms

Gavin Petrone  
Co-News Editor

In a ProPublica report released this week on Point Park's IRS 990 tax-exemption form, Charles Perkins, a professor in the Rowland School of Business, was revealed to be the highest paid faculty member of the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

Perkins made \$155,728 in 2023, plus \$23,491 for other reasons not specified, totalling \$179,219.

Stephen Tanzilli, dean of the Rowland School of Business where Perkins teaches, made \$199,575 total in the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

The roughly \$20,000 difference in pay between the two is the closest difference in faculty and administration wages throughout the university, according to the report.

Lou Corsaro, assistant vice president of public relations for Point Park, said, "This was Professor Perkins' annual salary, along with overload and course development stipend payments."

"For calendar year 2022, he was a full-time faculty member. He became a part-time faculty member in September 2023, then later a professor emeritus," Corsaro said. "He is currently employed as a professor emeritus and is compensated for the courses he teaches, with a maximum of two, as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement with faculty."

Fiscal years end in August, so Point Park's report concludes in August of 2023.

Channa Newman, a former professor, is listed as the highest compensated faculty member in the report.

She received \$223,799 from an exit deal reached after she filed a 19-count lawsuit alleging discrimination.

Karen McIntyre was also paid for an exit deal reached because of a lawsuit. She received \$212,285.

The highest paid employee in the 2022-2023 fiscal year was Paul Hennigan, former president, who was paid \$820,256. He was paid an extra \$48,037 in addition to his base compensation, totalling \$868,293.

Corsaro said his compensation was a part of his retirement agreement, referring to it as a "vested deferred" payment.

"This type of deferred compensation is a common practice in higher education and other sectors, designed to recognize long standing service and contributions," said Corsaro.

Don Green, the president proceeding Hennigan who stepped down in the Spring 2023 semester, was paid \$476,793. He received an additional \$442,037 in his exit, totalling \$918,830. This made Green the highest paid cumulatively.

According to ProPublica's report, executive compensation at Point Park totalled \$3,078,455, or 2.4% of their total expenses.

Other salaries and wages totalled \$35,023,401, or 27% of total expenses. The report does not specify whose salaries and wages are included in the figure.

The university lost \$12,989,439

## Highest Paid Employees at Point Park University

AS OF AUGUST 2022 - 2023

### Paul Hennigan (Former Officer/President Emeritus)

Base Compensation: \$820,256  
Total Compensation: \$868,293

### Donald Green (President : Exited 1/15/23)

Base Compensation: \$476,793  
Total Compensation: \$918,830

### Bridget Mancosh (Vp Finance/Opr.& Board Treasurer)

Base Compensation: \$318,197  
Total Compensation: \$365,510

### Michael Soto (Provost)

Base Compensation: \$229,335  
Total Compensation: \$312,454

### Channa Newman (Professor : Exited 6/23)

Base Compensation: \$213,076  
Total Compensation: \$223,799

### Karen Mointyre (Professor)

Base Compensation: \$212,285  
Total Compensation: \$239,771

### Trudy Williams (Vp Enrollment Mgmt. : Exited 6/23)

Base Compensation: \$193,212  
Total Compensation: \$217,118

in the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Corsaro said this deficit was a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The University saw a significant decrease in enrollment during that time," Corsaro said. "The Fall 2024 semester is showing a noticeable uptick in enrollment, and building on that increase is a primary focus for Point Park in the years ahead, as defined in Pioneer Vision 2030, our current strategic plan."

An independent auditors' report filed by Baker Tilly, an accounting firm in Pittsburgh, said, "The accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the University as of August 31, 2023 and 2022."

Gavin Petrone  
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# Male arrested after students harassed outside Thayer

The male student went to follow her inside, but then the man tried entering the building. However, the male student pushed the man out and closed the door.

By that time, Garibay and her friend were right outside the door where the man was. When he saw them, he lunged at them. The man grabbed a hold of their shirts and then proceeded to grab Garibay inappropriately. Garibay's friend began to swing her purse at the man, who then backed off.

The man started screaming and yelling before running into the streets when Point Park Police arrived. When he spotted the patrol car, the man ran up to it and began hitting the window. A Point Park officer got out and restrained the

man on the ground. Officers arrested him after he was restrained.

The man was discovered to be under the influence of K2, a marijuana-based substance. Since they found no drugs on him, officers concluded he must have smoked it.

K2 is a drug that, when smoked, often causes the user to become very aggressive. Once the effects wear off, the user may become lethargic. When K2 leaves a person's system, it is possible that the user may not realize what was happening while under the influence.

"An ambulance was called because the man said he was diabetic. He may have had a reaction to the drugs due to being diabetic,

and we always get people checked out," Police Sergeant William Wagner said.

The man was checked out in an ambulance and was not transported to a hospital. He is in the Allegheny County Jail; he is facing charges of harassment and disorderly conduct.

"Due to the fact whenever she was touched it was with clothing the charge falls under harassment," Wagner said. "If he had went up her shirt to touch bare skin it would have been a different charge."

Additionally, Pittsburgh Police were called in as back-up for the incident.

"A lot of times, if we have an issue and we call for back up, not

only does Pittsburgh respond. We have Port Authority, and the Sheriff's Department will come too," Wagner said. "It is nice that if there's a serious incident all these different bureaus will come."

Garibay was surprised by the encounter.

"I wouldn't think something like that could happen to me, but it can happen to anyone, especially Downtown."

If you are near campus and in need of assistance, please reach out to campus safety's 24/7 dispatch at 412-392-3960 or the number 2222 on any campus phone.

Peyton Martin  
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# Masks, COVID-19 tests not returning to Health Center

From COVID page 1

Zane Ford, a sophomore human resources management major, does not find the changes unreasonable.

"I think it's a tad bit irresponsible, but I feel like we are out of the brunt of the COVID-era," Ford said. "It's not entirely unfounded for them to not follow all the policies that have been taken out of effect."

Hospitalizations due to COVID-19 peaked in January 2022 and have been trending downwards ever since. 33 people have died from COVID-19 in the past week – down from 143 during this time in 2022 and 263 in 2021. 55,600 total COVID deaths have been reported in PA since Jan. 1, 2020.

The university no longer keeps track of cases, so there is no official metric for how COVID-19 has looked on campus this year. Harp-

er has only had five to six students asking her for excused absences from class due to major sickness. She says that this is a low number – official case counts last year were also low, according to Harper.

If CDC guidance were to change again, the university would align itself with those guidelines as it has done in the past. The university also follows Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) guidelines and regularly met with the department during the height of the coronavirus pandemic, according to Harper.

"If things pivot, we have a good pulse - I have a monthly meeting with the county health department, so we always know if things are getting wild and crazy," Harper said. "We have good resources to get that information up to students fairly quickly too."

The same is true for a mask policy. Harper encourages stu-

dents who are worried about their health to wear a mask if it helps them. She also says that the new CDC guidance encourages students to be in clean living spaces, not just common areas.

"One of the hammer home points of the CDC with this kind of shift was to also clean your environment, to make sure that you're changing your sheets and wiping down surfaces in your dorm room," Harper said. "You're spending so much time there, it doesn't get any down time, so try to keep your space clean and tidy to make sure your life in general is healthy."

David Chapman, a first-year special education major, says that he hopes the university doesn't have to change its policy again.

