

Campus community celebrates virtual Black History Month

JADA HOFFMAN
ASSISTANT NEWS
EDITOR

Since 1970, Black History Month has been celebrated every February in America. Though this is a tradition that should continue, many want to encourage the celebration every month.

The Office of Multicultural Student Services (OMSS) serves to celebrate specific marginalized groups each month. For February, OMSS focuses on celebrating and educating the community about Black culture.

Director of OMSS and Associate Provost for Student Engagement, Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Kristi Kelly explained, "We celebrate Black culture everyday, but we have more events centered around Black History in February... If COVID wasn't a thing we would've had four to five in person events. However, due to regulations and protocols we have been hosting predominantly virtual events."

On Feb. 18, OMSS orchestrated a 'Let's talk about anti-racism' event led by well-known civil rights activist, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II. More than 300 people registered for this event, including over 80 Lewis staff,



ANTHONY BEIMAL / GRAPHIC DESIGNER

students and faculty. The remainder of registered attendees are from around the country.

Kelly has also partnered with University Ministry to have a prayer service of reflection on Feb. 25.

Black Student Union (BSU) is one of the many organizations that fall under the department of OMSS. They have been planning several events in an

attempt to continue their tradition of celebrating Black History Month.

Senior aviation flight management and president of BSU Nia Mitchell explained, "COVID has made our celebrations very different compared to years prior. We usually celebrate our founder's day, which was Feb. 1, with a party of sorts, but due to COVID we could not do it."

Mitchell hasn't let COVID completely ruin their traditions as they still partnered with Sodexo to host their annual Black History Month Luncheon.

"This year we decided to ask students what they wanted to see in our luncheon and were surprised that there were several requests for African dishes," said Mitchell. "We gave Sodexo a list of requests which

included: Jollof Rice, cabbage, jerk chicken, sweet potato casseroles, banana pudding and strawberry lemonade."

The turnout was great and people enjoyed the change in dishes from the Laverne and Brown Dining Hall.

BSU has also partnered with Students for Progressive Change to host an event in which they educate people on famous black inventors on Feb. 26.

"I am very excited for this event simply because there's a lot I didn't know that I want to teach more people about," said Mitchell. "I didn't know that a Black person [Garret Morgan] created the stop light. This is something people used around the world and it's great to know a Black person was able to impact so many people. However, I wish more people knew which is why I think this event is important."

Similar to Kelly's words, Mitchell wants everyone to know that Black History should not be celebrated and taught only in February.

"One month isn't enough," explained Mitchell. "It's important to celebrate our history all the time, and that's what BSU strives to do."

COVID-19 vaccines bring hope for the future

STEPHANIE LINGENFELTER
NEWS EDITOR

COVID-19 vaccines are rolling out in Illinois and across the U.S., bringing hope that the world can soon return to normal. President Joe Biden's three-step COVID response plan included the purchase of 200 million additional doses of vaccines from Moderna and Pfizer. This deal ensures that there will be enough vaccines to vaccinate every American by the end of the summer.

In Illinois, Phase 1B began on Jan. 25, allowing residents over 65 and frontline essential workers to receive their vaccinations. There is currently no plan on when exactly college students can be vaccinated. However, Associate Nursing Professor Dr. Nanci Reiland believes that based on current projections,

college students not included in Phase 1A or 1B will be eligible around May or June.

Based on this prediction, Reiland believes life will shift to a new normal in the fall. Students can also expect to be back in person for classes.

"I think we're going to live in a new normal that may not be exactly what we're used to," said Reiland. "Maybe masking being required or some people feeling more comfortable continuing to mask in certain environments or because of some history they may have. We've seen it in Asia, masking on public transit, they have been doing that for years and years. Hopefully, we won't have any more restrictions, but there may continue to be some cautions."

The vaccines utilize messenger RNA and are 95% effective. Scientists are still unsure of how long immunity lasts,

as they are still gathering data from those vaccinated in January. Both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been proven safe with only moderate side effects.

"Generally, people with the first dose get a normal soreness in their arm," said Reiland. "Some people get the feeling that they're coming down with something the next day. That is actually a good thing, it's your body's immune system responding. More so, people after the second vaccine might feel a little bit more of that response, so low-grade fever, achiness, chills, headache, and that usually occurs 12 to 18 hours after the dose. It's all normal and expected and it is a good sign."

