

THE MAST

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Unheard voices of PLU: A spotlight on the people who make campus pretty

By Kiyomi Kishaba

Reporter

The PLU campus is made of stretches of luscious, green lawn paired with tall, brick buildings packed with students and professors alike.

It is a bustling area kept clean and gorgeous because of the custodial and grounds staff.

Randall Self and Kenneth Cote, employees of PLU in Custodial and Campus Landscape respectively, had very different journeys on their ways to working at PLU.

Self first worked at Day Wireless Systems as a Journey-level Communications Equipment installer.

After struggling to find electronics jobs in Tacoma, Self utilized temp agencies which eventually sent him to PLU as a Mail Clerk.

"Pace Staffing sent me to PLU to work as a Mail Clerk for two weeks. Then after two weeks, I came back for four weeks.

Then the "permanent person" that PLU had hired quit because



PHOTO COURTESY OF HAEDON BRUNELLE

Randall Self, a PLU janitor stops by the ASPLU office to say hello to students working in there. Randall often sports a PLU Late Knight shirt as he said he loves supporting and interacting with students.

of pay. They called me back again, said they liked me and my attitude and after a couple of more weeks, they asked me to stay," Self stated.

Self remained working as a Mail Clerk for ten years. In 2017, his job was eliminated due to a contract with a private company.

Self reached out to Environmental Services at PLU and was immediately hired as a Cus-

“ You believe that what you do makes a difference ”
todian.

On top of his custodial work, Self also volunteers as an Emergency Worker with W7PLU.

He interacts with students daily, especially when working in the AUC, and knows about 45 students by name.

Kenneth Cote is the Campus Landscape and Athletic Fields Manager He has positive interactions with students often, as Facilities includes many members of the student body.

He received an MBA at PLU and stated he enjoyed the classes and professors. Cote attends theatre productions at KHP several times a year.

Cote came to PLU after his wife told him to "get a real job with benefits."

With a construction and landscaping background and a Bachelor of Science in Urban Forestry, Cote said he enjoys his job at PLU the majority of the time.

"Like any job there are moments that make you wonder, but when you believe that what you do does make a difference, it carries you through the rough patches," Cote stated.

PLU has "good people who care about the work they do" and many "opportunities for growth."

Self has a similar point of view, "I enjoy working at PLU. I have come to know over a hundred people here," he said.

"I don't like what I do, however, I do like where I work, when I work and who I work for and work with. For me, PLU is not just a job. It is a community," Self said.

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NEWS SECTION

Storm sweeps through campus toppling tree on Columbia Center



PHOTOS BY MCKENNA MORIN

Fallen tree on top of the Columbia Center causes the building to face slight cracks and damages.

By McKenna Morin
Editor-In-Chief

Over the first weekend of January, a large wind storm swept through campus toppling over a large tree.

The tree was located on the PLU golf course. It fell onto the Columbia Center roof, leaving a small amount of damage on the side and top of the building where

it landed.

"There doesn't appear to be much damage," one crew member said.

Crew members worked throughout the week to remove the tree. PLU landscaping and management workers said they called in an outside team to come take the tree away.

"It wasn't a healthy tree. We guessed

the root system had been compromised," a worker said. Many unhealthy trees have already been taken out for safety and upkeep on campus. According to the work crew, "this tree was on the list of trees to remove this year." The tree is now gone and repairs will start soon.

PLU flag flies high at the WA state capital



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOHN FROSCHAUER

TOP: From left to right: Lute Vote members Gracie Anderson, Miguel Ordanez, Deanna Hobbs, Raven Lirio and Solen Aref strike a pose in front of the state capitol building in Olympia, WA.

RIGHT: Students holding the PLU flag as it prepares to be raised alongside the U.S. and Washington State flags.

By Kiyomi Kishaba
Reporter

During the summer of 2018, Washington state Gov. Jay Inslee and Secretary of State Kim Wyman announced a competition for all two and four year universities to see who can register to vote the most students to vote for the midterm election.

Pacific Lutheran University students Riley Dolan, head of the Lute Vote team and Civic Engagement Director for Associated Students of Pacific Lutheran University, ASPLU, Gracie Anderson, the Lute Vote Data Manager, and Deanna Hobbs, the Lute Vote Volunteer Coordinator, rose to the challenge and ultimately proved successful in registering the highest percentage of student voters.

"To reach as far as we could around campus, we had a variety of strategies," Dolan said. "We did tabling outside of the Commons, had voter registration in the ASPLU office during New Student Orientation, went to various big campus events with voter registration

forms, encouraged sharing on social media, went to large classrooms to tell them about the challenge and get them pledged or registered and hosted 'PLU Rocks the Vote' on National Voter Registration Day."

All of the Lute Vote team's hard work in registering students will help others exercise their right to democracy. Additionally, the winners of the competition were promised to have the PLU flag flown at the capitol building, a lunch for the Lute Vote team with Inslee and Wyman and a visit from the governor at PLU in the spring.

"I cannot emphasize enough just how important I believe participating in our democracy is. The challenge was a great way to energize our team of volunteers and convincing students to register to vote, and the rewards we are getting are nice," Dolan said.

"However cheesy it sounds though, I think the biggest reward is having more and more young people participating in elections and getting their voices heard. In 2018 we saw

record-breaking numbers of young people voting, which is helping to ensure that our values are being represented in government."

Although PLU did not previously have a flag, the Marketing and Communications Department, MarCom, designed one to be flown at the Capitol building. Members of the Lute Vote team helped raise the flag this past Friday Jan. 18th.

As for Inslee's visit, Dolan intends to partner with PLU's administration, ASPLU, Lute Vote, and MarCom to plan the event. Despite the governor's busy schedule, Dolan remains confident he will find time to visit PLU.

ASPLU president Haedon Brunelle believes in the importance of the challenge because "civic engagement is huge part of being a Lute." He also extended gratitude to the Lute Vote team.

"I am so grateful of ASPLU Civic Engagement Director Riley Dolan for his leadership of LuteVote and with the Lute Vote team, including but not limited to Gracie Anderson,

Deanna Hobbs, Gurjot Kang, Solen Araf, Nikolis Clark and Raven Lirio," Brunelle said. "They truly led PLU to win this challenge and this team is the reason why I'm not surprised that we won."

