



# SIX MILE POST

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## SGA seeks new president

By Ashley Hall

The Student Government Association is accepting applications for the president of the 2023-2024 academic year. The SGA President is responsible for representing the student body, and college, within the USG. The position comes with many opportunities for networking, experience and learning the ins and outs of the internal college structure.

Any student aspiring to be SGA President should apply by Feb. 23 with the online form sent through student email. Applicants will meet with the SGA President Campaign Committee leading up to the deadline to present their reasons for wanting to become president and what they can bring to the student body.

Members of the SGA President Campaign Committee are as follows: Student Engagement Coordinator and SGA Faculty Adviser, Clifton Puckett, Student Engagement Assistant, Madison Signore, Cartersville Library Assistant and Equality Alliance Faculty Adviser, Brittany Ozmore and current SGA President, April Cole.

SGA President nominees can begin their campaigning on March 1. They are permitted to create their own posters, flyers and brochures to hang and distribute across each campus. Nominees can also send campaigning information to Puckett through [cpuckett@highlands.edu](mailto:cpuckett@highlands.edu) to email all students.

There will be a meet and greet for nominees that is projected to be the week of March 13. Students will have the chance to get to know the nominees, ask questions about their vision for GHC and how they intend to make it a reality.

Voting will be from March 27 to March 30 and there will be voting booths with iPads set up inside each campus library. An online option is also available through the SGA Elections page on the GHC website.

According to the Student Organizations webpage, "The primary purpose of the SGA is to serve as the voice of the student body and act as a liaison between students and college administration in order to help formulate just and proper regulations pertaining to student government and to

assist those persons designated to enforce the regulations."

Signore has been working closely with the SGA, learning about how it runs and what advantages it brings to students.

"It's a chance for students to gather in one central location that represents different interests or different clubs," Signore said. She added that every active club participates in SGA, and "it gives all of those clubs a chance to meet and coexist and figure out a way for SGA to come about with new rules and regulations."

Puckett said the SGA President is the face of the student body. They will meet with VIPs, represent the college as the student voice and speak at graduation ceremonies. The future SGA President will be able to add their experience in these types of tasks to their resume.

"Anyone who has aspirations to run for an office one day... especially the campaign process, because you have to kind of talk to people and win their favor," Puckett said.

Former SGA President, Labeeba Shafique, did not have plans to run for an SGA



ABBY CHESNUT | ARTIST

The future SGA President will have numerous opportunities and responsibilities. They will work closely with GHC leadership to improve students' experience and participate in events to represent the college.

position upon applying to GHC after graduating high school. She said she was welcomed by her professors and classmates and wanted to be more involved with the college after working as an orientation leader for PTK.

"It made me really glad that I was in the position where I can make decisions for students and help to em-

body, but also very scared because it's a grand role," Shafique said. She added that meeting with other SGA presidents at the Student Advisory Council Summer Conference made her realize how grateful she was to be in the position.

(Continued on page 2)

# HVAC system being replaced on Floyd campus

By Patrick Daniel

The interior of the Walraven building on the Floyd campus is undergoing renovations due to the HVAC system needing to be replaced.

"The old system was inefficient and expensive, so this is the next step towards GHC being more eco-friendly," Floyd campus Manager, Bradley Gilmore, said.

The Walraven building has been part of the Floyd campus ever since the campus was first established as Floyd Junior College in 1970.

"The system was original and came with the building when it was built 50 years ago; the new system should be more effective," Director of Facilities, David Van Hook, said. "Hopefully this new system will benefit the Floyd campus overall."

"The new equipment has ultraviolet air cleaners that will improve air quality and have better filtration, and less of a carbon footprint, also less outside pollutants coming in," Hook added.

According to an email sent by Hook, contractors raised construction barriers and created a new entry-way between the A and AA

buildings for students to use during construction.

Students have complained about the temperature of the Walraven building.

"Some parts of the building are at a different temperature than other parts; this new equipment will keep all of the building at the same temperature," Hook said.

"This new system is a great move forward for the Floyd campus, and students will be more comfortable," Gilmore said.

The projected completion time is June.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY DAVID VAN HOOK

GHC is getting more eco-friendly by installing a new HVAC system, which is also less expensive and more high-tech.



PATRICK DANIEL | PHOTOGRAPHER

The new renovations to the Walraven building on the Floyd campus will make students more comfortable while learning and studying.

## (SGA Continued from page 1)

Signore said that some advantages of being in the SGA are networking, teamwork, representation and opportunities. However, it is a role that holds a lot of responsibility.

"Sometimes we'll have professors reach out to work with SGA. And if that's the case, the president will be the one representing SGA and it is a great opportunity to network," Si-

gnore said. "Learning those responsibilities, taking the role of leadership; but my biggest benefit that I see is opportunities, 100%."

Shafique said that the SGA president needs to know the student body to understand their needs.

"Our student body is diverse. And some of the challenges that other students will be facing might not necessarily be yours," Shafique said. "But you really need to go out there to know the students and your

school and know their needs, and how can you facilitate their college journey better from a president's position..."

She added that the SGA President has the power to make real change within the college, and even USG, as they are connected to higher positions such as the college provost, the vice president and the president.