COVID-19 has caused a shortage of healthcare workers, so Lewis nursing students are stepping up and helping out on the frontlines by volunteering their time to participate in



photo courtesy of: DR. NANCI REILAND

Nursing students helped give out vaccines at the Flight Deck.

the vaccine rollout. On Feb. 8, nursing students helped at Will County Community Health Center in Joliet. On Feb. 13, Jewel-Osco hosted a vaccination event in the St. Charles Borromeo Center where around 1,000

individuals were vaccinated.

As the pressure to vaccinate the public continues, Lewis nursing students, faculty and other healthcare workers bring hope for the future.

Environmental injustice plagues Chicago's Southeast side

STEPHANIE LINGENFELTER
NEWS EDITOR

Environmental injustice is a local, regional and global social justice issue plaguing many communities of color in the Chicagoland area and across the globe.

Right now, a coalition of residents in a mostly Latino Chicago neighborhood, South Deering, are pushing back against a proposed scrap metal plant along the Calumet. The state gave Southside Recycling a permit to build in June, but now a federal environmental injustice investigation is underway.

According to Chair of the Biology Department, Dr. Jerry Kavouras, "Environmental injustice occurs in lower socioeconomic communities that are exposed to increased levels of pollution, which leads to greater negative impacts on human

health and the environment in those communities."

In Southeast Chicago, industrial sites have shaped the banks of the Calumet River, causing high levels of air pollution. The cement and trucking companies provided jobs to the area, but not without consequence. Air pollution from the sites can cause cancer, birth defects, respiratory illness, heart disease and more. These areas also tend to have more environmental degradation.

Companies look to build industrial sites and factories in poorer areas since they tend to have less political power and need the jobs. People in those communities are less likely to protest and have their voices heard against a big corporation, which makes the residents of the South Deering neighborhood fight against the norm.

South Deering is already plagued with disproportion-

ate health problems associated with high air pollution levels and last summer, the area experienced its longest streak of high-pollution days in over a decade.

Environmental racism goes back many years with much of Chicago's zoning for industrial corridors and factories overlapping closely with areas that were redlined, a discriminatory practice from the 1930s that kept people of color from buying homes in certain areas.

A 2018 study done by the Environmental Protection Agency found communities living below the poverty line had a 35% higher burden from particulate matter emissions and non-whites have a 28% higher health burden. Black communities had a 54% higher burden. This is due to historical racism that has left them with, "a lack of political power to advocate for what is best for their community and



ANTHONY BEIMAL / GRAPHIC DESIGNER

unequal enforcement of regulations by local or federal agencies," said Kavouras.

In South Deering, 15% of adult residents have asthma, compared to 3% in Chicago's wealthier Northside. A 2020 Chicago Public Health report found the city's communities of color experience up to 10 times higher rates of poverty, cardiovascular disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

The air quality on the Southeast side was also reported to be amongst the worst in the city. There are many grassroots organizations and nonprofits working to combat environmental injustice, but is a long battle stemmed from systemic racism. South Deering hopes to see a healthier future for their community, but many residents don't expect much to change, at least soon.

Higher Ed Highlights

B.1.1.7 strain reported at U.S. universities

EMILY KRIVOGRAD
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

As the 2021 spring semester and COVID-19 precautions continue, six universities across the nation have reported cases of the new coronavirus variant B.1.1.7 on their campuses. First discovered in Britain, the B.1.1.7 variant has been reported at Tulane University, the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Miami, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Washington and the University of Michigan.

According to the CDC, the variant may be associated with increased risk of death compared with other observed variants of SARS-CoV-2, but more studies are needed to confirm this finding.

In an effort to combat a rise in cases, the University of Michigan announced a stay-at-home order. Not a full quarantine, students were allowed to leave for necessities including food, exercise, work and in-person classes. The quarantine was reevaluated Feb. 7, during which

time university officials felt the objective had been completed and restrictions were lifted.

"COVID-19 cases associated with U-M represent about half of the total cases in Washtenaw County, and student cases are rising," said University of Michigan President Mark Schlissel in an email addressed to the students sent on Feb. 12. "The change in the state of Michigan's distribution strategy and the nationwide shortage of available vaccines prevented Michigan Medicine from scheduling ad-

ditional first-dose vaccination appointments this week for employees and patients."

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) altered their original vaccine distribution plan to take a population-based approach at the end of January. As more healthcare workers and long-term care patients and staff received their vaccinations, the MDHHS updated their plan to prioritize getting vaccinations to hospitals based on the percent of the inpatient population they serve in the state.