Dolan grants PLU's win to the dedication of the Lute Vote team, ASPLU and the student body who proved their commitment to democracy by registering to vote.

"Everyone deserves to have their voice heard, but unfortunately there are many identities and groups of people in the U.S. that are systematically discouraged from or denied their right to vote," Dolan said.

"By raising awareness and excitement about the importance of voting, I hope that we were able to encourage our generation to become lifetime voters. I had multiple people tell me that if it wasn't for the work that Lute Vote did this year, they probably wouldn't have registered or voted in 2018, and hearing that makes all of the long hours of work this took worth it!"

The great gen-ed debate:

By Brennan LaBrie and Raven Lirio

Reporter and Copy Editor

For the first time in over 10 years, Pacific Lutheran University is reexamining the backbone for all students' education—the general education requirements.

At the December faculty assembly, the Ad Hoc Committee for General Education reviewed two proposals for a new gen-ed program. These two proposals are to be reviewed at the February faculty assembly, during which one proposal will be chosen as the basis for a new and revised general education program at PLU.

This process dates back to last May, when the Ad Hoc Committee was formed to review the current requirements for PLU undergraduate students. This decision was made based on the fact that PLU had not seen any changes to general education since the early 2000s, said committee co-chairs Michelle Ceynar, professor of psychology, and Kevin O'Brien, professor of religion.

"It's been a really long time since we looked at gen-eds," Ceynar said. "It's always good practice to reevaluate what we're doing and make sure the curriculum is what it should be."

At the same time, requirements for gen-eds by college accreditors have become more critical and demanding of data over the years.

Additionally, Ceynar and Kevin O'Brien said that the current general education program is difficult to assess, primarily due to the number of courses that count for general education.

Classics and International Honors, IHON Professor, Tyler Travillian, added that "there are over 1,000 possible general education classes. Currently, we're at 1024, but that number grows every time

we count."

"Every student has a completely different path and that makes it difficult to know that all of our students are getting the same thing out of gen-eds by the time they graduate," Kevin O'Brien said.

To kick off the new gen-ed process, the committee conducted faculty, student and alumni surveys asking respondents about their experiences with PLU's general education program. Hundreds of responses displayed two overarching themes: a wide demand for inclusion of diversity, sustainability and justice and a decrease in the amount of required credits.

Both of these demands were taken into consideration by the committee, which consists of Kevin O'Brien, Ceynar, eight faculty members and two student representatives, when drafting four initial models in the spring of 2018. The most well received elements of these four by faculty and students were combined into the "Liberal Arts Foundation."

In feedback from surveys, the importance of a "liberal arts" education was highly emphasized by all of the groups surveyed. As such, the committee decided to use this term in their proposal.

The Liberal Arts Foundation

The "Foundation" was based on a distributive core of classes that resemble the current gen-ed program with the addition of academic proficiency requirements including a global engagement category, which could be fulfilled either through one semester of language or studying away, and two pathways. These can be seen on the Foundation flowchart on the Ad Hoc website.

The biggest differences were the elimination of two health and fitness credits, the addition of religion and diversity in replacement of world religion and a change in FYEP 190: Inquiry Seminar to FYEP 102, a similar class with a focus on Diversity, Equity and Justice and a better connection to FYEP 101.

The "Foundation" was presented to the faculty assembly in September and was met with heavy criticism, many of whom believed it was too similar to the current program based on faculty survey results.

Amy Young, chair of the Communication Department, voiced the concerns of many faculty members surveyed.

"The first general education revision proposal we were sent is nearly identical

to the gen-eds we currently have," Young said. "I like nearly nothing about it."

Fellow Communication professor Kate Hoyt echoed this sentiment that the new plan "retained a lot of the elements that the faculty felt needed improvement, and it seems overly burdensome for most students with 46 credits."

There was a decrease in only two credits, which many believed was not sufficient as the current requirements make up 1/3 of PLU's required 128 credits to graduate. Many students and faculty already feel that this overwhelms too many students, especially those with higher credit majors or multiple majors and minors.

"Students and alumni overwhelmingly affirmed the vast majority of our current requirements," the committee said, "and did not provide a clear consensus for a larger or smaller general education program," said the committee in response to this criticism.

Many faculty members also questioned why the topic of diversity was tied exclusively to religion in the new "Religion and Diversity" core requirement.

"I have no problem with Religion offering courses on content that is more widely representative," Young said. "But they are not the only department with that expertise."

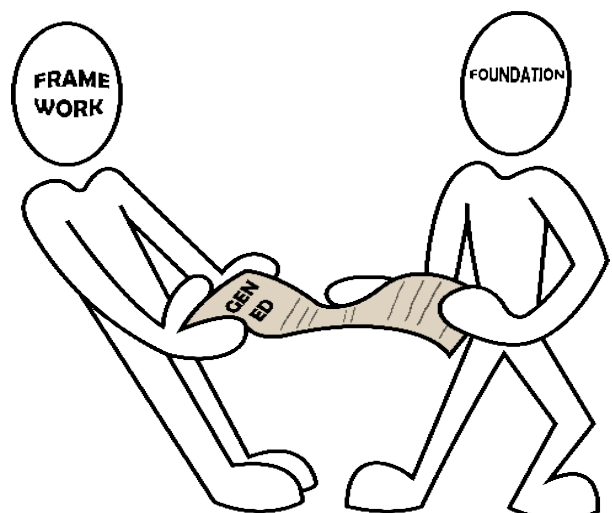
Young, along with many other faculty members who gave online feedback, also questioned the need for two religion courses.

French and IHON professor Rebecca Wilkin was "stunned" that two religion classes remained as requirements, while classes in language and history continued to be left out of the general education program.

"I do not think students should be forced to take a Christian Religion—we do not demand people express a particular religious faith or any faith at all—this isn't representative of who we are as an institution," Wilkin said.

Many professors echoed Wilkin's sentiments of what they saw as an unequal inclusion of disciplines such as religion and philosophy in both the current program and the Foundation.

Religion professors Suzanne O'Brien and Erik Hammerstrom agreed with this notion.