"It's obviously still important to test because there's still a lot of people that are kind of still at risk," Chapman said. "If there's not a strong outbreak, then it

won't affect [university operations], I hope."

Being the director of student health services for five years has shown Harper a pattern of sickness surges on campus. She says that colds and upper-respiratory infections are common during the beginning of the fall and spring semester, while students with stomach flu symptoms spike close to fall break.

The Student Health Center is on floor three of the Student Center. While free tests and masks are no longer available at the student health center, they are still for sale at stores nearby such as Target and CVS. For more information on COVID-19, visit [cdc.gov/covid/](https://cdc.gov/covid/).

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# Public Safety Department takes control of ID center

From ID CENTER page 1

Hall sometimes; my own home."

According to Police Lieutenant Matthew Mays, the turnstiles are owned by a third-party company.

The turnstiles in the library are now shut and functioning properly.

"If someone follows you off the street [into a campus building] and the turnstiles are broken, there's not much good they can do," Atwara said.

Julia Werner, a first-year act-

ing major, said that she feels safe on campus due to security measures like turnstiles, ID scanners and the Metis emergency help systems that call police with the touch of a button around campus.

"I have not personally experienced piggybacking and I definitely feel safe when I'm inside campus buildings or on campus property like Village Park," Werner said.

Werner said that she feels safe when there is a visible presence of security officers on campus, especially at night.

"You pretty much always see police around or have access to the emergency call buttons around campus," Werner said.

"As we all know, without a Point Park ID card and the correct access levels, no one could navigate our campus or access specific areas. For [security] reasons, the ID Center was moved back under Public Safety," Besong said.

"The police department's goal is to continue providing a safe environment for students, faculty, and staff," Besong said

According to their page on the

university's website, Point Park Police works 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide a safe, secure living and learning environment for the university community.

University Police can be reached by dialing 2222 on any campus phone, or 412-392-3960 on any other phone. The university police department is located on the third floor of Frontier Hall.

Michelangelo Pellis  
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# Pioneer Public: Voter registration in Village Park



Rachel Ross  
Feats/A&E Editor

With the 2024 Presidential Election quickly approaching, it's likely you've seen or been approached by canvassers throughout the city asking and ensuring that you are registered to vote.

One of those individuals is junior theater arts major Leandro Billelo-Rodriguez, who has devoted a large portion of his work to making sure his fellow Point Park students are prepared to cast their ballots this November.

Working with the South Side branch of the organization Action for the Climate Emergency (ACE), Billelo-Rodriguez operates as a campus liaison of sorts, bringing the nonprofit's initiative directly to students.

According to its website, ACE is a nonprofit organization which says it hopes to ensure that young people can "understand the science and advocate for solutions to the climate emergency."

"Specifically, [ACE] really wants me here on campus because

a lot of students travel from other states." Billelo-Rodriguez said. "Since we are a swing state, it's very important for people to register to vote here, because we could be a deciding factor."

Billelo-Rodriguez decided to join ACE recently after receiving a flier on the street from one of their canvassers.

"I'd been wanting to get a job like that, and I'm also interested in politics and stuff, so I thought it would be the perfect mix," Billelo-Rodriguez said.

Billelo-Rodriguez has utilized his unique position to spread the word around campus through collaboration with Point Park's social media and positioning himself in areas of high student traffic such as Village Park.

He also had registration materials available at a campus watch party for the recent Presidential Debate.

"The main registrations I get are people that are either freshly 18 or people that are registered to vote in other states that want to vote here in PA," Billelo-Rodriguez said.

Beyond these types of registrations, Billelo-Rodriguez went on to explain he can also help students change their registration address, declare or switch political parties or apply for a mail-in ballot.

Billelo-Rodriguez explained



Cassandra Harris | The Globe

Jordan Kullen and Leandro Billelo-Rodriguez sit in Village Park to register new voters.

the importance of initiatives like this leading up to the election, as a significant portion of the people he encounters have never received the proper information on how voter registration works.

"You'd be surprised how many people come up to me and [say] 'I have no idea how to register to vote, and it's so complicated online,'...it's really important to have somebody there with you to walk you through the steps," Billelo-Rodriguez said.

Billelo-Rodriguez plans to con-

tinue his student outreach in the weeks leading up to the election, including potentially collaborating with other student organizations promoting voter registration.

More information about ACE and their other initiatives including climate education can be found on their website at [acespace.org](http://acespace.org).

Rachel Ross  
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# Lights for Life highlights Suicide Prevention Day

Peyton Martin  
Staff Writer

On Sept.10 every year, World Suicide Prevention Day is a way to change the narrative surrounding suicide. The goal is to have open discussions about suicide, so that more people will help themselves as well as each other by seeking support.

Lights for Life took place at Village Park and was an event organized to honor and provide support to students who struggle with suicidal thoughts. Cassandra Moffat is the director of counseling services and one of the Lights for Life event organizers. When it came to planning the event, Moffat said she wanted to make sure it was on World Suicide Prevention Day because last year that just wasn't possible.

She also wanted to make the resources available known to students. "We are in a particularly difficult spot Downtown. It can be a little bit harder to get resources, so the main part of planning the event was seeing how we could get resources to students," Moffat said.

Moffat believes its important to bring awareness around suicide because by not talking about the



Peyton Martin | The Globe

Aylah Hildebrand, a first-year criminal justice student, decorates a lantern in honor of suicide awareness.

problem, it is not truly being addressed. "We're kind of just covering it up, and I think that it's important to acknowledge that suicide exists," Moffat said. "People have suicidal thoughts and the more we talk about it the hope is that more people will help and other will seek support for themselves."

Sienna Wraith, a first-year history student, attended Lights for Life because she said it sounded nice that they were honoring the lives of those who passed from suicide. Wraith herself sometimes struggles with mental health.

"The lanterns were my favorite part of the event. Additionally, having the chance to view them in the dark is going to look good," Wraith said.

Kira Arndt, a sophomore early education and special education major, attended Lights for Life again after attending last year's event. She enjoyed decorating the lanterns.

She visited many tables at the

event like the Title IX table where she had the opportunity to color.

"The most important thing I learned was PAAR [about Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (PARR)] and how close they're so close to us," Arndt said. "They have different resources even if you aren't the ones who need them."

PAAR is a non-profit organization that has worked to give important services to victims of sexual violence at no cost. They have been providing their services for over 50 years in Allegheny County.

Located at another table, Tristan Rose, a first-year general psychology student, assisted with the lanterns. Rose was there with the Psychology Confluence club, but he had his own reasons for coming.

"I was involved in a serious incident, where at one point I was considering doing the same thing," Rose said. "So being in a spot where I feel like I can be appreci-

ated and surrounded by a community of supportive individuals who admire the same aspects I do when it comes to mental health."

If given the opportunity, Rose wants to become a part of the system of support on campus to hopefully make a change. Ultimately, the event is about suicide prevention, which he feels happens a lot with college students.

If you are struggling with suicidal thoughts call 988 to talk with the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline or you can chat online at <https://988lifeline.org/>

For additional information, please reach out to Point Park's Counseling Center at [conuseling@pointpark.edu](mailto:conuseling@pointpark.edu)

Peyton Martin  
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Peyton Martin | The Globe  
Lanterns with written positive messages.