The University of Miami also entered a stay-at-home order, canceling large gatherings and any in-person meetings. After being reevaluated Feb. 16, new restrictions permit students to resume in-person meetings with social distancing and completion of a campus-wide daily symptom checker. Campus dining will continue to be solely takeout until at least March 1.

No plans to enact precautionary restrictions at other universities where the new strain was detected have been announced.

Philadelphia universities' merger agreement underway

As of Feb. 10, the merging of Saint Joseph's University and the University of the Sciences was officially announced. Located in Philadelphia, the combining of the two private institutions opens the door to a conversation about the fast-changing higher education market.

The University of Sciences, the self-named first college of pharmacy in North America, has been coping with a sinking market position for several years. Financial challenges have led the university to seek

out institutional partnerships and lower the cost of undergraduate tuition and fees. Despite the decrease in the cost of attendance for students pursuing a bachelor's, the University of Science has seen undergraduate admission fall and acceptance rates rise since the 2018-19 academic year.

The proposed deal between the University of Sciences, which has an enrollment of 2,400, and Saint Joseph's, which has 6,800 students, would allow the latter to keep its name. The deal also outlines

that Saint Joseph's faculty and staff would operate both institution's campuses, which are located five miles apart.

However, members of the administration at both universities have signed a nonbinding letter of intent, but they still aim to develop further details and can abandon the original deal if negotiations fall through. For example, concerns about Saint Joseph's relationship with the Roman Catholic Church and anti-abortion views' possible impact on the University of Science's health-

care programs will most likely be addressed in the deal.

"It has been from the student perspective, for me and for many other faculty who are not Catholic and not Christian," said Assistant Professor of Physical Therapy Eric Pelletier at the University of Sciences in an interview with Inside Higher Ed. "I think there will be an open dialogue about that...If such a merger happens, it will be with an understanding that we need academic freedom and freedom for research."

The merging of the two Philadelphia universities is hardly the first time a merger and acquisition plan has been enacted for financial gains. In March 2018, Purdue University acquired Kaplan University and called the new organization Purdue University Global. The University of Arizona has also participated in merger and acquisition agreements, acquiring Ashford University for its own University of Arizona Global Campus last December.

Stop shaming people for going out responsibly

DEREK SWANSON
Managing Editor

Since Feb. 4, every region in Illinois has maintained the requirements needed to operate at Phase 4 mitigations. That means bars and restaurants are open for indoor dining at reduced capacity, and other activities that had been suspended, like indoor fitness classes, are back in full force.

Even at such establishments, many precautions still remain in place. At restaurants, tables must continue to be spaced six feet apart, masks are required unless eating and drinking, patrons are expected to be seated the majority of the time and no parties of more than 10 people are allowed.

Many restaurants have added additional mitigation efforts, such as temperature checks for all parties before seating and putting sneeze guards between booths. Others have added costly outdoor dining areas for when the weather returns to more livable conditions.

Yet there is still a stigma in the minds of many that going out to eat or drink means throwing all caution to the wind. While many people remain uncomfortable with going out, and that is okay, it does not mean that people who do go out should be seen



Photo by Anthony

as selfish, or even worse, as COVID-deniers.

Let's start with the most obvious fact: restaurants and bars are allowed to be open under Governor JB Pritzker's state reopening guidelines. These guidelines were put into place as a response to rising case numbers and test positivity rates, and the strict mitigations that were put in place to prevent holiday surges are no longer in effect.

While it might be hard to totally trust the mitigation efforts, there are a few other factors to keep in mind before shaming someone for grabbing a beer. As of Feb. 14, Illinois has administered a total of 1,783,345 vaccine doses, with an average of nearly 63,000 shots a day, according to data from the Chicago Tribune. Anybody working in healthcare has been eligible for the vaccine for some time now, which is well earned after the sacrifices many of them have made.

It should come as no surprise then that healthcare workers and others who have been vaccinated might want to go out for food and drinks. With a 95% vaccine effectiveness paired with mask wearing and social distancing, the chances of them spreading COVID-19 are incredibly slim. So, what harm could a night

of 1,783,345 vaccine doses, with an average of nearly 63,000 shots a day, according to data from the Chicago Tribune. Anybody working in healthcare has been eligible for the vaccine for some time now, which is well earned after the sacrifices many of them have made.

Required Internship for graduation should be removed amid pandemic

DEREK SWANSON
Managing Editor

It's hard to argue against the effectiveness of an internship preparing students for the workforce. Internships have acted as the first step into the professional world and offer immersive training, class credit or pay and have been readily available to worthy students in the past.