"Once you're in the position, you can really use your creativity and your ingenuity to bring new ideas

into campus and implement new plans," Shafique said.

Shafique said that anyone that wants to try for SGA President should.

"You don't have to be great to start, but in order to be great, you have to start."

Additional information and questions can be requested from studentengagement@highlands.edu.



# Students and faculty should be aware of phishing scams

By Julia Haynes

Students and faculty have been receiving emails from outside organizations for the past few years with many presented as if they are from GHC. Some of these emails have convinced students and faculty to provide their personal information, putting themselves and the school at risk of scammers.

Certain emails may seem more trustworthy than others, even if they are unknowingly sent by a scammer. It is important for students and faculty to look for the signs of phishing before responding, especially if an email asks for personal or financial information.

GHC will never ask for passwords, Social Security numbers or driver's license numbers. If someone receives an email from GHC asking for any of these, it is likely a scam and should be reported to IT at [rt@highlands.edu](mailto:rt@highlands.edu) to pre-

vent future harm.

There are several ways to tell if an email is a scam. Students and faculty should check the sender before reading a message. Phishing scammers can pose as an organization or as another student, teacher or coworker. Someone should report the email or contact the alleged sender in person if something seems strange to make sure they are not being scammed.

The most common phishing scams at GHC are messages meant to make someone believe they have made a mistake, such as forgetting to make an invoice payment. Another common sign of phishing is when an email wants a student to click a link to another site. Grammatical errors or awkward phrases should also be looked for.

Some students

have received emails with subjects like "IT DESK," "WORK WITH US," "PERSONAL ASSISTANT" and "APPLY NOW" in the past. Many scam emails have encouraged students to apply for job positions that do not exist.

"Always be skeptical and avoid any emails that have any offers that seem too good to be true," Mohan Naidu, assistant professor of computer science, said.

Some students have also been victims of "sextortion" scams, where scammers try to convince them that they've hacked into their camera and recorded an inappropriate video of them.

Somewhat similarly, employees have reported emails from

Gmail or Yahoo from people pretending to be higher-ups. They ask faculty members to buy gift cards and then text codes to a phone number.

There are dangers associated with falling victim to phishing scams. A student or faculty member could allow a scammer access to their computer by clicking on certain links or providing information. Then the phisher can hack into the college system and retrieve data and information on various people and accounts.

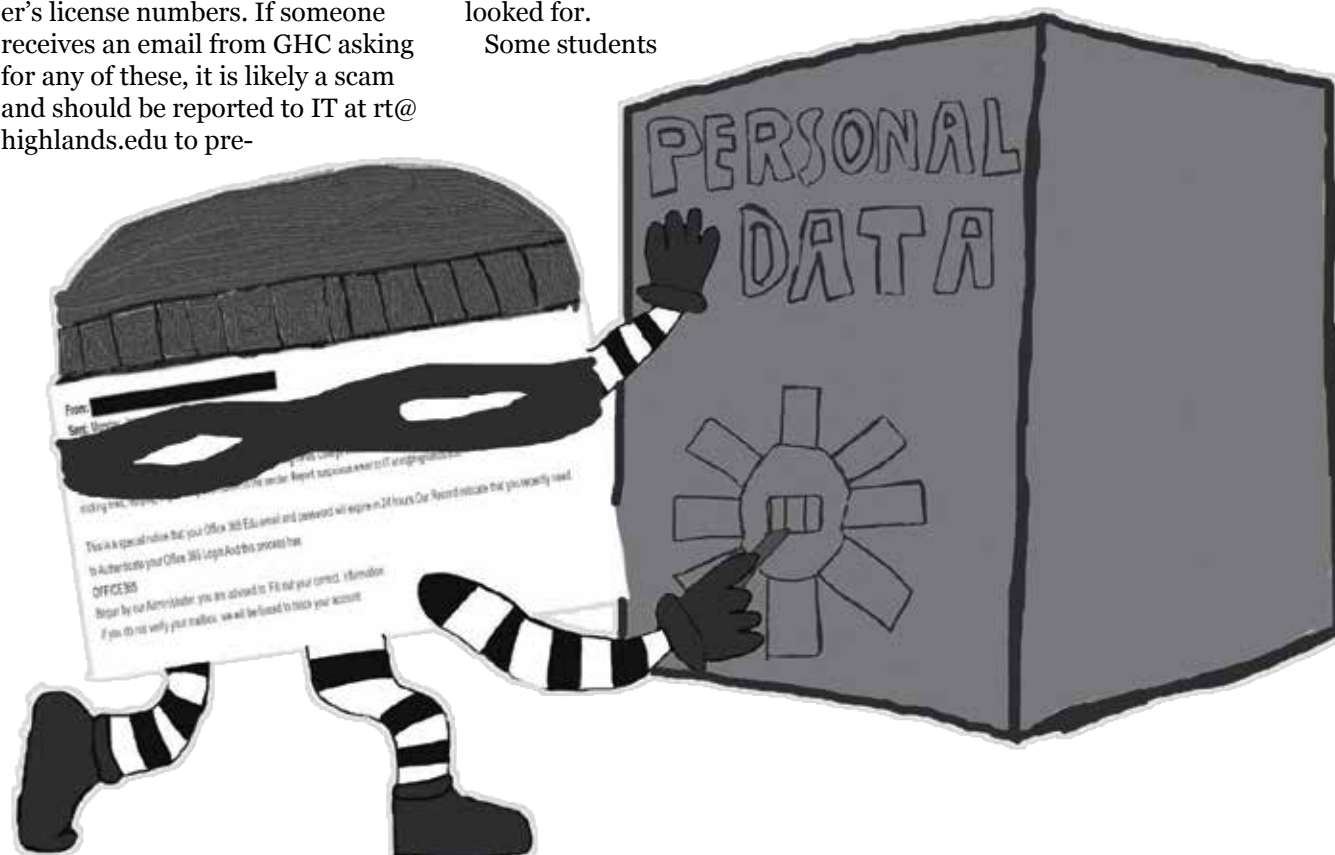
Some phishing emails also include malware, which can infect someone's computer and leak personal information and finances.