**THE GLOBE**  
SINCE 1967

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## 'Burgh Bites

### Forbes Tavern: Don't get the dip

**Rating:**

Cassandra Harris  
Editor-in-Chief

The Forbes Tavern, located on Forbes Avenue, is a right turn past the University Center, in the opposite direction of Market Square and just past the French bakery La Gourmandine. The entrance, labeled with a large sign, leads a customer inside to a room with three sports TVs and a bar littered with men and women in business clothing. Probably letting a load off after work around 6 p.m.

After looking at the varieties of options on the menu, a friend and I me ordered the Pittsburgher for \$16, tavern dip for \$17 and five smoked-garlic parm wings for \$7.50.

Although it was clearly labeled on the menu as a flatbread, for some reason, I was still surprised when the Pittsburgher came out looking like a pizza. The sauce was a mixture of ranch and barbecue, topped with grilled chicken, bacon, fries,

red onion, cheddar and mozzarella.

Out of the three dishes ordered this was the tastiest. Although, after switching through all three dishes and returning to try the flatbread, I thought that the sauce was a bit overpowering. My friend thought otherwise.

The fries weren't crispy, but instead soft, and the crust was crispy. Overall, it was just an excellent take on a Pittsburgh-themed dish.

The tavern dip on the other hand was disappointing and left quite a bit to the imagination. To my surprise it came with a side of either French onion soup, chili or mac n cheese. We ordered the Mac n Cheese, at the time, without regretting it.

The mac was rich, the cheese pulled nicely, the noodles were tender and it was topped with green onions as a garnish. When asked, our waitress said that customers either really liked the richness of the mac or just disliked it altogether.

In retrospect, I realize that my waitress duped

me. She said that the dip came with a side when, really, the tavern mac was a \$3 up-charge. When the whole meal came to \$49.07 without tip, I wondered why it had shot so close to my \$50 budget; because, normally, I do the math before ordering.

The dip itself tasted just like a chicken sandwich although the menu says that it's roasted ribeye. The middle of the plate had a bowl of savory au jus – which translates to "with juice" from French (thanks Google Translate). On the sandwich was gruyere, crispy leeks and horsey crème, all on a split French baguette.

Again, in retrospect, I didn't realize that they were trying to replicate a French dish. For me and my friend, the sauce was sweet and far too weird to want to order this again for a whopping \$17. Although it's not authentically a french dish, I suppose they needed a dish to compete with La Gourmandine next door, but I really wished they hadn't. Despite all the fancy words the



Cassandra Harris | For The Globe

A table with the tavern dip (center), Pittsburgher (top right), mac and cheese (bottom) and wings (left) at the Forbes Tavern on Forbes Avenue.

sandwich by itself was average and didn't taste special or expensive.

Last on our list were the five smoked-garlic parm wings for \$7.50. The garlic parm sauce was good, and so were the wings. They had a smoky flavor and weren't bad; they were certainly better than the wings at the Point Perk. They weren't special, but they were worth trying for any wing lover looking for a fix.

The Forbes Tavern did

an overall good job, but disappointed us with the most expensive thing we ordered: the tavern dip. The ambiance in the sports bar overall was nice. If I were 21, I would come here to drink, ordering everything except the dip at least once.

Cassandra Harris  
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## CAB HOSTS ANNUAL ICE CREAM EVENT IN VILLAGE PARK



Sydney Rendahl | For The Globe



Michael Klug | For The Globe



Sydney Rendahl | For The Globe



Sydney Rendahl | For The Globe



Cassandra Harris | For The Globe

Last Thursday, Sept. 12, Campus Activities Board (CAB) hosted their annual ice cream social—Scoop-a-Palooza! The event brought nearly 400 students, faculty, and staff together to enjoy free Bruster's ice cream on a hot, sunny day in Village Park. The event was put on by Courtney Parrish, CAB's Spirits and Traditions coordinator. She plans to throw other annual CAB events such as the Halloween Bash, Condom Carnival and Late-Night Drag Brunch.

## EVENT CALENDAR NOTHING TO DO?

WED @ 12PM

**WELLNESS WEDNESDAY**  
LH LOBBY

FRI @ 6:30PM

**CAB'S CRUISE & VIEWS**  
GATEWAY CLIPPER TOUR

WED @ 1:30PM

**FALL 2024 CAREER EXPO**  
SC BASEMENT

SAT @ 10AM

**SOCCER TAILGATING**  
HIGHMARK STADIUM

THURS @ 9 PM

**BACK-TO-SCHOOL BINGO BASH**  
LH BALLROOM

FRI @ 11AM

**COLLEGE CANINES**  
LH LOBBY

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9/18-9/23



## Sophomore musical theater majors prepare for Tony-themed showcase

Robert Fornataro  
Staff Writer

This year's sophomore musical theatre class is preparing for its showcase at the annual parent's weekend. This showcase, a staple event for the department, offers students the platform to develop their performance skills while celebrating some of Broadway's finest musicals.

Quinn Starrett, a sophomore musical theatre major, spoke about the process of the event, and also explained how the showcase serves multiple purposes for musical theatre classes.

"It's a showcase for the parents who are sending their [students] here," Starrett said. "But it's also a great way for sophomores to learn how to sing in an ensemble, work together, and learn from each other. Since we have solos, it's also a chance to work on new music that we haven't explored before."

This year's showcase theme is Tony Award Winners. Every musical number featured will be from shows that have won a Tony Award for Best Musical.

"We're doing lots of amazing numbers," Starrett said. "All of the mash-ups are really well thought out and done beautifully by Tim Marquette." Marquette is a teaching artist for the Conservatory and this show's music director.

Preparation for the showcase is intense, Starrett said, with students

balancing daily rehearsals alongside their regular coursework. The process, which began just over a week ago, includes ensemble rehearsals, individual solo work and choreography sessions that can last anywhere from one to three hours. The demanding schedule has brought the sophomore class closer together, Starrett said. While balancing busy schedules is a challenge, she said, the connection and support among classmates is a vital part of their success in preparing for the event.

Directors Kaylee Bender and Bella Valencia, both senior musical theater majors, and Assistant Director Kendal Williams, a junior musical theatre major, are all working in the showcase -- not only as directors, but also as choreographers. To gain their positions, these students drew from their own experiences to mentor the sophomores and ensure the production's success.

"It's so fun coming back and getting to work with all of the upcoming talent and also underclassmen because we don't get a lot of opportunities to be with them," said Bender. "They're all so hard-working and talented, and it's fun to see how much they've grown from last year into this year. It's also a great creative outlet for us, just everyone musing minds together."

While preparing the students is rewarding, both directors, Bender and Valencia noted the challenges of transitioning from being

peers to occupying leadership roles.

"The most challenging thing is knowing that these are also our peers and friends," Bender said.

Bender also said that she thinks it's awkward to put her peers in numbers and situations that they might not like, but she has to be professional.

Yet, the experience has been formative. Bender and Williams both expressed that working on the showcase has provided them with valuable leadership experience.

"Going from student mode to assistant director mode is very interesting," said Williams. "But it's so much fun because it's like flexing a new muscle."

In their interviews, the directors promised that the showcase would be a fun and engaging experience for both performer and audience alike. Although, the students are to use the showcase to develop important skills for their future careers, the primary goal is for everyone to enjoy the performance.

The sophomore musical theatre showcase will take place on October 11-12 at 7 p.m., at GRW 1 in the University Center.