Fast forward to 2021 however, and internship opportunities have dwindled in many fields, leaving students scrambling to find an available spot before their graduation. A survey from the national association of colleges and employers (NACE) released in May found that 22% of businesses have revoked internship opportunities as a result of COVID-19. One thing that has not changed, however, is that many programs at Lewis hold an internship requirement in order to earn your degree.

Pre-COVID, this was completely sensible, as internships have traditionally functioned as a way for students to "feel out" their field before completely committing to one career. In the time of the pandemic however, many in-

ternships that remain in place have become virtual if they are continuing on as a result of social distancing requirements.

thus, students are left with only an idea of what the work they will do after graduation will look like, which negates some of the point of interning. It is true that some fields like business or marketing might have made nearly seamless switches to virtual, though STEM programs have found it much harder to translate research programs into video conferences.

Additionally, social distancing means that less people can congregate in the workplace at once, meaning that the hybrid structure that Lewis uses in class is not always possible for internships.

Furthermore, the digital divide has grown ever deeper during COVID-19. Some internship candidates who would have excelled in the workplace are now at home, which means dealing with unreliable internet, noisy or crowded conditions at home, along with further obstacles that do not exist at the office. The stressors keep adding up for students who have already witnessed some of the most

significant changes to higher education in history with the switch to hybrid learning. Yet students in many programs are still required to find internships before they graduate if they ever want that diploma in hand.

To counter the unfortunate effect that COVID-19 has had on the academic and working world, Lewis should remove the internship requirement. That's not to say that internships shouldn't be recommended, or that students shouldn't get credit for them, it just means that a student shouldn't be held back because they are one requirement short.

This move would likely only need to be temporary. Once the world is vaccinated and COVID-19 is a distant memory, internships will be allowed to work as usual once again. However, there is no set timeline as to when that day will come, and as we approach nearly a year of social distancing, students on the cusp of graduation should be given some wiggle room in filling that requirement.

out for them possibly bring?

Senior nursing major Kelly Calcagno has received both doses of the Moderna vaccine. She explained that, "I am definitely more relaxed about going out, however I'm still wearing my mask everywhere, not taking it off and washing my hands all the time. I still try to act as though I'm not vaccinated." Additionally, Calcagno added that everyone should make their best effort to get the vaccine.

Until herd immunity is achieved through mass vaccination, social distancing will

still remain in place, but that doesn't mean that there hasn't been progress made in returning to pre-COVID life. Businesses like bars and restaurants have been hit harder by the pandemic than just about any others, yet they have still made many efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19 in their establishments.

While going out is somewhat of a risk, it is a calculated risk, and shaming people for going out, especially vaccinated healthcare workers, is not going to end this pandemic any faster.

The Column

Increase communication when events happen on campus

EMILY KRIVOGRAD
Editor-in-Chief

As we've continued to plow our way through this semester, I've seen more in-person events on campus. A whisper of normal life is finally coming back on campus, as Valentine's Day week featured a myriad of holiday-themed activities. Yet it seemed almost no one knew that they were happening.

To celebrate the holiday, Student Activities ran an event where students could send their Valentine or "crush" a can of Crush soda. The C-store pulled through with an assortment of special treats, selling indulgent cheesecake slices from The Cheesecake Factory and the biggest chocolate-covered strawberries I've ever seen. Mother Theresa Hall even held a speed dating event, which I'd argue had the potential to be the most exciting thing these halls have seen since move-in day.

In a way, the small activities surrounding Lewis' Valentine's Day celebration are insignificant in hindsight, but they also spoke volumes about the current tone on campus.

Last semester, many of us weren't allowed the luxury of participating in Christmas-themed events due to the in-person semester ending at Thanksgiving break, as well as the rise in COVID-19 cases.

With nursing students and education majors just starting to get their first and second doses of the vaccine, it's no wonder that even some different food at the C-store brought joy to shoppers; this was the first event we've actually seen decorations and events displayed since COVID-19 wrecked our usual mood toward the holidays.

Clubs and other organizations will likely want to come out of their online-only orientation and hold socially distanced activities where students can actually meet people and form connections without having to worry about

their internet connection.

However, as things start to get back to normal, I question: while everyone was excited over the Valentine's Day food and activities, why was it such a surprise to us? I doubt that this pleasant surprise was only due to the fact that we're so used to an online "events are canceled" world that we've come to live in.

It's no secret that communication between faculty and students has never been impeccable, but now, more than ever, that needs to change.