GRAPHICS BY KEVIN JANSEN

Framework vs Foundation

"I do feel that this first model could be improved by amendments," Suzanne O'Brien said. "In particular, I'd like to see it modified to include explicit requirements in history, sustainability, and global education."

Hammerstrom added that language should be required as well.

"Even if that was a loss of one religion, I'd be okay with that."

Despite these critiques, many faculty members voiced their support of the Foundation.

"It's an opportunity to reach out and work with faculty across divisions which is something we need," Travillian said.

"It provides students with both guidance and choice and clearly articulates our identity and what's distinctive about PLU," Suzanne O'Brien said.

Gracie Anderson, one of the student representatives on the committee, said ASPLU felt that the Foundation was strong, and got the sense that their constituents did as well after holding student discussions.

The Liberal Arts Framework

As a result of these concerns, the assembly voted for a second proposal to compare and contrast to the Foundation. This resulted in the creation of the "Liberal Arts Framework."

The "Framework" is a drastic change in structure and format from the Foundation and the current gen-ed program.

"The faculty wanted something bold, so we gave them something bold," Anderson said.

Kevin O'Brien said that the Framework intended to respond to the criticism by faculty over the inclusion of some disciplines over others by distancing itself from specific disciplinary and departmental requirements.

Each gen-ed class would count for one keystone and one proficiency each, and students would need to complete all six of each to graduate. The Framework retains the FYEP system and drops two health and fitness credits.

Young found the Framework to be "significantly improved" over the Foundation, and more "inclusive." She also appreciated the "clearer integration of topics and disciplines, and the freedom that ten less credits will give students, from being able to take additional classes of interest to adding a minor or even studying away."

The increased flexibility created in the Framework was applauded by many students and faculty on the online forums but it was also met with plenty of critiques. Many found it overly complicated.

Sophomore Jared Shelly agrees. "I think the Liberal Arts Foundation is easier to follow and it seems simpler and easier to grasp, compared to the Framework. The Framework confuses me."

"I've heard students say they like the idea of the pathways. They like something that is kinda laid out for them," Wilkin said. "It's more of a line to follow than a grid to fill. It's less confusing to them."

Travillian had particularly strong oppositions against the Framework, pointing out the subtext in the framework calling for students to take courses from every division and department with specific restrictions on what counts.

"This is a 4D chart presented to look 2D," Travillian said. "How do you define what these names mean? What classes would count? How do you advise for this? We have no way of preparing for that."

Other Lingering Concerns

Some online responders were concerned over which departments might be most negatively affected by the drop in required credit hours.

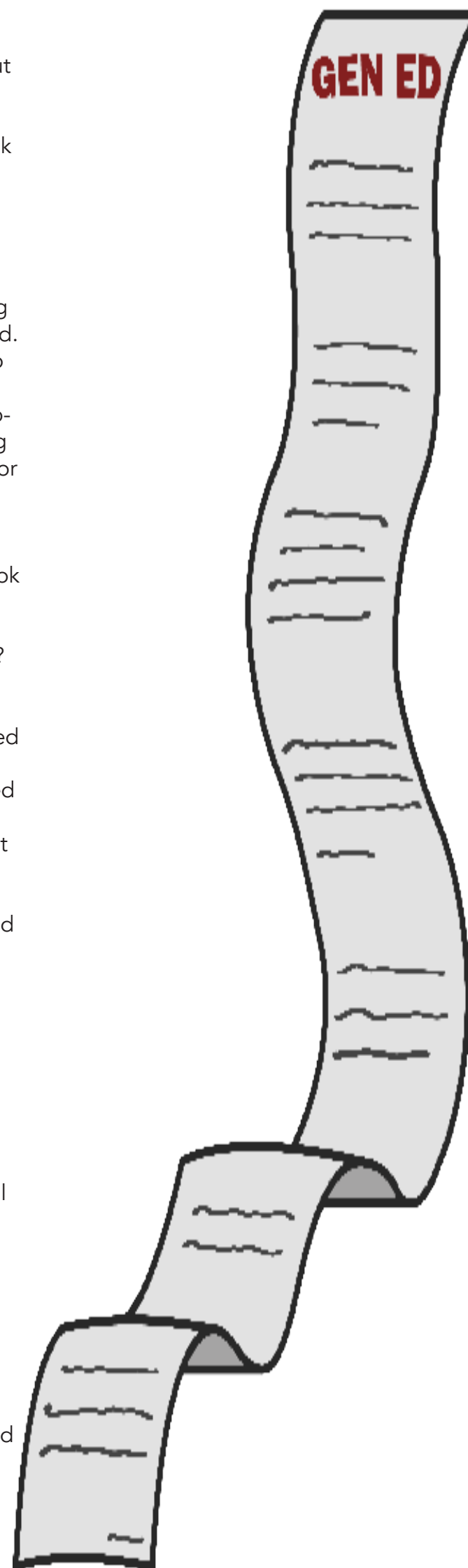
Hammerstrom brought up what it might cost PLU to pay teachers in affected Humanities classes. With less students enrolled in classes, Hammerstrom speculated that costs to students would increase as a result of less courses being taught by Humanities.

Many others were concerned that this new program would require teachers to change their classes in order to fit within the new guidelines. Wilkin worried that teachers might even jump departments to teach essential classes in the gen-ed program. Some classes might become full while others become under enrolled.

Other online responders voiced concerns that a drop in a clear religion credit drew PLU away from its roots as a school founded by the concept of a Lutheran Education.

Anthropology professor Bradford Andrews did not believe a Lutheran education must require two religion courses, and added that it should be considered why a Lutheran education would not include a clear language requirement.

CONT. ON PAGE 6



Opera preview of *Le Nozze di Figaro*

By Raven Lirio
Copy Editor

Pacific Lutheran University's music department presents one of opera's classics— The Marriage of Figaro.

Written by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in the late 18th century, this humorous opera tells the story of Figaro, played by Chris Conway and Ben Merill, who is set to marry the Countess' maid Susanna, played by Mackenzie Taylor and Sabrina Hussein, and the madness that ensues up to the wedding.

The decision to perform this particular opera was made by the PLU music department as part of their three year cycle.

"Our cycle covers different stylistic periods," said professor of music James Brown. "Early operas, traditional operas set around the 18th or 19th century, and newer operas from the 20th or 21st century."