For more information on events at this year's Family Weekend, be sure to visit Point Park University's website.

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## "Hamilton" comes to the Benedum Center

Robert Fornataro  
Staff Writer

The Broadway musical "Hamilton," drawing 7.8 million viewers to its stage across the U.S. is coming to Pittsburgh's Benedum Center September 1-29, and fans across campus couldn't be more excited. This three-week run marks the return of one of the most talked-about productions in modern theater and is expected to draw huge crowds eager to experience Lin-Manuel Miranda's retelling of American history.

One student who recently saw the show, Abby Perenovich, a sophomore, mentioned specific moments that caught their attention.

"The song, 'One Last Time,' it's one of my favorites, and it was performed so beautifully," Perenovich said. "Everyone was very in awe the entire show. It was just a very pleasant environment."

A contributing factor as to why the show has remained so popular is its music. After its early showings, songs like, "My Shot," "The Room Where It Happens," and "Helpless" became iconic staples in the Broadway industry, trending years after the show's first live production.

This run marks a highly-anticipated return to Pittsburgh, where theatergoers can witness this extraordinary experience.

Since its debut in 2015, Hamilton has become more than just a show than a part of history. The musical tells the story of Alexander Hamilton, one of the United States's Founding Fathers, but does so in a way that was ground-breaking at the time. Using a blend of hip-

hop and traditional Broadway sounds, the show reimagines history with a modern look.

Whether you're a history buff or just love a good musical, "Hamilton" is known to engage a wide variety of audiences. Its mix of historical accuracy and emotional storytelling mixed with its modern music has set it apart from other Broadway shows. Just like how this show's last visit to the city was met with sold-out performances, this year promises to be no different.

When asked if they would recommend the show, Perenovich's response was clear,

"Yes, absolutely," Perenovich said. "If you like musicals, I totally recommend seeing it when you get the chance!"

Performances will be held at the Benedum Center, one of Pittsburgh's premier theaters known for its beautiful architecture. Located in the heart of Pittsburgh's Cultural District, this venue is perfect for a production of this scale with over 2,800 seats available per show. With its beautiful design and top-tier acoustics, the theater will give audiences the best experience.

If you're planning to attend "Hamilton" at the Benedum Center, make sure to grab your tickets as soon as possible. Shows are expected to sell out quickly, and seating availability could become tight, as the run is limited.

For ticket information and availability, be sure to visit the Benedum Center's official website.

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## Point Park students, alum perform in company production

Melissa Garlock  
For The Globe

Some people may fall asleep at night restlessly, overthinking a stressful decision. Others may use melatonin supplements, allowing little-to-no thoughts and leading to quick, heavy eyes.

That is not the case for Jaka Pearl Porter. Ever since the ripe age of 20, when Porter's head hits the pillow, their choreographic mind ran wild, they said. Porter's days spent as a choreographer follow them deep into the night. While lying awake, Porter questions "what is dance," "who is a dancer," and "how can dancing be experienced?"

These thought-provoking prompts are investigated through Porter's "Pillow Project," which is named after the contemplations only your pillow encounters before bed.

### The description

"The Pillow Project" is a project-based dance company founded by Artistic Director Jaka Pearl Porter.

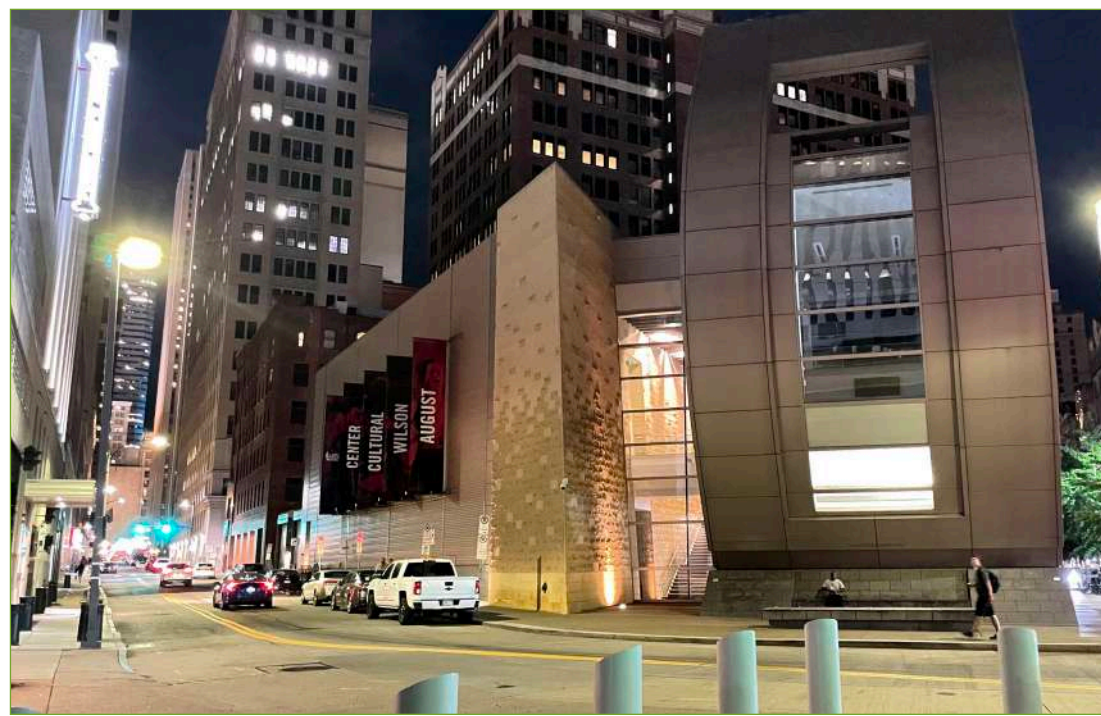
Porter holds a BFA in dance from Point Park and is a 20 year-long professor of modern dance and improvisation within the Conservatory of Performing Arts.

Apart from their work as a resident faculty member, Porter held artist residencies and created original works for various renowned dance companies. Most notable of these accomplishments are TEDxGrandview and the August Wilson Center Dance Ensemble.

"The Pillow Project" also holds "Second Saturday Jazz" happenings at The Space Upstairs, the creative laboratory where company dancers can experiment with jazz improvisation.

Through "The Pillow Project," Jaka has also independently organized various performances. This includes "The Long Dream," which premiered the weekend of September 6-7, at the August Wilson African American Cultural Center.

"The Long Dream" featured a cast of 16 dancers.



Nevaeh Wessel | For The Globe

The August Wilson Cultural Center, where "The Long Dream" was performed.

This cast was made up almost entirely of Point Park students and alumni, with the exception of one individual.

Due to a scheduling issue, Porter was unavailable to comment on the rehearsal process.

The performance was highly anticipated by a diverse crowd of people. For all Point Park COPA students, tickets were five dollars off. "The Long Dream," also signifies the 20th anniversary of "The Pillow Project" company, making it a monumental occasion for many fans. In addition, housing the performance at the August Wilson African American Cultural Center was ideal for Point Park residents, as the theater is located right near the campus in Downtown Pittsburgh.

Choreographed entirely by Porter, "The Long Dream" was separated into three acts. It featured music by Sibelius, Brahms, and Berlioz; all of which produced a harmony in

conjunction with the dancers. Moving from the first act into the second, a live on-stage poetry portrayal was performed by Porter, and instrumentally accompanied by PJ Roduta. This inspiring touch was the opening number of the performance. The performance was Porter's first choreographed piece, originating from their senior choreography project.