As events get up and running again, students need to have a way to actually communicate that their club is hosting an activity in-person, whether it's a card making event or something just as menial as delivering Crush to one's crush. The hybrid and online method has been the only safe way to keep learning college material for most of us, but as the world starts looking a bit safer, we have to know how to come out of Zoom University to actually participate in campus life.

Organizations and faculty members of Lewis should extensively promote in-person events so that they can reach the level of success they once were at before COVID-19. Especially for freshmen who didn't even experience the joys of an in-person SOAR, getting events and activities back on campus and celebrating little holidays here and there is a big deal.

Utilizing social media, printing out multiple large flyers and posting on the LewisU App need to be encouraged so that we can finally have the experience we want. With proper communication, events on campus have the potential to be more successful than they ever were. People just need to know about them.

'Framing Britney Spears' gives new perspective on stardom

LAUREN HARRIS
Tempo Editor

To many, Britney Spears has always been just another celebrity, a pop star with the perfect life and pristine image to match. But in recent years, waves of controversy have washed over the famed singer and many of her fans are speculating as to why. With the start of the 'Free Britney' movement, The New York Times released a documentary named "Framing Britney Spears" explaining it all on Feb. 5.

The documentary takes a deeper look at Spears' rise to fame and superstardom, her tragic downfall and her conservatorship. The documentary begins on a cheerful note, depicting the talented young girl trying to pursue her dreams of becoming a performer, evoking a sense of nostalgia. The 90s indeed were a wonderful time for Spears. She had just been signed to her first record label, had a hit song and her popularity



FX STUDIOS/IMDB

"Framing Britney Spears" re-examines Spear's career and can be streamed on Hulu.

had suddenly skyrocketed. But even at just 17 years old, Spears was already being exposed to a world of trouble.

The documentary showcases how much the media has villainized her over the years. Interviewers were inappropriate towards her and would purposefully try to provoke her, the paparazzi were relentless in their chase for a good photo and the world began to think of her as a laughingstock.

The film touches on the very sensitive topic of Spears' battle with the courts and her father for the right to autonomy. Her career and finances are currently out of her control due to speculation that she can not care for herself, but many lawyers have disagreed with this, even going on to say that she is a "highly functioning individual."

As we walk through her life, audiences can clearly see that her passion and joy in life is performing, but somewhere down the line her spark was lost. The televised deterioration of Britney's mental health, along with no one, including her own family, showing concern causes the severity of the situation to become crystal clear. The hour is painful and upsetting to watch; it is disturbing to know how not too long ago mental illness was viewed as a negative attribute worth being shamed for.

The documentary vindicates her and proves to people that there's more to her story. The film holds the real villains accountable and rewrites a history that was flawed from the very beginning. The documentary features key interviews from the friends, family and professionals surrounding the celebrity. Not only is this well-researched, but it is greatly organized, presenting the important moments in order to give audiences a better way at understanding everything.

The documentary mostly ends up being a cautionary tale and somehow makes it seem as though we are all at fault. Videos of fans apologizing to Britney have now gone viral and been used as a way to bring awareness to more than Britney Spears, but the flaws of the conservatorship as a whole.

The protest calls for society's infantilization of Britney Spears to be put to a halt and for the government to be more proactive in preventing conservatorship abuse across the board. There is room for hope and the strong ending to the documentary suggests that there will be action for change.

'Malcolm and Marie' brings the chaos

LAUREN HARRIS
Tempo Editor

On Feb. 5, Netflix released their newest addition to the platform, "Malcolm and Marie," which follows a filmmaker and his girlfriend as they come to terms with reconciling their love while fighting their own demons. In an ironic twist, the film was released just before Valentine's Day though it was far from being the romantic film audiences initially thought it to be.

"Malcolm and Marie" takes on a minimalist approach, with the set being reminiscent of the cool style of the 60s and the image being in black and white. However, if you are worrying about it being too simple, the film makes up for it with their two sensational stars, Zendaya and John David Washington.

It was exciting to see Zendaya and director Sam Levinson working together on this project, as their collaborations are always entertain-



NETFLIX/IMDB

John David Washington and Zendaya as Malcolm and Marie

ing to watch. But it was even more exciting to see John David Washington expand on his acting career outside of his famous father, Denzel Washington.

The first scene launches with Malcolm, who is excited about his movie premiere going so well. Things quickly turn sour when Marie becomes upset that Malcolm forgot to thank her during his ac-

ceptance speech and begins to wonder if she's appreciated at all in their relationship. Malcolm of course denies this, but in a way that is dismissive and rude, so they begin to argue. The couple rustles back and forth and scream at each other with passionate hate. They don't seem to be good for each other and their pent-up anger is not only sad but scary to watch.

