

9-30-2021

Kenyon Collegian - September 30, 2021

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Recommended Citation

"Kenyon Collegian - September 30, 2021" (2021). *The Kenyon Collegian*. 2559.
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The Kenyon Collegian

ESTABLISHED 1856

September 30, 2021

Vol. CXLIX, No. 6

Gambier businesses struggle amidst national labor shortages

JOE WINT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Despite the recent lifting of enhanced COVID-19 restrictions and active cases on campus dwindling, Kenyon's campus operations remain far from normal. Four of the eight independent businesses in Gambier — including Chilitos Fresh Mex, the Gambier Deli, the Village Market and the Kenyon Inn restaurant — have been temporarily closed or have reduced their hours this semester due to staffing shortages. In addition, several other businesses in Gambier, such as the Bookstore and AVI food services, have reported staffing complications.

The temporary closure of Chilitos has become a target of conversation on campus, with many theories circulating as to why the doors of the student-favorite food option remain closed. During a recent Student Council meeting, Dean of Campus Life Laura Kane addressed rumors that the restaurant had lost its liquor license, explaining that it is closed due to short staffing.

In Knox County, more people than ever before have voluntarily quit their jobs and many unemployed workers are retiring or seeking jobs in different fields. Job resignations and openings are at an all-time national high. In particular, the hospitality and leisure industries were decimated by the pandemic, seeing more



Chilitos Fresh Mex remains closed due to staffing shortages. | TY CUTLER

than a 10% reduction in the industry labor force.

This trend is not unique to Knox County — similar difficulties are apparent throughout Ohio and the nation as a whole. The unparalleled conditions of the pandemic provided workers an opportunity to reassess their employment, leading to a major reshuffling in the labor market.

In the post-pandemic market, job seekers are able to leave their

jobs as soon as they are notified of opportunities offering better pay or benefits, specifically pertaining to schedule flexibility and childcare benefits. Meanwhile, minimum wage or low-paying service jobs are far less attractive than they were before. "[Employers are] now finding when posting help wanted signs, there just aren't people looking for those particular types of jobs," Trevon Logan, an economics professor

at The Ohio State University, told Knox Pages.

In April 2020, the harshest month of the pandemic for the United States economy, the unemployment rate in Ohio reached 16.4%, its highest since the Great Recession (25.6%). Beyond widespread layoffs, many employers cited health concerns and generous federal unemployment benefits as reasons for lower interest in employment. They presumed

that the reopening of in-person businesses and a decline in COVID-19 cases would begin to bring back employees.

Although unemployment in Ohio stabilized at a tremendous pace, this labor rebound has not gone quite as expected. As of October, the unemployment rate in the state returned to its normal level of about 5%. However, the labor market remains unbalanced and jobs continue to be extraordinarily hard to fill.

In addition to the 2.5 million U.S. workers displaced due to unemployment, 2.9 million people have left the labor market altogether, leaving the labor force well short of its size prior to the COVID-19 outbreak (3.6% deficit).

According to PJ Glandon, a Kenyon associate professor of economics, many people took the pandemic as an opportunity to retire or change careers. "People at the peak of their careers or late in their careers have decided to retire and left vacancies in their roles creating a big opportunity for other people to change careers," Glandon said in a recent Knox Pages panel.

Although Gambier businesses' staffing difficulties have much to do with nationwide labor shortages, supply shortages and a lack of business due to fluctuations in the campus population also complicated the transition to post-pandemic service.

Continued on page 4

Student files Unfair Labor Practice charge against College

SARA HALEBLIAN
PHOTO EDITOR

On Sept. 29, the Kenyon Student Worker Organizing Committee (K-SWOC) issued a press release announcing that a student worker and member of K-SWOC has filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge against Kenyon College. This comes two days after K-SWOC announced that it has again acquired a majority of Kenyon student workers' union card signatures, under UE Local 712 — a local chapter of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America.

The student worker chose to file these charges after they were not rehired for their job, which K-SWOC claims is due to the worker's participation in union events last semester. If successful, the student — who elected to remain anonymous — will be reinstated in their job and receive back pay.

Last semester, the student worker participated in the March 16 ULP strike, as well as the April 27-May 10 strike for

union recognition. Both of these strikes were legally protected by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), meaning that it is illegal for employers to retaliate against the striking employee.