### The review

As a viewer, "The Long Dream," was not only a captivating and worthwhile watch, but an experience. The auditorium was filled and buzzing. The booming instrumental music caused goosebumps. The warm lights shone brightly, saturating the costumes worn by performers. Literal pillows traveled across the stage, chased by the effortless glides of individual dancers. They would collide then separate, constantly filling any empty space.

As they moved asymmetrically to one another, the dancers emotionally captured and manipulated the audience. Following the first act, Porter stepped into the spotlight. Their movements worked cohesively with their intense words, paced to a beautiful cadence. The audience watched as Jaka described their path to becoming a choreographer. Succeeding the poetry was a choreographed saga. The dancers bathed in specified lighting choices that highlighted individual limbs. The concept of the piece was left up to the viewer's interpretation.

"The Long Dream," performed by the "Pillow Project," was an opportunity for students to attend and celebrate art. Porter has and continues to create a one-of-a-kind environment for dancers and admiring patrons to thrive.

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Nevaeh Wessel | For The Globe

The outside of the August Wilson African American Cultural Center.



## We need to resolve the media literacy crisis

August Stephens  
Opinions Editor

There is discourse regarding the education of students in secondary education and whether they receive media literacy training. In online circles, educators and parents alike are speaking out about struggles children face in school. The younger generation, Generation Alpha, starts school not knowing how to read.

In addition to not being prepared for the American school system, the educators and students themselves are experiencing the repercussions of education gaps, screen time exposure and shrinking attention spans.

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, 67% of fourth grade students are not reading proficiently. The percentage dropped four percent from 2019.

From Media Literacy Now, there are three parts that form the definition of media literacy. This includes the ability to decode messages, to assess the influence of those messages, and to create media thoughtfully.

There are current and recently graduating university students complaining about the lack of media literacy education. English or Language Arts courses are mandated until grade 12.

Many of us may have had to attend a class where we had to learn and

regurgitate information for an entire year. Animal Farm, The Catcher in the Rye and To Kill a Mockingbird are all examples of required readings in high school, according to GoodReads. The reader is there to understand information applying to the story and the individual scenes of a story.

A TikTok from Nicole Brennan demonstrates the media literacy crisis through an anecdote detailing their experience overhearing a conversation where two people could not identify the symbolism of the green light at the end of the Broadway version of The Great Gatsby.

While it is pertinent to focus on media literacy with the advancement of technology, we need to pay attention to the education of younger generations. This decreases the affects of COVID-19 taking over several years of their life.

There does not need to be hours of structured tutoring if their child does not need it. However, caretakers and parents should read to their children, ask them questions, and request they read books aloud in order to identify any problems with their literacy skills. With an increased focus on teaching reading comprehension to the new generation, media literacy will also increase.

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# THE GLOBE'S POINT



## Tradition does not equal prosperity

Globe's Point: Tradition does not always mean prosperity

Have you noticed anything different with the front page in the past three issues?

If you're astute, you might have noticed a few differences. The Globe staff have been hard at work thinking up new ideas for newspaper layouts. We'll just say it – our old masthead has gone the way of the flip phone. It may have been functional, but it was obsolete and not very nice to look at. Not to talk the new masthead up too much, but it is jaw-droppingly gorgeous, designed by Khalil Johnson, and upgrades The Globe from something people would look at and go “aww, a little, baby college newspaper,” to “this paper isn't messing around.”

Good thing we really aren't messing around – when it comes to reporting news on campus, there is nobody better than The Globe. Now that we want to write like the important pillar of the university we are, it is time for our publication to look as important too.

Last year, a few pieces were published about how much minimalism can drain the character out of someone's life, which is curious considering our old masthead had no life in it left. The default font used in the masthead's old design was already dull

enough, but the Globe logo itself was painfully flat.

Why was it not changed sooner? The answers are simple: Time constraints, thanks to a tiny staff and the nagging voice of someone telling past editors, “It was always done this way.”

This is exactly what the current editorial team is trying to tackle. Just because something was done the same way for several years does not automatically make it good. That's like saying it is smarter to cook the same meal repeatedly, but instead of trying to add or remove elements to improve your cooking, you make the food identically every single time because you've always done it that way.

Such thinking has plagued The Globe for at least eight years. If you were to pick up a copy from 2016 and compare it to one from Spring 2023, they'd look nearly identical. The pictures are in the same places, the articles are in the same places, and sometimes there aren't any pictures on an entire half of a page.

Being complacent and not wanting to try anything unique with The Globe can only hurt us, which is why we have been trying out new design concepts as of late. We don't want the paper to look the exact same every single week, and we also want the graphics to be something worth staring

at. Our new crime report graphic is just one example of these beautiful, new graphics.

It's understandable that tradition may be “sacred,” even in the context of a student-run newspaper. But when tradition is doing nothing for us other than holding us back, then what's the point? Who is being made happy by delivering a low-quality product?

Such thinking does not only apply to The Globe - as students, we always need to question whether a process is truly working for us or if we need to change our thinking. While we have been making changes to the appearance of our newspaper and the culture that surrounds our reporting, you could be making life changes that benefit you more than sticking with the same thing for years. That is why we hope to bring the quality of pieces up too – this is not your “we need something, anything to be able to just fill the pages” Globe. We do not miss the burnout Globe caused by a few people doing the work of many for years. The Globe is spinning once again, and we hope you enjoy the changes seen throughout the semester.

We're always open to suggestions. Send an email to that address below.

The Globe  
globe@pointpark.edu

## Letter to the Editor: Professor Bob Ross responds to Rullo

Bob Ross  
Letter to the Editor

To the Editor,

I was dismayed to read the September 12 letter to the editor by David Rullo, a Point Park alumnus and staff writer for The Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle. The ostensible purpose of Rullo's letter was to criticize the journalism found in The Globe. Rullo picks apart two articles and line-edits grammatical mistakes and typos, as if he were the student-reporters' professor. For an accomplished journalist to nit-pick the writing quality of student reporters in a public forum is inappropriate, disrespectful and unprofessional.

He could have easily offered such critiques through private correspondence. Such feedback, if given constructively in the safe environment of an email message or phone call could have been a valuable gift from a local reporter to students, who are still eager to strengthen their craft. Instead, Mr. Rullo's public critique comes across as bullying, something for which we as a community should have zero tolerance.

While Mr. Rullo couched his letter as a critique of the writing quality found at Point Park's student newspaper, the primary purpose of his letter seems to be to complain about The Globe's publication of facts that challenge right wing perspectives on Israel, something that is rarely if ever found in his own newspaper. Mr. Rullo's complaints, which focus on a Globe article about a lecture I gave on Palestine/Israel in April (which Mr. Rullo did not attend), are themselves riddled with factual errors and misguided, right-wing talking points. There are too many to respond to within the spatial confines of this newspaper, so I will address only the most glaring and dangerous ones here.

For starters, Mr. Rullo falsely claims that “Occupied Palestine' does not exist” and that “the Palestinian territory is not a state and should not be classified as one.” This is nonsense, according to international law and longstanding popular understandings. Palestine has been recognized as a non-member observer state of the United Nations General Assembly since 2012. And “Palestine” has been used by its indigenous inhabitants (including, until 1948, its then small Jewish population), as well as most of the rest of the world, to refer to the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea for more than 2,000 years now.