Last year, PLU Opera performed Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas" which is an early opera and so this year "The Marriage of Figaro" was chosen as it is a "staple of operatic repertoire," according to Brown.

Brown said that while operas are not precast, a large part of the deciding factor for choosing an opera depends on who is available to sing.

First-year Arthur Keast said he auditioned for the opera to improve his vocal and acting skills.

"Although I am pursuing a degree in business, I still want to pursue music as it is a big part of my life," Keast said. "So far, choosing to be part



PHOTO COURTESY OF PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY
The Marriage of Figaro will be presented in the Karen Hille Phillips Center for Performing Arts. The show opens January 24 at 7:30p.m. and runs through January 27 at 3p.m.

of the opera has been one of the decisions I have made as a student of PLU."

Similarly, sophomore Karl Eickhoff has expressed how his experience has been "simply unreal."

"Opera demands a huge amount of effort and passion from everyone involved, Eickhoff said. "The final product gives it back tenfold. I've left every rehearsal feeling equal parts exhausted and thrilled."

The Marriage of Figaro is not only a debut for Eickhoff and Keast, but also for Brown himself.

"This is actually my first exposure to this piece," Brown said. "Somehow I never encountered it in my training but it has become my absolute favorite opera ever."

Sarah Fox, a first-year performance major, has also expressed her excitement for the production.

"I want to get as much performance experience as I can," Fox said. "This program is one of the main reasons I chose to attend PLU."

Fox has participated in two operas at PLU during the summer and other local programs but admits this experience has been different.

"I have not only been a part of the staging and music preparation process, but have also been able to work in the costume shop learning how to make and alter costumes which are so vital to a production's authenticity," Fox said.

For Eickhoff, "the best part is seeing and hearing the enormous talent of my friends. Everybody in this production has artistry coming out of their ears and seeing them shine onstage is awe-inspiring every time."

"Everyday I am inspired by the people around me who work hard to make everything

possible," Keast said, echoing Eickhoff's praise.

As opposed to most years, PLU will not be putting on a spring opera due to the theater production of Sweeney Todd which is a collaboration between both the music and theater departments.

"So many resources are going into both Sweeney and this J-Term," Brown said. "This precluded the teaching load to do a spring opera." Despite the lack of a spring opera, PLU will still be doing its summer opera workshop with the Pirates of Penzance.

The performance will be in Italian with real time supertitles in English above the stage. It will be streamed online by iTech.

"I hope people show up for it because it's Mozart at his best," Brown said. "It's some of the best Mozart written and his dramatic concept is absolute genius."

Show Times for *Le Nozze di Figaro*:

Opening Night: January 24 at 7:30p.m. (KHP)
Jan. 25, 7:30p.m. (KHP)
Jan. 26, 7:30p.m. (KHP)
Jan. 27, 3p.m. (KHP)

Tickets are \$17 general admission; \$10 seniors citizens (60+), military, alumni, PLU community; \$5 PLU students, 18 and under. Tickets can be purchased on Eventbrite

CONT. FROM PAGE 5

PLU Alumni Samuel Manders, who graduated with a BA in Religion, supported this claim, but also argued against the removal of the religion requirement entirely.

"Taking religion classes at PLU isn't required for the fulfillment of a higher Lutheran education," Manders said. "It's ironic that a Lutheran university isn't requiring its students to take at least one or two religion classes. With this in mind, I also don't see the harm in dropping the number of required religion classes from two to one."

Ceynar said "both models provide opportunities for our current faculty to invent new classes that will fit, so there's some possibilities for creative change. Some of the classes that we have will slip right in."

The committee is currently drafting a proposal to form a permanent General Education Committee, one with faculty-elected individuals who would devote much of their time to overseeing the gen-ed program. That committee would have much more deciding power than the current gen-ed council.

Wilkin and Travillian were worried that this council's strong deciding power would result in different departments competing with each other to get their classes to count for a keystone or proficiency. Wilkin feared it might become "politicized, giving maybe too much power to a group of faculty on something that affects everybody very, very much."

"I think that could lead to competition," Kevin O'Brien said, "It could also lead to really interesting collaboration and cooperation."

This is an ongoing issue at

PLU that will remain in discussion through the rest of the school year into the next with new Lutes coming onto campus.

If you wish to share your opinion on this topic, go to plu.edu — General Education — Ad Hoc Committee — Submit Feedback. Also, to view the two different gen-ed proposals and other supporting documents, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/GenEdProposals>.

Music and theater collaboration experimentation

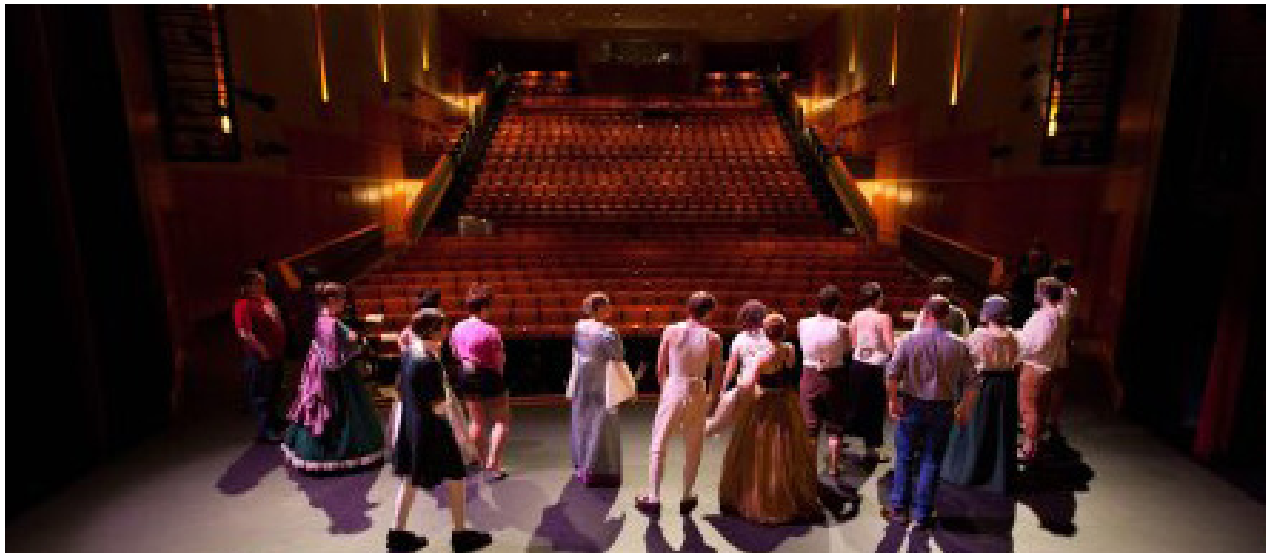


PHOTO COURTESY OF PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

Sweeney Todd is currently in preproduction. The show will premier in the spring in the Karen Hille Phillips Center for the Performing Arts.