Other emails steal passwords to use across different websites, which is why students and faculty should use a different password for each new site.

"Many people reuse passwords across multiple websites and when a big data breach happens somewhere like Twitter or LinkedIn, hackers share and sell stolen usernames and passwords online, where it can be used to break into accounts and to perpetuate these scams," Ian Fleming, chief information security officer, said.

"I have gotten some scam emails, but I don't pay too much attention to them," Guadalupe Delgado, Marietta campus general studies major, said. "I end up deleting them afterwards once they send an email saying 'Do not trust these scams.'"

Students and faculty can use the Phish Alert button on Outlook to automatically forward a suspicious email to IT. Reporting these scams can help protect other GHC students and staff and reduce the number of those that fall victim to them.



AINSLEY HOWARD | ARTIST

Phishing is one of the most common scams people can come across. Recognizing the signs of a phishing attack is crucial in avoiding one as they can be dangerous.

# VA supports veteran students

By Anna Crusselle

The Veteran Affairs Department offers educational benefits to student veterans on all five of the GHC campuses. There is a resource center to serve as a place where they can come together to study, grab a coffee and meet with other student veterans.

VA Department Coordinator, Amy Wise, started at GHC as an Enrollment Management Specialist and VA Certified Official in 2004. Wise moved to the Cartersville campus a year later and became the Admissions Counselor while still being the VA Certified Official.

"This is about the student veterans," Wise said. "They've served us and now it's our time to serve them."

Wise said she and the department are improving many aspects of the VA.

"We are offering to expand credit for prior learning in a lot of ways, but our military credit is one of them that we are really concentrating on," Wise said. This would allow a student veteran's military credit to be transferred over as college credit.

One thing that GHC wants to make sure of is that student veterans know that they are appreciated and have a resource center on each campus to make them feel at home.

"The spaces are set up on campus because we want them to come and check in, visit with other veterans and get to know each other to really create that comradery



**Left:** The Student Veterans Resource Center located at the Cartersville campus is a place where veterans can come to study, make coffee and be a friendly face for other students. **Right:** The honorably discharged Alec Lindsey, studying in the Veteran Resource Center at the Paulding Campus.



ANNA CRUSSELLE | PHOTOGRAPHER

on campus," Wise said.

Student veterans have access to a desktop, couches and free school supplies that are donated by the Georgia Army National Guard Family Assistant Specialists in our resource centers.

"It is nice to have a friendly face you can recognize on campus," Wise said. "When we shut down and everyone switched to online, that really changed the way students interact and the dynamic of the on-campus experience."

The VA has many other benefits. Student veterans receive priority registration and can partake in the GHC lending library. This allows them to check out a class textbook for the semester if there is an available copy.

"The changes recently with the department have allowed us to promote the study abroad program to be partially paid for by the VA," Wise said. The department

encourages students to visit the VA resource centers on campus and join the Student Veterans of America club.

Student veterans are also eligible to work for the VA through the GHC Federal Work-Study Program. They can work up to 25 hours a week on campus and don't have to qualify for FAFSA.

Wise said the VA work-study students are there to help other veterans with military-related topics when she's not there.

The student veterans can Zoom chat with Wise, help her with paperwork, set up booths and guide other students.

GHC offers veterans 15 years of educational benefits from the time they complete their service. They can turn in their military paperwork at any point and GHC awards a waiver that waives out-of-state fees.

Wise understood her work

was important as she saw many recently separated military students coming back to school. These students needed extra attention as they learned to separate themselves from service and transition back to civilian life.

"After being out of school for almost a decade, coming back here as a new student has been pretty intimidating, but the teachers here have been very kind and helpful in getting me along," Paulding campus English major, Alec Lindsey, said.

Lindsey was honorably discharged during the COVID quarantine on Dec. 5, 2020, after serving as part of the United States Air Force Security Forces in Japan for five years.

"It was a difficult transition because everything was shut down," he said.

Lindsey has been attending GHC for two years, but

started his first day in the FWS program on Jan. 17. He helps Wise with VA duties and helps other student veterans that stop by.

What makes Lindsey passionate about the FWS program is that he can be a guide for other student veterans that are adjusting to civilian life.

"Once you go to the military and come back out it's a completely different world and it can be very daunting and intimidating," Lindsey said. "I'm thankful for all the people who have tried to help me out any way they can."