Mr. Rullo also repeats a tired falsehood that “occupied' hasn't been a corrective adjective for [Gaza] since 2005, when Israel pulled its troops and residents from the territory.” According to the United Nations, Gaza and the West Bank are still both “occupied Palestinian territory,” meaning that Israel exercises military control over them. When I visited Gaza in 2015, I was greeted at the Erez crossing into the territory not by members of Hamas or any other Palestinian official, but by uniformed soldiers of the Israeli military who had the exclusive power to deny or grant my admission into the territory. The visa I needed to do so, moreover, was issued not by any Palestinian entity, but rather by the state of Israel.

Indeed, Israel (and on its border, Egypt) has controlled the movement of everything and everyone who wants to enter or leave the territory since it began its occupation in 1967. Israel's occupation army, in coordination with the Egyptian military, has virtually paralyzed the residents of Gaza since 2007, prohibiting all but a tiny privileged few from ever exiting the territory, thus creating what many residents told me

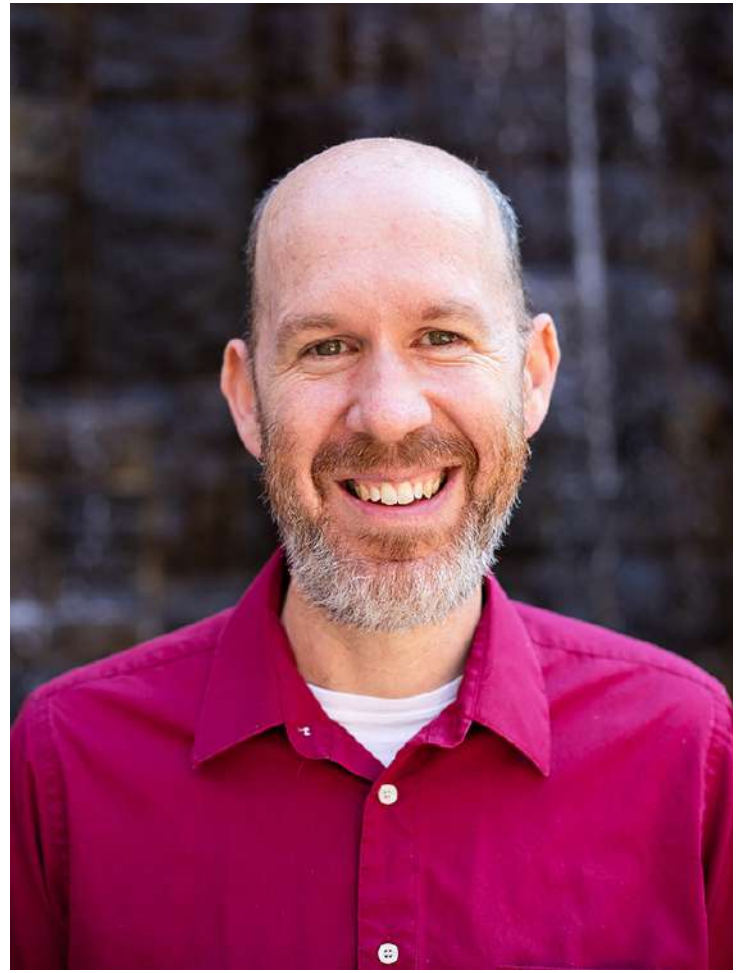
was effectively an “open air prison.”

Palestinians in the occupied West Bank are permitted by Israel to leave the territory through Jordan, but even long before Oct. 7, the Israeli military has placed extreme limits on their movement within Palestine. Traveling from one Palestinian village to another usually means passing (or being denied passage) through inhumane Israeli military checkpoints. While Palestinians are not permitted to move freely in their own land, they are often not allowed to stay there, either.

The Israeli military regularly demolishes Palestinian homes under the pretense that they were not built with an Israeli-issued permit, permits that are nearly impossible for Palestinians to obtain. During my most recent trip, I witnessed Israeli soldiers bulldozing Palestinian farmland to make way for a new Israeli settlement. My colleagues and I met with an elderly man in occupied East Jerusalem at the ruined site of his house, which had been demolished just two days before.

Evidence of the occupation is everywhere in Palestine. To deny its existence is to erase from the map the lived realities of millions of people and the legitimacy of international law.

Mr. Rullo states that the current war in Gaza “is not a war of oppressors versus the oppressed. This is, instead, a war for the very existence of the Jewish people living in Israel and around the world.” Such a claim, while likely rooted in legitimate, generational trauma from the Nazi Holocaust and Hamas's Oct. 7 attacks, is a gross reversal of reality. The scale and details of Israel's ongoing war on Gaza are disproportionately too vast and too grotesque to fit within any word limit. But suffice it to say that a growing consensus of human rights organizations and genocide



Courtesy of Point Park University

A headshot of Bob Ross, professor of literature, culture and society, department of community engagement, standing in Village Park.

scholars (including Israeli historians) have concluded that we are witnessing an unfolding genocide perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people.

The Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle has published several disparaging stories about my teaching, writing and human rights work in relation to Palestine/Israel, often associating me with antisemitism. After almost every article went to print, I received death threats and online harassment. And I am not alone. Such weaponization of false accusations of antisemitism against people who express even the remotest criticism of Israel is on the rise across the United States. So, for Mr. Rullo to claim, in reference to The Globe's coverage of Palestine/Israel, “these types of stories make Jewish students on campus less safe” is not just ludicrous but also dangerously irresponsible.

Threats against Jews are real, as we in Pittsburgh know all too well. Antisemitism exists and is on the rise, both here in the United States and around the world. But there is nothing inherently antisemitic about resisting, criticizing or, in the case of The Globe, printing factual information about a nation-state that has been occupying and eradicating an indigenous population for more than 75 years now. We need more of this kind of journalism, not less.

—Robert Ross, Ph.D.  
Professor

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# Cross Country finishes in sixth place

## The Pioneers take on the Robert Morris Invitational

Megan Lukitsch  
Staff Writer

The Point Park men's and women's cross country teams traveled to Clinton, Pennsylvania on Sept. 15. Both teams placed sixth out of 10 schools at the Robert Morris University Colonial Invitational.

Point Park competed against runners from other PA-based schools such as Robert Morris, Carnegie

Mellon, Duquesne, Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Thiel College. Out-of-state universities such as West Virginia University, Mount Union, Baldwin Wallace and Walsh University were also among those competing on Saturday.

Both Division I and Division II athletes competed against each other in the women's 5k and the men's 8k races.

First-year Cassandra



Kyla Pothier | For The Globe

Cassandra O'Connor competes in the 5k race. She finished 14th overall.

O'Connor, who was coming off a first place finish at the West Liberty Invitational on September 5, led the way for the women's team this weekend.

O'Connor finished 14th overall in the 5k race with a time of 18 minutes and 29.22 seconds, which ranks in the top five of Point Park's history of 5k races.

O'Connor was followed up by Jana Schmid in 32nd place with a time of 19 minutes and 14.1 seconds and Sophia Lee-Hauser in 43rd place at 19 minutes and 32.6 seconds. The women's team had six more runners finish in the top 100.

History was made on the men's team with sophomore Luke McKenna setting a school record in the 8k at 25 minutes and 47.8 seconds.