By Raven Lirio
Copy Editor

After six years, Pacific Lutheran University's music and theater departments have teamed up once more for the annual spring musical— Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street.

Back in October, the cast for Sweeney Todd was released, featuring students from various departments but mainly theater and music. This production joins together the two departments in wake of the new musical theater BFA program offered through PLU's school of theater.

"Theater and dance became its own department for the first time," Tom Smith said, Artistic Director of Theater and Dance and professor of theater. "We wanted to reach out and work more closely with other departments for interdisciplinary collaborations."

The last collaboration between these two departments in particular was back in 2013 during the production of "Kiss Me Kate" right after renovations for Eastvold Auditorium were completed.

"Since the debut, theater has done its own thing but we really wanted to collaborate on a big project in honor of the new BFA musical theater degree," said Chair of Vocal studies and professor of music James Brown. "The music is fairly complex so we thought it would be a good chance for music and theater to collaborate."

Both Smith and Brown are currently in charge of the production of Sweeney Todd, with theater handling all theatrical elements like lighting and costume design, props, and other production elements and music handling accompaniment and the orchestra.

Despite the idea of collaboration, an anonymous group of theater students felt that the audition process was very music-centric. The audition process differed greatly from what most students in the department were used to and some believed that casting decisions were made mostly on musical talent alone.

The most notable differences were the lack of callbacks, the use of music from the musical for vocal auditions and the lack of a monologue, which most productions at PLU request.

Junior Gunnar Johnson said that he felt the casting process "definitely felt more like a PLU opera audition."

"I got the impression that there was a bias towards selecting more operatic performers, but I think this is an understandable bias," Johnson said. "This show, Sweeney Todd, is nested in that gray area between musical theatre and opera."

In response to these changes, Smith said that the auditioning process was tilted more heavily towards music for a couple of different reasons.

"The biggest challenge in the show was on the difficulty of music," Smith said. "Although the audition focused on music and less so on reading scenes, it makes perfect sense to have done that given this particular show compared to other shows where the music is easier. We sometimes change up audition based on the style of the show."

Brown added that both theater and music decided in advance to take an operatic approach to auditions by asking students to sing songs from the musical itself, which is an operatic practice more than theater.

"In one way, the audition process was necessarily music-centric since Sweeney Todd is almost operatic in its construction," Brown said. "In the opera world, the auditions are through music from the show. Tom and I conferred because I wanted to make sure that something they wanted to do. After discussing, we decided for a more operatic casting approach because of the operatic music demand of Sweeney."

Sean Kilen, a sophomore musical theater major, argued with some of his peers and believed the process to be "pretty normal."

"From my experience, there was not many differences minus no dancing but Sweeney Todd isn't very dance heavy," Kilen said. "Because Sweeney Todd is a more song heavy show, I understand why there was no monologue."

Smith said the lack of monologue was a result of the amount of auditions we received.

"We had almost 70 people audition," Smith said. "If we had done singing and monologue work, we would have not had enough time to see as many students given the two nights of auditions."

Smith also said that "most of the character is told through music versus dialogue" and they didn't choose to do callbacks since they felt that they would not get anything extra from reading as opposed to their ability to act through song.

He doesn't anticipate that this will be the new norm, "it was just how it worked best for this particular production." Both Smith and Brown confirmed that casting for them remained extremely consistent with casting choices matching up perfectly between the two.

"In the casting process, I very purposefully kept quiet initially and asked Tom who do you see in this role," Brown said. "100% of the time, I agreed. Theater really led the way in casting."

While many students may have been disappointed with the results, Brown fully believes that collaboration in the future will benefit both departments.

"The music students will learn more about performance and acting from theater students and that theater learns more about musicianship from the music students," Smith said. "We all value collaboration and what I love most about PLU is the ability for anyone to be involved in any project on campus."

Johnson, who is neither a music nor theater major, agreed with Brown. "We are lucky at PLU to have a large talent pool from which to draw for shows," Johnson said.

Kilen further adds that for musical theater, this collaboration is extremely important for the program.

"I hope that people will blend together and teach each other things," Kilen said. "We should recognize that we are all artists and performers and we are all trying to make the world a happier place. As long as the audience is happy, we should be happy"

While rehearsals have not yet started, both Smith and Brown expressed their excitement to see how collaborations unfold for this production and in the future.

"Sweeney is really a groundbreaking piece in style and tone in its conception. It's incredibly exciting we are rising to the challenge of producing such a piece like this and I'm excited about the future production," Brown said.

There are currently no plans for collaboration beyond Sweeney set in stone, but both departments have expressed a great interest in further projects.

"What I hope in the future is that students recognize the importance of working with people outside of their own home department and that we can all learn from each other by all working on the same project," Smith said.

"The only improvement I would like to see for the future is for collaboration to happen more often" Brown said.

Editors Note:

This group of students has chosen to remain anonymous in order to protect their identities within their department(s).

PLU success story: Cierra Nalani Richards

By Solen Aref
Reporter

When PLU alumni Cierra Nalani Richards started her pageant career at 17, she was hoping to win some scholarship money to help pay for the ever-increasing cost of college.

She found herself at an automatic disadvantage when she realized her competition were girls who started out in the pageant business as “literally toddlers in tiaras”. However, Richards didn’t let her lack of experience stop her from competing, and after receiving the title of International Junior Miss Washington title, she is clearly glad she didn’t.