There are currently two positions open for FWS VA at the Cartersville and Rome campus. Any interested student veterans can contact Wise at [awise@highlands.edu](mailto:awise@highlands.edu) or 678-872-8005.



## Katie Weatherford pursues children's media production

By Abigail Henderson

Katie Weatherford, previously a music major, found the best way to pursue her passion through film production. She has stepped into leadership positions and participated in many projects since switching her major to film production in fall 2021.

Her path began when she saw an email from the School of Humanities offering free student film passes, including access to film screenings and workshops at the Rome International Film Festival (RIFF).

Weatherford began ques-

tioning if she was on the right path with her music major around the time she took the opportunity to attend RIFF. She chose the music pathway as she felt film studies would not have offered the desired opportunities for her goals of working in children's television.

"Ideally, I want to create something for this generation of children, like Mr. Rogers, that offers strategies to help when kids feel overwhelmed, have big emotions or don't know how to deal with something," Weatherford said.

Weatherford observed that many children strug-

gled with anxiety during her time as a preschool teacher. She recognized that this generation's children would benefit from knowing how to process their emotions.

She felt inspired by the role models of her generation, Mr. Rogers and Jim Henson. She realized that television would be an excellent way to teach children about social and emotional health and well-being.

"I thought, since kids already watch a lot of television, we could use that for good," she said.

She discussed her long-term goals with an adviser and learned that there was not just an option to major in film studies, but specifically in film production.

Her adviser suggested and agreed with Weatherford that she change her major.

Film production majors are afforded the opportunity to take courses at the Georgia Film Academy (GFA), which is affiliated with the University System of Georgia.

"The campus that I go to is in Norcross," Weatherford said. "I love meeting people there. You're not so confined to just one group of students; you have more interactions and more contacts."

She said she enjoyed the experience offered at GFA, as she has been able to work on set construction through craft courses, such as one inspired by Bilbo Baggins' fireplace from "The Hobbit."

Weatherford has also become the president of the Highlands Film Society,



NIKKI WINSTON | PHOTOGRAPHER

Katie Weatherford promotes the Rome International Film Festival during a Highlands Film Society screening Oct. 2022.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY KATIE WEATHERFORD

Katie Weatherford has worn many hats since enrolling at GHC. She is the president of Highlands Film Society, vice president of membership of Phi Theta Kappa, has worked on HFS films and was associate producer for RIFF 2022.

where she enjoys working with the officers and planning events.

She has been directly involved with a few films produced by the Highlands Film Society. She was the associate producer of "The Suspects," which was featured in RIFF 2022 and was sold out on opening night.

She was also the script supervisor and assistant director for "The Backpack in the Alley," a short film produced by Floyd campus film major, Joseph McDaniel. He said she was "really good" and "Definitely helped things go smoothly."

Weatherford has also used her film production skills for other organizations like assisting with projects for Phi Theta Kappa as the vice president of membership.

Biochemistry major, April

Cole, said that she has worked with Weatherford as PTK officers for a year and that she has been a vital part of their biggest projects.

"I met Katie right before her ventures began to take root, and watching her growth in film has been a great joy," Cole said.

One of Weatherford's favorite quotes from Mr. Rogers is: "There are three ways to ultimate success: The first way is to be kind. The second way is to be kind. The third way is to be kind."

Her future endeavors are intended to shape this generation's children and bring hope for change in a world that often lacks kindness.

# First Amendment rights under attack

By Six Mile Post Staff

The Six Mile Post is sponsoring First Amendment Awareness Week, celebrated Jan. 22 to Jan. 28. As a student newspaper, exercising our First Amendment right is important. The Six Mile Post is nothing without freedom of speech.

The First Amendment guarantees freedom of expression and Congress is prohibited from making laws restricting it. This has not stopped states from finding ways to censor citizens under the guise of protecting students from harmful misinformation.

Many states started this attack by determining what students can and cannot be taught about slavery and the role racism has played in history. American history is rooted in slavery and racism, so this is censorship at its finest.

Many books are being pulled from public school libraries, notably books that promote anti-government control, pro-LGBTQIA+, women's awareness and anti-religion.

Florida has taken it as far as requiring training for public school librarians to limit "harmful materials" from entering classrooms. Many of these books are critical for student development and banning them gives students no choice but to seek this knowledge elsewhere.

There has been a rise of the "anti-woke" movement which is really a guise to silence ideals people in the movement do not like.

The banning of race-related content in Florida schools is an example of this. They believe that these books are brainwashing, but that's because it does not align with their viewpoints.

The recent First Amendment violations are censoring knowledge and expression for no good reason. Both sides of the aisle are more interested in getting their ideas across and using children as pawns to do so.

Citizens should not feel as though they can't express themselves and their ideals. America has always been prided as the "land of the free," but our freedom of speech is in more jeopardy now than ever.

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CHRIS DANIEL | ARTIST



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# Social media ban affects student productivity

By Tami-Ann Treasure

The USG system is banning the use of TikTok, Telegram and WeChat on the system-owned devices of its 26 universities and colleges. This ban comes after Gov. Brian Kemp banned TikTok on state-owned computers.

System-owned devices account for computers and phones used by schools for several reasons, such as schoolwork in libraries and for outreach and advertising.