The student had also indicated last semester that they wanted to continue working their on-campus job and was promised by their employer that they would be asked to reapply for this semester. After reapplying and waiting to hear back from the employer, the student discovered through former coworkers that they had not been rehired for the job — while all of their coworkers who were not part of the aforementioned strikes were. At this point, most of the application deadlines for other on-campus jobs had passed. According to K-SWOC, the student's managers were aware of their exclusion from rehiring, and the workplace's departmental management had previously made coercive anti-union statements.

After being excluded from the hiring process, the student reached out to K-SWOC, believing that their employer

had violated their rights as a worker. The student worked alongside K-SWOC to discuss the possible courses of action, including filing the ULP charge against the College. According to K-SWOC's press release, "the College's decision to not rehire a student worker who participated in legally protected union activities violated Section 8(a)(3) of the NLRA. This section prohibits an employer from 'refusing to hire or consider job applicants because of their union membership, activities, or sympathies.'"

K-SWOC believes that with a recognized union, student workers would be guaranteed a voice in major changes in the workplace, and that they would be able to hold the College accountable as an employer.

For the past 13 months, K-SWOC has been publically campaigning for student workers to sign cards to indicate their support for a union. Since cards expire after a year, many student workers who signed cards during the summer and fall of 2020 have had to re-sign. K-SWOC

plans to present these to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) when they file for an election.

"We look forward to student workers, not the Board of Trustees deciding on the question of union recognition for student workers through a democratic election administered by the NLRB. However, this is only a possibility once we have enough cards that we can comfortably petition for an NLRB certification election and we encourage all student workers to sign or consider signing a card with K-SWOC," Sally Smith '23, a member of K-SWOC, wrote in a message to the *Collegian*.

In the press release, K-SWOC called for support for this student worker and for all Kenyon student workers, while also reiterating that student workers have the right to join a union and engage in legal labor activity with their coworkers.

K-SWOC encourages any student workers who are concerned their rights have been violated by the College to reach out to them by email at union@kswoc.org.

College unveils “Foundations for Kenyon’s Third Century”

AMELIA CARNELL
NEWS EDITOR

On Sept. 22, President Sean Decatur sent a news bulletin to the Kenyon community announcing the College’s new strategic plan. The plan, “Foundations for Kenyon’s Third Century,” includes the growth of the student body to 2,000 students over the next 10 years, the reimagining of the academic calendar to incorporate a “J-term” and the introduction of a computational studies major.

“I’m excited by how well the plan maps onto our overall mission and values, and how it responds to the challenges of this specific moment and for the foreseeable future. I believe it will position Kenyon, and our graduates, for success, even in uncertain times,” Vice President for Facilities, Planning, and Sustainability Ian Smith said.

The strategic planning process took between seven and eight months, and included conversations between administrators, students, faculty, trustees and alumni. According to Decatur, the process extended from Kenyon’s newly revised mission statement, and began by putting together a steering committee which then broke into smaller working groups.

“The goal of the strategic planning process is always to pull way

back from what you’re doing and to think very big picture about your deepest commitments and your biggest priorities,” said Provost Jeffrey Bowman.

Key to the strategic plan is increasing enrollment by approximately 15% over the next 10 years. Vice President for Finance Todd Burson pointed out that the goal student population of 2,000 students is close to Kenyon’s 2021-22 enrollment, although it inflated for a number of reasons — including a disproportionately large first-year class and an unusually high number of second-semester seniors.

Growing the student population will allow for a broadening of programming, but some students have raised concerns that it will change Kenyon’s unique small-school culture.

Decatur said that he did not believe growth would change Kenyon, pointing to the fact that many of Kenyon’s peer institutions are slightly larger.

“I think as long as we are very intentional and careful when doing that over the course of an extended period of time, we should be able to navigate to hit that sweet spot,” he said. Decatur noted that the key is growing the campus just enough to support growing opportunities like the new major in computation studies, but not so much as to significantly change the cul-

ture on campus.

Notably, the increased student population will create an increase in tuition revenue for the College, as many fixed costs remain the same.

The plan also includes tuition increases over the next ten years. However, Burson emphasized that keeping Kenyon affordable was a key priority and that the College also plans to increase the discount rate, the proportion of financial aid Kenyon awards relative to its tuition revenue, from 39% to 48%.

According to Burson, 52% of the additional income will cover increased operational costs that will come with growing the school, and another 37% will be used to pay off debts and grow Kenyon’s endowment.