Richards came to PLU loving the pageant world, but looking to study something she could make a lifelong career out of. She said had no clue what she wanted to study initially besides dance, which was offered as a minor when she attended PLU.

She looked into majoring in kinesiology or philosophy, but said she found herself yearning for something a little more creative.

“I’ve always been good at science, STEM and these other things, but I’ve always really been passionate about creativity,” she said.

She finally found what she was looking for after taking her first communications class. Richards knew she loved public

speaking since that was so incorporated in the pageant world, but that’s where her knowledge on communications ended. In fact, after taking just a few classes in that department, Richards said that Communications “captured my heart like no other”.

This led her to finishing class textbooks in just a week, because she said she felt so engaged in what she was learning every day. She credits her to graduating with a communications major in 2017 to this love of learning.

It’s been a few years since she was on campus as a student, but Richards looked back on it with fond memories of meeting great people. She said she met many inspiring professors here that shaped her way of thinking, including a personal role model in Professor Peter Ehrenhaus, who has since retired. He taught the Intercultural Communications class she took.

She described him as a personable teacher who was somebody that you could ask anything to, and he was always there for his students.

“I really wanted to study exactly what he studied. I feel like if I have the opportunity to go a route in communications, I wanna go his route, and ultimately I’d love to be a professor like him one day.”

She also remembered another professor giving her money to buy lunch and printer points, after she couldn’t print a paper to turn in on time due to running out



PHOTO COURTESY OF CIERRA NALANI RICHARDS
Cierra Nalani Richards graduated from PLU in 2017. Since then, she has become a successful model and USA National Miss Washington candidate.

of money on her lute card.

“People here hold the door for you, and smile when you pass by, and in the outside world you don’t get that and I miss that so much”, she said.

After graduation, Richards continued volunteering and doing philanthropic work in her local community, and it’s led her to many opportunities.

Through Crown C.A.R.E.S., (creating a respectful environment in schools), she works closely with local elementary schools to teach anti-bullying to students.

She said while she loves volunteering, she is also excited about dedicating her time to a paid work position, and after finishing her fourth round of interviews for the American Cancer Society earlier this week, Richards said she’s very hopeful about landing a job as the new Community Development Manager of our local area.

Obtaining a degree in at a Lutheran higher education school may seem daunting to some, but Richards said she loved the opportunity to learn something completely new.

While it’s easier said than done, she believes that everyone can follow in the footsteps of Martin Luther with just a little courage in themselves.

“Don’t be silenced”, she said “...and don’t feel like you have to keep something to yourself because it’s not the norm Really if you feel like this is right, and this should be said, go for it- and be passionate about it, even if you get this retribution back”.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CIERRA NALANI RICHARDS

The UAS National Miss Washington competition is a tremendous honor for Cierra Nalani Richards. She is proud to participate in the event, as well as feels lucky to have the opportunity along with her other current endeavours with the campaign “Crown C.A.R.E.S.”

Music making its way through campus

The Music Department at PLU presents a large variety of concerts throughout the year. These events are hosted in either the Mary Baker Russell Music Center (MBR), or Karen Hille Phillips Center for the Performing Arts (KHP). Most events will be held in Lagerquist Concert Hall (LCH), unless otherwise marked. Admission is free to PLU students, unless otherwise noted.

Feb. 2, 3p.m. - WSMTA Four Piano Benefit Concert
Feb. 8, 8p.m. - University Wind Ensemble Homecoming Concert
Feb. 9, 7p.m. - Marine Corps Jazz Orchestra (KHP)
Feb. 10, 3p.m. - Artist Series: Lyman & Tegels

Feb. 22, 8p.m. - Showcase Concert
Feb. 25, 8p.m. - Piano Works of Bernstein
Feb. 26, 8p.m. - Camas Wind Quintet
Feb. 27, 8p.m. - Evergreen Music Festival

The J-Term Opera, *La Nozze Di Figaro*, begins January 24 at 7:30p.m. in the Karen Hille Phillips Center for the Performing Arts and runs through January 27 at 3p.m.

“I just want to provide a space where everyone is loved”

Notes Coffee overcomes racial incidents in hopes of a safer space

By McKenna Morin

Editor-in-Chief

When looking at the outside of the building, you would never guess what the little cafe is hiding inside. Light jazz music blooms from small speakers, an array of musical instruments sit throughout the space, rows and rows of bookshelves line a wall, board games rest on tables, and a large menu of snacks and drinks fill the inside of Notes Coffee Company.

After multiple occurrences of racism and prejudices in the cafe, owner John Gore posted to Facebook about his most recent racial incidents. His post said he has shut down before because of the issues and was thinking of doing so again.

This place usually captures that small town café vibe with warm lighting, lots of windows, and cozy seating, making it feel homey. However, for Gore, the past 11 months in the café have hardly felt like home at all.

“It’s unfortunate because I think everyone should just be able to live how they want to without worry of someone taking offense to them just being a person,” Gore said.

It’s been a month since his post went viral. He’s been interviewed on Seattle’s Q13 news, was in the Tacoma News Tribune and had an article written about the events on PLU’s website. However, according to Gore, it’s not a super popular place for students.

“I’ve have professors and students come in...but I haven’t seen any activity groups or anything like that, which would be nice because we have a good space for it. That’s what I’m trying to build, a space for expression,” Gore said.

However, Gore has struggled to build that space with the problems and racism he and his staff have encountered at Notes.

“It pretty much was from the get-go. To be honest with you I don’t think I’ve ever experienced it until I came out here to this part of Pierce County,” Gore said.

Between Notes and his other business, an ice cream truck company, Gore said he has received threatening phone calls, had a gun pulled on him, and has been called the N-word multiple times.

The morning of this interview Gore said



PHOTO BY MCKENNA MORIN

John Gore visits with customers inside the Notes Coffee Company in Parkland.

he was driving into work and was by Frugals when another driver swerved into him and yelled racial slurs at him.

“He tried to get in front of me and used his car to stop my car...so I pulled over and got out of my car and said ‘you asked me to pull over so what’s happening?’ He stayed in his car and continued his verbal assault. I was like this is just crazy,” Gore said.