“From a library perspective, we can’t use TikTok as an outreach tool anymore, but there are lots of other options like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter,” Julius Fleschner, dean of libraries and college testing, said.

Restricting the use of these social media platforms does not guarantee a boost in student productivity. Students who complete their work on school-owned devices may engage in conversations on apps like Telegram and WeChat as an escape while working.

The ban of these platforms will force students to

engage on their personal devices, but this may be a distraction for some.

The negative impact social media has on college students’ memory has been proven in a behavioral study titled, “Social media use while listening to new material negatively affects short-term memory in college students.”

The study found that electronic devices present in the classroom are distracting to all students, not just the ones using them. Conversely, it says that using electronics can enrich the learning environment depending on what the student is using the devices for.

This means students using social media and entertainment apps are bound to be distracted, but students using devices as learning aids will be academically enhanced.

According to NPR, the reason for this ban is because “the Chinese government could potentially use the popular video-sharing app to influence American users or control their devices.”

“The core concern is that these social media companies have ties to the Chinese government



BREE MESSENGER | ARTIST

and their respective apps could be used for surveillance, data harvesting and disinformation campaigns against US citizens,” Ian Fleming, chief information security officer, said.

GHC has no ban imposed on students accessing these platforms on their personal devices while connected to the school network. However, discretion should be used to protect your own privacy.

# Access codes not worth their price tag

By Tami-Ann Treasure



ABBY CHESNUT | ARTIST

Many college classes require students to purchase textbook and program access codes to do their coursework. Platforms such as Pearson, Cengage Unlimited and McGraw Hill Connect charge anywhere from \$100 to \$200 on average for access codes to engage in their content.

The average college student has five classes a semester and leaving the bookstore with a \$400 bill is brutal.

Many students have no issue purchasing expensive access codes when the class is a requirement versus dropping the class.

“I believe if the access code is needed to succeed in the case [of required classes], it’s worth the purchase for the class,” Octavia Pendleton, an online health science

major, said.

Other students do not hesitate to drop the class if the textbook access code is too expensive. I have dropped a business class for this reason.

“A few just aren’t purchasing them at all, and instead hoping they can find resources in the library or elsewhere that might fill that gap,” Susanna Smith, assistant professor of library and information, said.

There are ways to avoid the cost of expensive access codes, such as renting on Amazon or Chegg, and using financial aid to pay for cheaper methods. However, some students don’t have this luxury.

Some digital platforms are helpful for instructors and students by minimizing their work efforts.

“Grading homework from digital

platforms makes grading easier for the instructor. Most homework is graded by the digital platform, giving students immediate feedback,” Sandra Anderson, professor of mathematics, said.

This is a plus for students as they can instantly know their standing on a topic and reach out to their instructor, or study harder for better results. In addition, digital textbooks often come with perks like study guides and self-check quizzes which are beneficial to students.

These features are useful, but are they worth the cost of nearly \$200? I would rather use my student resources found in D2L. With classes being as overwhelming and difficult as they are, access code prices should be the least of our concerns.

# Stop generational blame for economic issues

By Anna Crusselle

Older generations do not realize the world is vastly different from the one they grew up in. Millennials and Gen Z are left with unsolved economic issues that are often to blame by Gen X.

Baby boomers and Gen X grew up in an era of American exceptionalism with the notion that the United States is the greatest country in the world and all you need to do is work hard and make the right decisions.

They complain that younger generations have this sense of entitlement, believe they don't have to earn their money and performance doesn't matter.

"When I was a kid, everyone said that we were just bums, lazy, would never work for the things we wanted and all we cared to do was watch MTV," History Professor, Shannon Bontrager, said. "I feel like every young generation has to combat this to a certain extent."

Older generations fail to realize that the choices they made led to the conditions we now live in.

According to CNBC, minimum wage workers would need to work over 100 hours a week to afford rent. The average one-bedroom apartment rent in Marietta is \$1,556 per month.

The world we currently live in is quite different and the fundamental idea of "rugged individualism" has vanished for Gen X. We live



BREE MESSENGER | ARTIST

Baby boomers and Gen X have been playing the blame game with millennials and Gen Z for years. Younger generations are not responsible for the drastic change in economic conditions, they are victims of it.

in a time that began with the New Deal program created by former U.S. President, Franklin D. Roosevelt. The government was going to spend large amounts of money on the military, environmental issues and raise taxes for programs like Social Security.

The healthcare field, IT sectors and financial service jobs are booming, while the textile and heavy industry jobs are fading out.

An overwhelming number of economic issues become prominent as generations evolve.

When Ronald Reagan came to power, he was trying to go back to the Republican view of low taxation

where corporations should be allowed to do whatever they want and to roll back on government regulation.

This is now the hard, grinding, desperately unhappy cycle we live under in the U.S.

Younger generations are being blamed for inflation, which is inaccurate. According to the Center for American Progress, the Inflation Reduction Act will crack down on the tax-dodging billionaires that caused inflation.

In a YouTube video titled "Debunking 4 Myths about Inflation," author Robert Reich said, "The truth about inflation is getting covered up by countless myths

spewed by corporations and their political lackeys."

The federal minimum wage has not changed since it was established in 2009, still sitting at \$7.25 an hour.