What the film got perfectly was the first thirty minutes; it was ominous and there was still room for mystery in the plot. But unfortunately, from there the plot starts to go downhill. The couple's arguments become repetitive, which I can admit is a realistic representation of a turbulent relationship but rings closer to lazy script writing.

Malcolm (Washington) turns his attention to the movie critics and begins to insult them all for giving him a bad review. He is a textbook narcissist; instead of accepting his movie is bad, he chalks his review up to no one understanding his deep artform or magnificent talent. Consequently, the movie starts to feel disingenuous, trying too hard to be noticed as a cult classic.

It seems like Levinson is speaking through the character more than actually letting Washington make the role his own. Instead, Levinson's opinions are too loud and cause the illusion of the movie to be lost.

Meanwhile, Marie (Zendaya) listens mindlessly, trying to stay out of the fire.

Zendaya's delivery of each line is wonderful as she communicates with more than words. Her facial expressions, her intonation and her silence are all enough to feel her pain. In fact, Zendaya's portrayal was so phenomenal that she was recently nominated for a Golden Globe.

The movie feels more like a play than a film and would have been easier to sit through had that been the case. This film had potential, but its pretentious nature ends up doing more harm than good. But don't get me wrong, the cinematography is beautiful and the acting is superb, but overall, the film falls short.

Campus Life

Fall Cabaret Concert faces challenges amid pandemic

KATELYN LEANO
Campus Life Editor

Due to severe weather conditions, the Fall Cabaret Concert, which features performances from the vocal jazz ensemble and Harmonic Uprising was postponed to Feb. 22. Originally scheduled for Feb. 4, the concert will take place as a livestream which will be broadcasted from the St. Charles Borromeo Convocation Hall from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

"The first time we postponed this concert, it was supposed to be in November and I actually got quarantined because I have been in contact with somebody who ended up testing positive [for COVID], and so I had to wait for my negative [test] result," said conductor and pianist for choral and vocal ensemble Jeremy Landig.

The new date of the concert was decided by everyone in the vocal and choral ensemble trying to fit a new concert date into their busy schedules, and they had to make sure that the new date worked for everybody's schedule.

"We just put everybody in



Luis Chavez / Photographer

Jeremy Landig, along with several student members of the vocal jazz ensemble, rehearse their pieces for the Feb. 22 concert.

the ensemble's heads together and started crossing out dates from a calendar of February and checked a couple of other events on campus to make sure we didn't conflict with them and the 22nd was the best date that we had that everybody could still make the concert and especially that it didn't go up against a dress rehearsal for the theater production because we share several students with theater," said Landig.

The concert will highlight

the Vocal Jazz Ensemble, also known as Altitude, which will be performing a total of eight songs at the concert. The remainder of the performances will be done by the a cappella group known as Harmonic Uprising. With both groups performing, the concert will be a little over half an hour long.

"For most of the music, it has six out of the eight songs being swing jazz tunes," said Landig. "They are mostly from the 1930s and 1940s, or

what we call the Great American Songbook."

Many of the songs being performed have good influence from Big Band Style. The last two songs of the concert aren't swing, the first one being a basa style Latin jazz, and the other one being a version of the song "Shed a Little Light" by James Taylor. Both are meant to be a tribute to Martin Luther King Jr.

"We have 14 people and 14 singers in the ensemble performing, but not everybody is in every song because of COVID and scheduling differences between everybody in the ensemble," said Landig.

Due to COVID precautions, the ensemble's performance will look a bit different. The entire ensemble will perform some songs that everybody has learned, but will then break into smaller groups. These groups are dependent on factors such as availability of the singers, and how much time each member has put into singing jazz.

"About three quarters of the songs are actually done by smaller groups, meaning five, six or seven people at a time, instead of the whole group,"

said Landig. "For example, we would have a three o'clock Monday rehearsal every week and there are two songs for the concert that we just rehearsed at 3 o'clock on Monday, for example, and I think there were small blocks or we just called them rehearsal blocks during the week."

The ensemble started rehearsing the music last year in mid-September. All members were able to meet for a dress rehearsal to put together the songs, but they hadn't ever rehearsed with everybody up until right before when the concert was meant to take place on Feb. 4.