For Gore, these kinds of attacks are not out of the ordinary. In his post, he said the café had been broken into, has had customers call him racial slurs and had a customer tell his barista to “smile while standing in the dark” so she could be seen. Gore said it all left him thinking one thing: “I wish I had left my business in Seattle.”

As Gore explained what it has been like for him in Parkland, he paused to wipe away tears. He said he never experienced anything this bad when he lived up north. It’s hard, he said, because he enjoys being so close to PLU.

In a recent PLU Marketing and Communication story, Gore explained more of what he’s been going through. However, having the PLU coverage has seemed to open the bridge between PLU and Notes.

“I think it opened the doors to the PLU staff members. Some of them were unaware that we were here. They were like ‘you’re open finally; we didn’t even know you were open.’ I think that’s what the students are unsure about,” Gore said.

Going from Northern Pacific Coffee

Company in 2016 to Q’s Coffee in 2017 and now to Notes, which opened in the spring of 2018, PLU students know this place to be more of a revolving door than an open one. It seems like every year there was a new name or owner of the space.

“To own a business on this block is tough,” Gore said. “People are just scrambling trying to make it.”

Even though owning a small business in a small part of town can be hard and having multiple racist and prejudice incidents, Gore said he’s not going anywhere.

“I’ve got too much invested in this place. I mean I love it, with all this said I love this space. It gives me an opportunity to interact with people and students,” Gore said.

Gore plans to bring in some new additions to help encourage students and other community members come in. Within the next couple of months Gore hopes to add rolled ice cream, beer, wine, and spirits to the menu. He said he also wants to add photography workshops, chess tournaments, and live music events to the space to help bring more positivity to the area.

“People need more cultural growth. People need more cultural experience. You need to get out and go places and see things. I think that would really help people,” Gore said. “I’m here in this space because I just want to provide a place that’s safe and where everyone, PLU people and the general community, is loved.”

Ten ways to stay busy this J-term break

By Gurjot Kang
News Editor



Go on an adventure with your favorite book

During the regular hustle of the school year, you spend a lot of time reading required material for your major or gen-ed classes—religion and philosophy readings...am I right?

However, this J-Term break, if you find yourself with some extra time, pick up a book and read about something you've always been interested in. Whether that's fantasy, sci-fi, horror, mystery or poetry, find a story that intrigues you and catch up on some good ol' reading.

If you're not a huge reader or can never find the time to sit down and actually read, try listening to an audiobook. For the New Year, audible.com is providing a 30-day free trial along with two free Audible books.



Listen to someone else's story

If you're not into reading or audiobooks but are still on the hunt for the latest story, try listening to podcasts!

There are podcasts ranging on a variety of topics, whether that's delving into the interesting world of criminal justice with the Serial podcast or catching up on the weekly political news with the NPR Politics podcast. You can find just about any radio show suitable to your individual liking.

The "Apple Podcasts" app features a wide variety of podcast shows for you to choose from. Some of my personal favorite shows to listen to are Radiolab, This American Life, and The Daily from The New York Times.

If you enjoy listening to stories from NPR like me, another great app to download is the "NPR One" app, which features numerous popular shows produced by the radio network.



Consider applying to scholarships or jobs over break

It's never too early to start planning ahead for your future career. During a free moment in J-Term, take some time to look into potential job opportunities you might be interested in and consider applying to a related fellowship or apprenticeship!

You can also surf the web for PLU or off-campus job positions through the Career Connections Opportunities Board.



Explore Parkland and Tacoma

PLU might not be located in the middle of a giant, bustling city but our college is centered right within the community of Parkland!

If you stay on campus for J-Term break and get tired of eating at the Commons, be sure to check out some of the local Parkland restaurants—many of which are family owned and just right down the block along Garfield Street.

Some restaurants near PLU include Reyna's, for great authentic Mexican food, and Farrelli's Pizza, where you can split a large pizza between all your friends.

Another restaurant worth visiting is Marzano's. It's definitely on the fancier and pricier side, but it has a nice cozy atmosphere. Trapper's Sushi and 208 Garfield are also good choices.

If you ever get tired of reading or studying in your room and would like to enjoy a nice meal or warm cup of coffee, I recommend going to Notes Coffee Company. Whether you're looking for a place to hang out with friends, listen to some good music, or play games, Notes Coffee is your go-to cafe destination. If you're interested in exploring further outside of Parkland, there's a bus stop near Walgreens that will take you all the way to downtown Tacoma. There, you can check-out all sorts of local food shops, visit the UW Tacoma campus, or take a stride along the Chihuly Bridge of Glass.

You could also plan a trip to a museum, like the Tacoma Art Museum, Washington State History Museum, or Museum of Glass. Be sure to look online though for special discounts available to students or free museum events open to the public.



Volunteer within the community

Visit the PLU Center for Community Engagement & Service (CCES) or check out their website to learn about service opportunities and ways to volunteer over break. If you're going home for break, you can search online for volunteer hours and other ways to get involved at your local food bank or multi-service center.



Pick up a new hobby or work on your craft

Whether it's writing poetry, creating short stories, animating your drawings, crocheting/knitting, or pursuing photography, spend a moment of J-Term break doing an activity you've always wanted but never had the time to do. It's up to you to create time for the things that bring you joy in life!



Catch up with some old friends

Remember those good old friends from high school or work who you love but rarely get to see—invite them over during break, or better yet, go visit them yourself. Use this chance to catch-up with each other and rekindle your friendship. Some of them might even still be on winter break, lucky ducks.



Create a vision board or bucket list

Experiencing trouble sticking to your New Year's resolutions? Instead of coming up with goals for 2019 that you likely won't commit to, create a vision board featuring long-term aspirations, dreams and passions you can actively visualize pursuing. These could be anything from traveling to Norway, going to grad school, or even growing taller.

Essentially, a vision board is like the "visual" version of a bucket list. However, if you're someone who prefers writing over a more hands-on arts and crafts project, you can always scrawl down your bucket list in a journal instead!



Start a new series or watch your favorite films

There's nothing wrong with a little self-care, so don't be worried to take some time over break to rest before the start of another busy semester at PLU. J-Term break might present a time for many of you to relax and catch-up on some of your favorite T.V. show dramas or films. Some of my personal favorite things to watch on Netflix are The Office, Patriot Act and Black Mirror. Overall, whichever way you spend J-Term break, use this time for yourself. Have a wonderful break, Lutes!