"Our country's productivity gains in recent decades should have translated into a minimum wage today of \$24 an hour — and by 2025, it should be almost \$30," Jon Schwarz, writer for The Intercept, said.

There are many Gen Z that still live with their parents because they can't afford housing and are having to work two to three jobs just to put food on the table.

Older generations received great amounts of help from the government, but want to

say "we pulled ourselves up by our bootstraps."

The cost of college was much lower in the 60s and 70s, and even those that served in the military had their entire education paid for on top of receiving stipends through access to the GI Bill.

"In order to go to law school, my uncle paid something like \$40 a tuition hour to attend college," Bontrager said.

The younger generations, even at cost-effective colleges, are paying hundreds of dollars in tuition fees.

You can't disagree that those older times did not work, because they did back then.

However, younger generations are not tied to outdated ideas and have recognized that old solutions aren't working anymore. The rest of the world has moved on from the psychological impact of the Cold War.

"As a teacher, I see a lot of really bright, young students who look at the older generation with a lot of skepticism. This idea that they've screwed up, their time is done... now give us a shot," History Professor, Steve Blakenship, said.

There are problems with a society that places so much emphasis on the individual while forgetting about the larger community. Capitalism is not concerned with your happiness, but rather, profit.



## Review: 'Puss in Boots: The Last Wish' nails anxiety representation

By Ashley Hall

### -Spoiler warning-

After being announced in June 2014, "Puss in Boots: The Last Wish" finally made it to theaters on Dec. 21, 2022, after being delayed by the restructuring of DreamWorks Animation.

It was a blessing in disguise, as the delay allowed the film more time to be perfected in an ever-evolving animation industry that embraces nontraditional styles, realistic characters and stories with deeper and darker themes.

Antonio Banderas and Selma Hayek return to the land of twisted fairy tales, reprising their roles of Puss in Boots and Kitty Softpaws, respectively. Puss embarks on a quest to find a wishing star after he loses eight of his nine lives so he can continue to fearlessly live as "the legend" and get the wolf character named Death off his tail.

Perro, a therapy dog in training, joins Puss, and later Kitty, in the quest for the wishing star. Once they steal the map from Jack Horner, a race for the star begins including Goldilocks and the three bears.

The art style is one of my favorite things about the movie. It is reminiscent of "Arcane" and "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse," titles that I revere as masterpieces. The vibrant colors are beautiful and make every scene pop. Animation effects such as speed lines and exaggerated expressions



ABBY CHESNUT | ARTIST

In "Puss in Boots: The Last Wish," Death follows Puss, causing him severe anxiety. Puss has to learn to accept death as an inevitability so he can live a full life.

imitate comic book graffiti.

Director Joe Crawford describes the art style as "fairy tale painting," according to Yahoo Entertainment. Viewers can notice brush strokes by looking closely at the surfaces of Puss' hat, Jack Horner's coat and even the dirt clouds in the Del Mar giant fight.

Ever since I left the theater, my thoughts have been mostly occupied by the brilliant portrayals of self-reflection, anxiety and thanatophobia—the fear of death.

"Puss in Boots: The Last Wish" does not hold back on mature themes. Puss' quest for the wishing star is born out of fear of dying, something he had never experienced before Death was able to draw blood during the bar fight. Puss boasted about

never being touched by a blade in the opening scene, so the sight of his own blood made him realize "I could die here."

This experience shakes him so deeply that he retires from being "the legend" to avoid any adventures that could mean his end. He also develops debilitating anxiety, Death's ominous whistle being his trigger as he stalks Puss at random points in the film. The tune sounds like "Ring Around the Rosie," a nursery rhyme that references the Black Plague.

The scene of Puss having an anxiety attack in the woods is being praised by those with anxiety disorder and mental-health advocates alike. The portrayal from Puss' point of view is accurate, especially when Perro applies deep pressure

therapy to ground him and he begins to recover.

A character analysis YouTuber, skulltrot, said that the movie took her back a little, in a good way, for how well it portrayed anxiety. She later added that "The way the movie has him manage his anxiety is very grounded in reality."

"It's nothing showstopping, it just is. And I think the decision to allow his panic attack to just be what it was ultimately served to make this scene come across as much more raw and gut-wrenching than if it were otherwise," skulltrot said. "It was very real and it felt very visceral to me as someone who's dealt with panic attacks before."

Banderas said that he relates to Puss' struggle to come to terms with mor-

talities in an interview with Entertainment Weekly. He said that he suffered a heart attack on Jan. 25, 2017, and has come out of the ordeal with a positive outlook, as it forced him to reevaluate what was important in his life. This is similar to Puss' journey through the movie because he is forced to face his mortality and reevaluate his priorities.

"Puss has always seen himself as bigger than he is, but in this movie, we see him very vulnerable," he said. "It tells the message that we have permission to actually be afraid and just to feel, and sometimes we don't [have] all the power that we thought that we had, and that is okay. Puss is for all ages and I'm excited for kids to see that heroes can also be in trouble and need help."

The portrayals of grappling with one's mortality and anxieties are fantastic, especially for a children's movie. Older generations grew up learning that having a mental condition is taboo, but media like "Puss in Boots: The Last Wish" is normalizing that it's ok to not be ok and to not feel shameful for reaching out for help.