"It'll be a little unusual not having a live audience; that affects the jazz concert more than a traditional concert because I don't function as a conductor during a jazz concert," said Landig. "I play the piano, so typically a jazz choir is going to be making eye contact with each other and with the audience not being present."

There will be another concert towards the end of April, which will have a similar format to this concert.

Interfaith forum helps bridge divide between community members

KATELYN LEANO
Campus Life Editor

The Gros Institute held a virtual group discussion for community members and Lewis students on Feb. 11 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. This annual Interfaith Forum was sponsored by the Gros Institute for Dialogue, Justice and Social Action. This forum brings people together from different faiths and traditions in order to establish a discussion about healing the racial divide in the U.S. and how the community can bridge that divide.

"The topic was from Fear to Compassion: Healing the Divide and we discussed the walls that divide us and subsequently the wisdom from each of the Traditions that are helpful in getting us to dismantle the walls and build bridges between communities that are divided," said Director of the Gros Institute and Assistant Professor of Theology Christie Billups.

The panelists scheduled to speak included Syed Atif Rizwan, the assistant professor of Islamic and Interreligious Studies at Catholic Theological Union, Patricia Gibbs, a registered nurse, Joseph Standing Bear Schranz, head



Photo by Anthony

of the Midwest SOARRING Foundation and Kathryn Johnson, the former Director for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Some attendees went to the event to fulfill an Arts and Ideas credit, while others were interested in learning about this serious issue. Besides students from the Lewis commu-

nity being in attendance, there were many other community members from the Romeoville area that attended the event as well.

"Hearing the perspectives of people from different traditions hopefully stretched thinking beyond not just our own students, but anyone who attended, and hopefully it continues to stretch our perspectives so that we can stretch

our perspectives and be part of the solution," said Billups. "The idea is to deeply listen and then connect it to our own lives and then to ponder ways that wisdom can lead us to action."

After Billups introduced the panelists, the 61 attendees were separated into breakout rooms, which let everyone get to know each other and discuss ways to bridge the racial

divide.

This event impacts the Lewis community because it's a function of the Gros Institute, which is a relatively young organization attempting to promote the idea of putting justice into action or moving ideas of justice and action into creating moving relationships.

"Overall, I think anytime we talk about these things and wrestle with these challenges for doing something good, we'll keep working to make it look better," said Billups.

Events that facilitate a conversation between members of a community, are meant to be very effective and vital to keeping community members connected to each other.

"I think it helps us, as a community, [to] recognize how diverse we are and...Every person has dignity and that there's dignity in difference [and] that it's not about at all making everyone the same, but in more fully understanding our differences and celebrating those rights," said Billups. "I'm hoping that events like this continue to influence the culture of Lewis to become more inclusive, equitable and welcoming."

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sports



Men's and women's swimming finish sixth at conference meet

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The men's and women's swim teams competed at the GLVC championships from Feb. 10-13 at the Elkhart Aquatics Center in Elkhart, Indiana. Both teams finished sixth overall and achieved over 20 top ten finishes and 13 NCAA Division II provisional B cuts combined throughout the meet.

On day one of the womens meet, the 200 medley relay finished fifth with a time of 1:46.01 and sixth in the 200 freestyle relay with 1:37.22. Freshman Larissa Alves came in ninth in the 200 individual medley with a 2:07.07. Additionally, sophomore Jenna Cipriani placed ninth in the 1-meter diving event, being the first Lewis diver in history to compete and score at a conference meet.

During the second day of competition, senior Stephanie Palcynski achieved two B cuts; she placed fourth overall in the 200 freestyle with a time of 1:51.13, and in the 100 backstroke, she led off the 400 medley relay in 56.31. Another top ten finisher was sophomore Cetta Senese who came in ninth in the 100 butterfly

with a 57.38.

On the third day, Palcynski placed sixth in the 100 backstroke and sophomore Erin Bachmeier came in tenth in the 100 breaststroke. On the final day, Palcynski added one more B cut to her list as she went a 1:59.57 in the 200 backstroke, which placed her fourth.

On the men's team, the Flyers achieved four B cuts during the first day: junior Ari Kissel in the 200 individual medley with a 1:49.79 that placed him seventh, senior Ruben Van Leeuwen in the 50 freestyle with a 20.29 from the 200 free relay lead off, and juniors Jackson Mugg and Rhys Taylor in the 1000 freestyle with 9:23.27 and 9:27.39, respectively.