McKenna's historic run placed him in 14th overall for the men's 8k race.

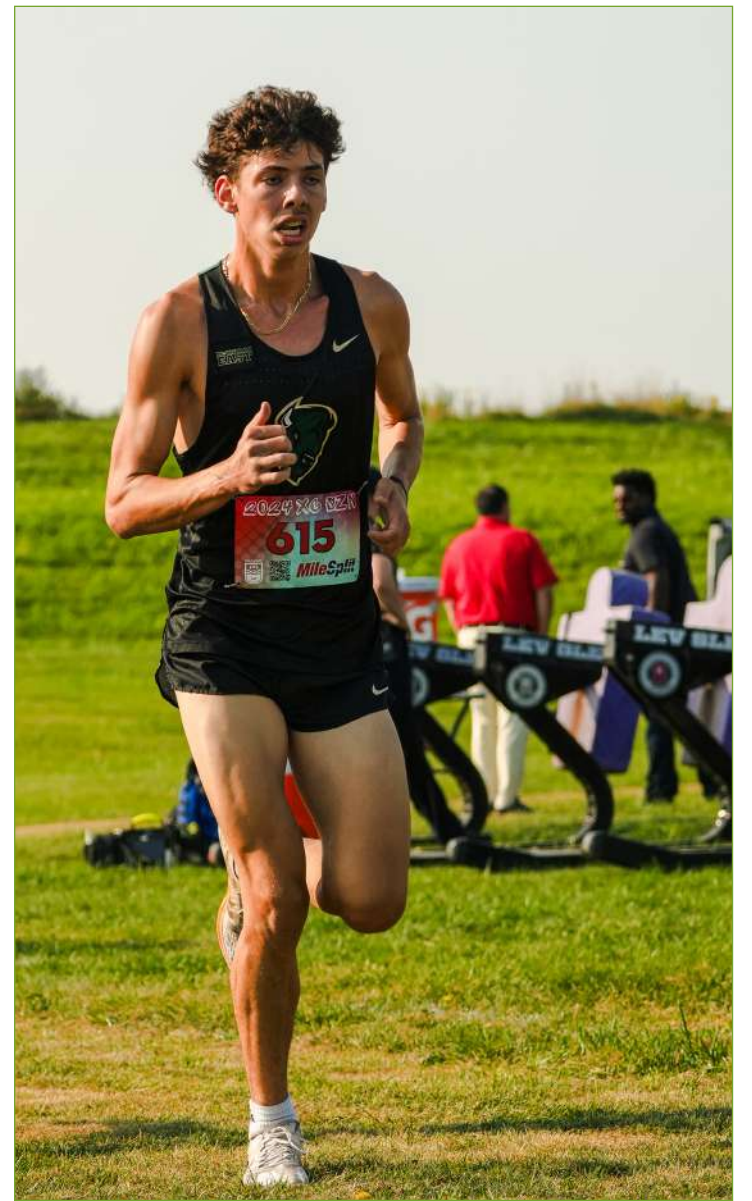
Five other runners on the men's team finished in the top 100, including Elijah James in 45th, Jannik Windelband in 52nd and Albin Petschauer in 53rd.

The women's team finished with a score of 164 points and the men finished with 171 points. Both teams earned sixth place overall.

Walsh University took first place overall for the women's 5k, with Robert Morris and Carnegie Mellon rounding out the top three.

For the men's race, Carnegie Mellon, Walsh and Mount Union scored in the top three spots.

McKenna and O'Connor earned Mountain East Conference (MEC) Runner of



Kyla Pothier | For The Globe

Luke McKenna races to the finish line in the 8k race on Saturday.

the Week honors this week. These accolades are two of the three weekly awards that Point Park has received since transitioning to NCAA Division II athletics.

Point Park's next meet is on Saturday, Sept. 28 at the West Branch Course in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania for the Lock Haven Cross Country Invitational.

The Pioneers compete

in their first ever Division II conference championship in late October. The race location will be announced at a later date.

Check [pointparksports.com](http://pointparksports.com) for meet information, news and results.

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# Pioneer Public: Luke McKenna

## Meet the runner behind the broken records



Jake Loveisky  
Staff Writer

Last Saturday, Sept. 14, sophomore Luke McKenna set the Point Park record for the 8k at the Robert Morris Invitational.

Behind the broken records, McKenna discussed his upbringing, drive for success and much more.

McKenna was born in Allegheny County but grew up in Lexington, South Carolina. Growing up, he became an avid runner, with his parents playing a significant role in his success in the sport.

"My mom was really helpful, she always pushed me to do stuff even when I didn't want to," McKenna said. "My parents are great."

McKenna grew up playing baseball until he turned 11 years old and then centered on being the best runner possible.

McKenna's journey to Point Park University was influenced by his Pittsburgh-based family.

"I have a lot of family here," McKenna said. "Both of my parents are from this area and grew up within ten minutes of the city."

When McKenna was a junior in high school, cross country coach Tim Creamer reached out to

him. From there, Point Park felt like the right choice for McKenna. He began his freshman year in 2023 as a Sports, Arts and Entertainment Management (SAEM) major.

This summer, McKenna locked into preparing for his second season with the Pioneers cross country team.

"I followed the mileage sheet and did speed workouts," McKenna said. "It was a lot harder to train due to the heat down south so I got up early every morning." Heading into this cross

country season, McKenna was determined to improve his mid-race running. He mentioned that he tends to wait until he can see the finish line before attempting to pass nearby runners. He shared that he wanted to focus on this aspect of his running.

McKenna's hard work this summer appears to be paying off for him and his team. The men's team finished in fourth place at the West Liberty Invitational, with Luke finishing fourth overall at 18 minutes and 58

seconds.

"Right from the gun I got out and was in the lead," McKenna said. "And I didn't want to give it up, so I stayed in the front as long as possible and nobody really ever tried to pass me."

McKenna aims to improve each race and avoid any bad races.

"I always go out there and work as hard as I can," McKenna said.

McKenna shared that he looks forward to the CMU Invitational at Schenley Park meet; it was his favor-

ite race last year.

As it is still early in the cross country season, McKenna has some big goals.

"[My] biggest goal is to run under 25 minutes in the 8k," McKenna said. "Then at the conference meet, place in the ten."

The Pioneers travel to the 23rd Annual Lock Haven Cross Country Open/Invitational in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania on Sept. 28.

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Tiana Lecker | For The Globe

Luke McKenna poses for his headshot on cross country media day in August. McKenna earned MEC Runner of the Week this week.



# Thomas hired as Sports Information Director

Brynn Rees  
Sports Editor

Point Park Athletics announced Chris Thomas as the new Associate Athletic Director and Sports Information Director (SID) last month.

Thomas oversees the athletic communications office. This includes the Point Park Sports website, social media, streaming and press releases. He also ensures that the university's athletic communication abides by the NCAA and Mountain East Conference (MEC) guidelines.

The NCAA accepted Point Park as a provisional member in July. The Pioneers are officially part of the MEC and began conference matchups this fall.

"Chris is a consummate professional, and he knows the job that needs to happen," Vice President of Athletics Scott Swain said. "It's been great to have him on board [to] help support our staff and our coaches."

Swain shared that he hired Thomas as SID because of his experience in NCAA Division II athletics and the MEC. Thomas brings over a decade of experience to the table, having served as SID for two other Division II institutions and having prior experience at the MEC office.