Puss comes to terms with his mortality in the end. He accepts that Death will come for him another day, appreciating his life for what it is and sharing it with the people he cares about. He doesn't feel the pressure to live up to "the legend," he can just be Puss.

# Fans question voice casting in new 'Super Mario Bros. Movie'

By Anna Crusselle

Illumination and Nintendo have partnered together on a new "Super Mario Bros. Movie" coming April 7, starring Anya Taylor-Joy as Princess Peach, Chris Pratt as Mario and Jack Black as Bowser. The movie also stars Charlie Day as Luigi, Seth Rogan as Donkey Kong and Keegan-Michael Key as Toad.

Fans can witness the gang come together in an all-new journey between old enemies into the world of "Super Mario" to put an end to Bowser.

Fans have seen the Mario game series played out in different ways over the years since 1985, but with the new animated movie, there has been much speculation about Pratt being cast as the voice actor for Mario.

Illumination released the first trailer that opens with Bowser ready to attack, as King Penguin and his army try to stop him. Their efforts are unsuccessful, and the castle gets torched with fire.

"We are introduced to Mario as he pops out of a warp pipe into a mush-

room-filled fantasy land, but he lands unceremoniously alone in the field," Amanda Silberling, a writer for TechCrunch, said.

There was not a lot of Mario to be heard in this sneak peek. According to an article by Variety, this leaves people wondering if it was done because they did not want to face backlash about casting Pratt as the voice actor.

Emily Harris, Film Society Club faculty adviser, said she was surprised when she found out that the directors of the "Super Mario Bros. Movie" are the same ones responsible for "Teen Titans GO!," Aaron Horvath and Michael Jelenic.

"I was surprised because the Directors of 'Teen Titans GO!' did such a good job of casting their voice actors, so why wouldn't they want to represent Mario in the way that he should be?" Harris said. "You can't have a 'Super Mario Bros. Movie' without the correct casting, at least for Mario and Luigi."

Does Pratt take away from the authenticity of Mario's true character regarding his well-known Italian accent?

In October 2022, there

was a poll by Nintendo Life titled, "So, What's Your Verdict on the Mario Movie Trailer?." Out of 5,027 votes and four choices, 49% voted "Let's-a go! I'm sold!" and 8% voted "Mari-oh no, burn it with fire!"

Floyd campus film production major, Collin Talent, is skeptical of the decision to cast Pratt.

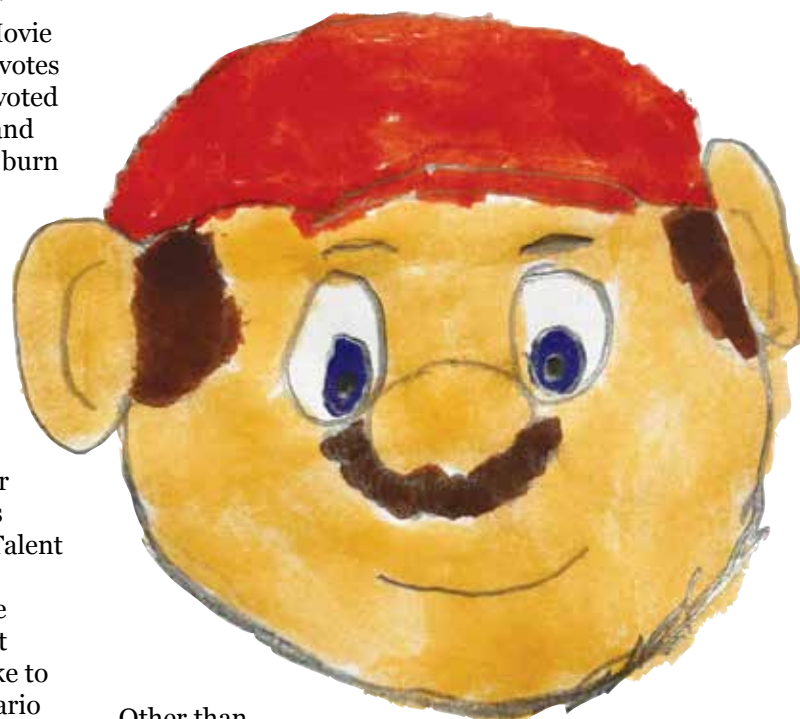
"The obvious elephant in the room is that Chris Pratt's position as a voice actor in this particular role is questionable at best," Talent said.

"The icing on the cake is that Charles Martinet stated how he would like to be the voice actor of Mario when the role was first announced, but was told no."

Charles Martinet is an American actor and voice actor who is known for his portrayal of both Mario and Luigi in the "Super Mario" video game series since 1992.

"Was the choice of hiring Pratt clearly just for star-value reasons? Fans are here to see Mario, not the actor," Talent said.

PATRICK DANIEL | ARTIST



Other than speculation about the voice casting, Illumination is dedicated to the source material and uses many references to make a cohesive story.

The company revealed another trailer one month later, giving fans a look at Princess Peach and Donkey Kong.

Fans see several aspects of the game series come to

their screen once more in a scene where Mario trains on an obstacle course, dodging blocks and fake fire wheels.

The trailer has more references like Rainbow Road from Mario Kart, fire flowers, Shy Guys and Cheep Cheeps.

The movie is set to premiere in theaters April 7.