On day two, Van Leeuwen broke the school record in the 200 freestyle with a time of 1:36.45, which was almost four seconds under the B cut of 1:40.29 and earned him a silver medal. Kissel also achieved the B cut and finished tenth in the same event with a time of 1:39.33.

Junior Mariano Sosa earned a B cut as well in the 400 individual medley placing tenth with a time of 3:58.94. Additionally, the 400 medley relay team of Sosa, junior

Jabari Ramsey, seniors Jose Javato and Brock Star, placed ninth with a 3:24.61.

On the third day, Van Leeuwen earned a bronze medal in the 200 butterfly with a 1:47.77, which was under the B cut of 1:50.13 and the 800 free relay team of Van Leeuwen, Kissel, Taylor and Star placed seventh.

During the last day, Van Leeuwen and Kissel achieved B cuts in the 100 freestyle with 44.15 and 45.28, respectively. Taylor added a B cut in the mile placing tenth with a 15:54.09 and the 400 free relay team of Kissel, sophomores Adrian Wlodarz and Ethan Fox, along with Star, finished seventh.

The Flyers had a stellar performance despite having a season with fewer than the usual number of dual meets and irregular training due to the pandemic. Palcynski recognizes that even with a lot of goals for herself, she was excited to see the freshman class perform, wanted to be a good teammate and for everyone to have fun.

"Being there for each other was our priority, rather than trying to post best times," said Palcynski, senior human resource management major. "Of course, we



ANTHONY BEIMAL / GRAPHIC DESIGNER

wanted to give our best, but even when someone had a bad race, we were focusing on having fun and looking out to the next race."

Palcynski is set to compete at her fourth and last NCAA Division II Championships next March and looks forward to finishing her college career proud and happy regardless of her results.

"Freshman year, I was scared, didn't have a lot of faith in myself, but then through working with a lot of the coaches, they helped me realize that I had something

to offer," said Palcynski. "Now, even though I definitely feel a lot of pressure to perform, I am more motivated than ever because I am swimming for something bigger than myself, my mom, and I care more about the experience and giving back to everyone that got me where I am today."

The Flyers are now waiting for the final national rankings to see how many swimmers will compete at the NCAA Swimming and Diving Championships March 17-20 in Birmingham, Alabama.

Women's volleyball remains undefeated after sweep against Illinois Springfield

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The women's volleyball team defeated Illinois Springfield 3-2 in five sets on Feb. 12 at The Recreation and Athletics Center in Springfield, Illinois.

After winning a tight opening set, the Flyers led 24-22 in set two, but the Prairie Stars attacked with three straight points to take the lead at 25-24. The opposite team was close to finish the set in four chances, and although the Flyers tied back in all of them, the Prairie Stars won the set with a kill during their fifth opportunity.

During the third set, the Flyers were ahead 11-10 before freshman outside hitter Natalie Stefanski and senior

middle hitter Ava Venema had two kills each, redshirt senior middle hitter Caroline Stefanon added one and redshirt sophomore setter Mikah Freppon added an ace. The Flyers continued with their momentum and reached a final margin of 25-16.

With a tough fourth set won by the Prairie Stars, the Flyers rebounded by taking control of the fifth and final set with a 5-1 run to grab a 9-5 advantage. The Flyers scored six of the last eight points to win 15-9.

Two-time Baden GLVC Defensive Player of the week, Jamie Poppen recognizes that the team is grateful for the opportunity to play outside competition, considering the players were just doing off-season

training for over a year. Although their first game was not their cleanest, they have progressively been finding a rhythm and remembering what it is like to compete against outside competition again.

"It feels great to start the season winning all our games," said Poppen. "I'm really proud of our team for the way we've worked through games, made adjustments and fought for this winning streak."

Despite the team not reaching national competition this year, the Flyers are still setting a high bar as their goal is to win the conference tournament. "The season is different, but we still are working for greatness, and I know that this team is capable of achiev-

ing that," said Poppen. "We have a lot of depth on our team which is a huge strength because we are able to challenge each other so much in the gym."

As for the Ballwin, Missouri native, Poppen is looking forward to being an All-American and the GLVC libero of the year. Even though she acknowledges that these are high goals, Poppen believes that with the support of the players and coaches these goals are "doable." However, she explained that it is much more meaningful



LUIS CHAVEZ / PHOTOGRAPHER

The Flyers are now 4-0 overall and in the GLVC.

to her what the team as a whole achieves this season. "I want to share a conference championship with everyone above all else."

The team returns to action on Saturday, Feb. 27 as they take on Drury and Truman State in a tri-match in Kirksville, Missouri.