Thomas is from Fairmont, West Virginia and received his bachelor's degree at Fairmont State, an MEC school. He went on to earn his master's degree at West Virginia University and returned to Fairmont State to serve as their SID for nine years.

Thomas worked at another Division II school, Gannon Univer-

sity, before taking his most recent job for the MEC office as director of strategic communication. He worked in this role for over three years, where he managed communication efforts for MEC championships and oversaw conference communication and stat reporting.

"He knows our conference that we're going into very, very well," Swain said. "I have known Chris for over a decade, worked with him in a variety of roles, and I've seen his work. I've been very impressed throughout."

The hiring process for a new SID began in May after the previous SID, Kevin Taylor, left the university. The athletic department hired Thomas in mid-August, and he started working on August 27.

Thomas spent 11 years working on a university campus, and he came to Point Park to return to that environment.

"I really got interested in moving to the area and promoting the student athletes through this Division II process of becoming NCAA," Thomas said.

Fall sports are underway, so the sports information office already manages all communication for Point Park soccer, cross country, golf and volleyball.

"I really feel like it's been a smooth transition," Thomas said. "[We] took off running from what Tiana had set for us. We were in good shape when I got here."

Tiana Lecker is the assistant SID. She served as interim SID during the summer after Taylor stepped down in the spring.

Lecker earned her bachelor's



Photo courtesy of Chris Thomas

Chris Thomas poses for a headshot. Thomas began his position at Point Park as SID in late

degree at Point Park, played softball for four years, interned for the athletic department and most recently served as graduate assistant in athletic communication. She worked this summer to ensure a steady adjustment as the university joined the NCAA.

Thomas and Lecker aim to elevate athletic communications at the university. They manage stat reporting, live broadcasts, social me-

dia posts and more.

"I just want to help transform and promote the student athletes, the coaches [and] the institution the best I can," Thomas said. "I like as part of this job to celebrate the accomplishments of athletes [and] celebrate the accomplishments of teams."

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## Volleyball faces tough loss in home opener

Edmee Idalis  
Staff Writer

The Point Park Pioneers volleyball team faced their first loss on home turf against the Washington & Jefferson (W&J) Presidents on Tuesday, Sept. 10 in the Student Center gym. The Presidents took home the win 3-0.

The Pioneers lost all three sets with the scores 25-23, 25-11 and 25-18. W&J came into the match with one win and six losses under their belt, this game bringing them to 2-6. Point Park left with a 0-5 record.

"You look at Point Park, they're a phenomenal program, they have a wealth of depth in their offense and their defense," Washington & Jefferson coach Lindsey Llewellyn said. "So for us to come in and compete well against a good team is really exciting for us."

The Pioneers game leaders were Eden McElhaney with five kills and 11 digs, Patricia Calero Iriza with six blocks and Mia Arndt with two service aces.

For the first set, the Pioneers' starting lineup included Mariah Perez, Giulia Follador, Eden McElhaney, Haley Stormer, Elise Wallace and Patricia Calero Iriza.

Point Park and W&J were at an even playing field throughout the first set, but at the last moment the Pioneers lost their momentum. The first set ended with the Presidents getting three consecutive points to edge past the Pioneers defense for a score of 25-23.

The Pioneers subbed in Rachele Tessari, Nadiushka Conde, Giulia Follador and Audrey Shull for the second set.

With the first set loss fresh in the players' minds, the Pioneers came into the second set with desperate attempts to score. The Pioneers were down 5-4 when the Presidents took their lead and ran with it. The



Luka Strickland | For The Globe

Eden McElhaney spikes against the Presidents on Tuesday, Sept. 10.

Pioneers didn't get another point until late in the set, leaving the Pioneers with another lost set at 25-11.

For the third and final set, the Pioneers sub in Rachele Tessari, Mariah Perez, Mia Arndt, Ana Baruh Krstic, and Audrey Shull.

The Pioneers showed a promising start in the third set but once again fell after reaching their fourth point of the set. The Presidents climbed to 11-4 before the Pioneers scored again. The Pioneers made a valiant effort to come back as they were down 22-13, scoring four consecutive points. The Presidents ultimately swept the Pioneers with a score of 25-18 in the third set.

"I think we needed more grit," Point Park starter Mariah Perez said. "I think we went out there and tried to give it all we got but honestly it just didn't work in our favor."

Although the match

ended dimly for Point Park, the crowd and players on the sidelines showed up with a lot of support for both teams. With such a close court view, the audience was closely invested in the game and the outcome.

"Even though [the Pioneers] lost, they all seem like they have good teamwork," first-year student Chloe Humway said.

The Pioneers competed in the Vulcan Invitational on Sept. 13-14 in California, Pennsylvania. They ended the weekend with a 2-1 record, earning their first win against Bloomsburg.

"We just gotta come in ready to work, get our mind right, get our tunnel vision," Perez said. "Honestly, just focus on the goals we had at the beginning of the season and that's to win."

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## OPINION: Student Fitness Center is far below standard

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This year, Point Park has proven to be extremely eager for change and facility upgrades.

With the completion of the Professional Career Readiness Center in the basement of the Student Center, an overhauled Point Perk menu, and a new dance studio built in the Online Education building, it is clear that Point Park's administration aspires to keep the university fresh and exciting with constant new additions.

However, they have made one glaring oversight in their revitalization projects.

The Fitness Center on the fourth floor of the Student Center is incredibly lacking, especially for an institution recently invited to compete in Division II of the NCAA.

The Fitness Center consists of three large rooms: one with a quarter-track, cardio machines and isolation machines; another with assorted additional machines and a versatile cable machine, and a third with squat racks, benches and dumbbells for compound lifts.

This third room is the most lacking.

Compound exercises are movements intended to target several muscle groups at once, according to the Australian Fitness Academy.

These lifts are often the most popular.

The dumbbells in the third room go up to 100 pounds, and there are nine 45-pound plates for barbell exercises.

For compound chest exercises, there is one flat bench, one decline bench and one incline bench.

For legs, there is one squat rack. There is another smaller rack that is often unstable and unnerving to use, especially when han-

dling heavier weight.

In the past, there was also a smith machine, useful for safely performing compound lifts alone, but it has been broken since the end of the Fall 2023 semester.

This lack of equipment is troublesome, especially when the gym is busy, as – more often than not – there are not enough weights or racks to go around.

On top of this, any one of Point Park's 17 varsity athletic teams may be found working out as a team in the fitness center, making it near impossible to get a good lift in at certain hours.

It is commonly known among students that, if you are taking your fitness seriously, you likely need to pay for a membership at a different facility.

Both the UFC gym on Forbes Ave. and ETAGE Athletic Club on Stanwix Street are popular gyms. Both also charge roughly \$25 a month for its membership, according to its websites.

If students genuinely want to get in shape, they should not have to pay \$25 monthly to use appropriate facilities, especially on top of tuition.

The Fitness Center in its current state does not need any large investment to dramatically improve the quality of exercise it can provide. An additional squat rack and flat bench, as well as maybe another cable machine, would dramatically improve the Fitness Center.

If Point Park wants to be taken seriously in the Mountain East Conference, it should consider overhauling the Fitness Center. This will not only improve the performance of its already extremely talented athletes but allow for students to get stronger and healthier efficiently alongside them.

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