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# Men and Women's basketball teams split in doubleheader on Feb. 8



BRANDON DYER | PHOTOGRAPHER

**Top:** Lady Chargers forward, JeNee Edwards, gets set for an inbound on defense in the team's game against South Georgia Technical College on Feb. 8. **Middle:** Lady Chargers head coach, Brandon Harrell, gives his team a speech during a timeout as his team takes on the South Georgia Tech Lady Jets on Feb. 8. **Bottom:** After a timeout, the Lady Chargers team takes the court again to chip into South Georgia Technical College's lead.

Both GHC basketball teams displayed their talents on Feb. 8, as the women's team took on the top-ranked team in the NJCAA, South Georgia Technical College.

The Lady Chargers were able to keep the score close early, even going into the second quarter tied 9-9. However, they ultimately fell to the Lady Jets by a score of 62-49.

Cheyenne Holloman led the Lady Chargers with 16 points, while Jamariah Turner scored 12. The Chargers would then take the court in a battle with the Central Georgia Technical College Titans. It was a tale of two halves for the Chargers, as they took a commanding 47-31 lead into halftime with no signs of slowing down.

However, the Titans would outscore them 43-30 in the second half, resulting in a chance for the Titans to tie the game up at the buzzer, trailing 77-74. The three-point attempt didn't fall, and the Chargers remained undefeated against GCAA opponents this season. PJ Carter led the Chargers in scoring with 16 points while Julian Dozier finished with 13. The Chargers next home game will be Wednesday night at 6 p.m. against South Georgia State College.

The Lady Chargers will be in action again on Saturday at 2 p.m. against Central Georgia Technical College in their final home.



BRANDON DYER | PHOTOGRAPHER

**Top:** Julian Dozier, a guard for the Chargers, drives to the basket for a shot attempt against Central Georgia Technical College on Feb. 8. **Middle:** Chargers head coach, JJ Merritt, looks on as his team builds a lead in the second quarter against Central Georgia Technical College on Feb. 8. **Bottom:** Chargers guard Akili Evans attempts to brush off a defender to get to the basket for a shot against Central Georgia Technical College on Feb. 8.



# Jordan Thornton named new softball head coach

By Brandon Dyer

The Lady Chargers softball team took the field with a new coach this season: Jordan Fortel Thornton. She has been a part of the Lady Chargers softball program since the 2020 season, coming on as an assistant coach.

The announcement came after the Lady Chargers finished the 2021-2022 season 16-36. However, there is more to the softball program than just its win/loss record.

"I don't want to just create a competitive culture, but one that also cares about the individual itself. I think that's something that gets lost in college athletics," Thornton said.

Two Lady Chargers players said that they welcomed Thornton to the new position with open arms.

Avrey Fisher is a freshman who was recruited by Thornton in the offseason.

"I really liked coach J when I met her. She was very personable," Fisher said. "She is very understandable to what the softball life is all about from an athlete's perspective."

Ansley Todd is in her fourth season with the Lady Chargers, and pointed out some similarities between former head coach Savannah Sloan and Thornton.

"They're similar but in different ways. Sloan was more on the lines of saying her peace and getting it over with, while coach J explains it more," Todd said.

Thornton's softball expertise goes further back than



BRANDON DYER | PHOTOGRAPHER

**Left:** Lady Chargers softball head coach Jordan Thornton prepares her team for their upcoming match up against Cleveland State Community College on Feb. 11. **Right:** Lady Chargers softball coach Jordan Thornton helps her pitchers get ready for practice with the batters.

her time with the Lady Chargers, as she was a standout pitcher, firstbaseman and outfielder at Greenville High School in Greeneville, Tennessee. Thornton left the Green Devils with a high school career record of 33-6 and posting a 0.86 ERA.

Her senior year was highlighted by a Class AA State Championship.

Thornton decided to take her softball talents to the next level at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Her freshman year with the Mocs would be capitalized by being named to the Southern Conference All-Conference team. The team would go 31-29 that season.

She would transfer to

Walters State Community College her sophomore year. Although Thornton only played one season with the Senators, it was full of accolades. She was named the 2017 Tennessee Community College Athletic Association (TCCAA) Player of the Year and TCCAA Pitcher of the Year. The Senators would be

**"She is very understandable to what the softball life is all about from an athlete's perspective" - Avrey Fisher**

crowned TCCAA Conference Champions that season.

Thornton would make her third and last college transfer after her sophomore year, this time to Lipscomb University. She would finish out her college career with the Bisons, although her junior and senior seasons were plenty different from each other.

She would start seven games her junior year, building up a 4-3 record, and finish with a 1.62 ERA, the second-best on the team. Thornton would move from pitching to playing first baseman for the Bisons heading into her senior year.

She was able to land a spot in the Lady Chargers coaching staff as an assistant

coach with Sloan after her college career.

Thornton and Sloan compiled a 39-57 record since Thornton arrived at GHC. She would learn a lot from her first two seasons under Sloan.

Thornton now has a full offseason under her belt, saying that Sloan played an integral part in helping her set the current team up for success.

"We had very similar ideals, so it was a smooth transition," Thornton said.

It's a new beginning for the Lady Chargers softball program, and it's one that Thornton is proud to be a part of.