Fall sports recap

A look back at the Lutes season of success

By David Walter

Reporter

Pacific Lutheran University brought home four conference titles to commemorate a remarkable fall season for PLU Athletics.

The teams that earned the hardware this fall were the men's and women's soccer teams, volleyball team, and the men's cross country team.

"It was a really exciting fall for the department," said Sports Communication Director Mark Albanese. "Not only in winning a share of four of the six Northwest Conference Championships, but also the continued academic success and community involvement."

Although the Lutes had a very successful season on the field, they also lived up to the expectation of being student-athletes off the field.

"The department had a cumulative 3.28 GPA and was recognized by the NCAA for our efforts with Special Olympics in addition to the amazing success on the field of play," Albanese said.

Winning the Northwest Conference Title was a dream come true for this year's cross country team. Chris Nussbaum, a junior student-athlete on the cross country team described how much it meant to him personally and as a team to win the NWC title.

"Winning the conference championship was a huge deal, it was the focal point of our entire season," Nussbaum said. "Our team made it a priority this year to spend more time with each other. This allowed us to build chemistry which reflected in our races.



COURTESY OF MARK ALBANESE

The men's cross country team poses with the Northwest Conference championship trophy. The men split the title this year with George Fox.

By engaging in team-oriented activities both inside and outside of practice, it made us become more resilient while racing."

Even though the team bonded closer together, they also had to fight through ups and downs, adversities, and injuries.

"A few members of the team went into the race dealing with sickness and injuries which would test both the physical and mental toughness of the guys that participated in the championship race," Nussbaum said. "Specifically with how the conference meet went, we dealt with a lot of adversity but managed to pull off the win."

Nussbaum knew that this team had the potential to be great as long as the hard work was put into it. The cross country team wanted to represent PLU in the best way possible while making their mark

and enjoying the moments while they last.

Nussbaum also mentioned that the coaches played a major role in their success on the field.

"The coaches were the ones we attribute all our success to because they reinforced and instilled the winning atmosphere within the cross-country program," Nussbaum said.

Overall, it was a successful fall season for PLU Athletics. The countless hours in the weight room and on the practice field paid off for the athletes when it mattered most. Being successful both on the field and in the classroom defines the true meaning of a student-athlete.

According to the Athletics department, PLU athletics aims to create lifelong leaders through athletics united in teamwork, excellence, and service. The Athletic Depart-

ment wants athletes to experience growth on the field as well as off the field by giving back to the people in the community.

"You learn how to lead, how to contribute your individual talent and strengths to a collective goal, and partake in creating long lasting friendships that will never cease to go away," Nussbaum said. "At the end of the day, you don't remember the place you finish in, you remember the experiences and moments you share with the people you create those moments with."

Spring Sports Preview

Softball:

Feb. 2, 11 a.m. at Trinity

Baseball:

Feb. 7, 12 p.m. vs Redlands

Track and field:

Feb. 8-9, University of

Washington Husky Classic

Men's and Women's Golf:

Feb. 23-24, at Pacific Boxer Invitational

Rowing:

Mar. 9, PLU Invitational



PHOTO BY MCKENNA MORIN

Sophomore Kylee Johnson and junior Emma Janousek fight for the ball against Pacific. The team sits in fourth place in the conference.

Women's basketball team is tougher together

By Isaiah Shim

Sports Editor

The difference a year can make is astounding and a prime example of this is the Pacific Lutheran University's women's basketball team (11-6, 4-5 NWC). Last season, with an overall record of 5-20, the Lutes have already doubled the amount of wins they had last year, in the first half of the season.

Head coach Jennifer Childress leads the team with a "More WE" philosophy and believes that this team's ability to buy into this has been a key to their success.

"Our chemistry off the court transitions on to the court helping us when we've faced strong opponents or adversity. We all make sacrifices for the greater good of

the whole," Childress said Senior Kristin Sturdivan feels the same way.

"I think we have been successful because we have learned to rely on each other and play as a team. We all know our importance, and we help each other play to one another's strengths. We believe in our system and are sticking to it," Sturdivan said.

"This year we are not only friends on the court but off the court as well. We have a foundation of trust and encouragement built that helps us stick together in tough situations."

Heading into the second half of the season, both Sturdivan and Childress believe that this year's team can do great things.

Sturdivan said "Our potential lies within the hands of running our system, and believing in each other with hard work in practice, and execution in close games."

Childress felt the same way about the team.

"We have the talent and experience to do something very positive this season... whether through wins and losses, or via the improvement continuum, we will have a successful year. Focus on what matters and let the outcome surface."

With seven games remaining in the regular season, the women's team has a chance to end up being in the top four teams in the conference.

New faces, same game: men's basketball hopeful for the future

By Isaiah Shim

Sports Editor

Second year head coach Chad Murray had a lot to consider during tryouts this season, which ended with 12 out of the 16 members of the team being underclassmen.

For him, it was all about success on and off the court.

"The players that ended up being on the roster after tryouts were the ones who I thought gave us the best chance to move the program forward in a positive way both on and off the court," Murray said.

With such a young team, it seems the leadership would fall greatly onto the upperclassmen, but according to junior Conor Geiger that is not entirely the case.

"I give a lot of credit to the younger guys for their leadership. All have stepped up and have played very important roles to help our team achieve what we want" Geiger said.

"It all starts at practice too. We wouldn't

be the team we are right now if the younger guys didn't practice as hard as they do right now. Just the effort level alone that they give off makes everyone around them better."

Sitting in sixth place in the conference with an overall record of 6-10, the Lutes have their work cut out for them heading into the second half of the season. Geiger believes that this team can do great things.

"We really want this team to turn some heads by the end of the season. We are more than capable of playing with anyone in our league, and if anything is holding us back is ourselves. This is a very talented hard-working group of guys. This team will do great things in the near future."

The men's team has seven remaining games, including a four game road stretch. They end the season with home games against Whitman and Whitworth, both of which are ranked in the top-5 teams in the nation.



PHOTO BY MCKENNA MORIN

Sophomore Kelton Williams goes up for a layup against Pacific. The team is currently 3-5 in conference play.