This strategic growth will be paired with an expansion of campus infrastructure, which will include not only increasing the physical capacity of the campus, but also hiring additional staff members and adding 10 new tenure-track faculty positions.

The necessary expansions to physical infrastructure include the construction of two new residential buildings on South campus, which, according to Smith, will begin in 2022 and be completed by early 2026. Decatur said that this expansion will not only allow the College to expand but also to im-

prove its infrastructure.

“I think the housing stuff will actually get better. And some of our other campus infrastructure, whether it’s health and counseling services or other things on campus, I think we’ll also have the opportunity to improve and get better as we think about strengthening what that infrastructure looks like,” Decatur said.

The final 11% of new revenue will go towards a variety of strategic initiatives laid out in the strategic plan.

One of these initiatives is to restructure the academic calendar to include a “J-term” in the month of January, a monthlong term where students could take a single intensive course, complete internships, research or travel abroad.

“This would enable us to have a more nimble and adaptive set of curricular and co-curricular choices for students so that not every opportunity that we have in terms of curriculum comes in a ready-made 14-week block, and gives an opportunity for faculty members to be creative about new teaching modes,” Bowman said. According to Bowman, this revised calendar would appear during the 2024-25 academic year at the earliest.

Additionally, the College will soon add a major in computational studies. Bowman emphasized the

program will build on existing strengths within the faculty and stay true to Kenyon’s liberal arts model of education. He said that the search for at least one new faculty member for the major will begin next year.

Another strategic initiative in the plan is a commitment to the environment, in all academic departments and areas of the College.

“You could have historians who work on the environment, you can have poets who are interested in the literature of the environment,” said Bowman. “So I imagine [this commitment] being about both the nuts and bolts of the College and of the buildings, and also the teaching mission of the College.”

This increased environmental emphasis pairs with Kenyon’s commitment to be carbon-neutral by 2040. According to Smith, members of the senior staff are working on specific recommendations, and this planning will be complete by the end of the academic year.

Finally, the plan calls for an increased emphasis on international engagement, including broadening the range of study-abroad opportunities and travel courses.

The strategic plan will carry Kenyon through the next decade, until the next strategic planning process begins in 2030.

Kenyon receives donation pledge from Schuler Foundation

BEN BRUMLEY
STAFF WRITER

On Tuesday, Sept. 28, President Sean Decatur announced in a news bulletin that Kenyon will partner with the Schuler Education Foundation through the Kenyon Access Initiative, a fund which uses donations to create scholarships for students from underrepresented backgrounds. Under the partnership, the foundation will match every dollar the Kenyon Access Initiative receives from Kenyon donors up to \$25 million by June 2026.

The Schuler Education Foundation has the stated goal of helping students from underrepresented backgrounds attend high-

ly selective liberal arts colleges. Working through various programs like the Schuler Initiative and the Schuler Scholar Program, they seek to use philanthropic resources to ameliorate the barriers to entry into such schools. In partnering with the Foundation in its inaugural cycle, Kenyon joins five other liberal arts colleges: Tufts University, Bates College, Union College and Carleton College. The Foundation will fully match Kenyon donors.

“At the end of the day, it’s this foundation saying, ‘you know what, we’re going to help you build this endowment as quickly as possible,’” Vice President of Finance Todd Burson said.

The partnership will rely on a coopera-

tive effort between Kenyon donors and the Foundation. In total, it seeks to acquire enough funding to create “permanent pathways” for 50 students in each class per year.

Decatur said that this partnership will tie into the goals of the College’s new strategic plan. “A key part of the strategic plan is also to continue to focus our efforts on expanding the diversity of the student body, especially socioeconomic diversity,” he said. “We arrived at that in the strategic plan because it is in alignment with our mission and values, and it’s something that we think is important for the college to do.”

In the past, Kenyon has had to deny admission to qualified students due to an inability to provide sufficient financial aid.

Decatur expressed hope that the partnership will give the College a steady financial resource through which they can prevent such cases.

“The opportunity to raise \$50 million with the added bonus, assuming we’re successful, [will allow us to] support the financial aid of students who are already here while specifically adding new Pell [Grant] eligible and [Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals] students to the campus,” Decatur said. “It’s just a perfect fit with the strategic plan and actually provides the resources for us to be able to do that much more quickly than we had anticipated.”

The Kenyon Access Initiative is expected to fully reach its goal by June 2026.

The Kenyon Collegian

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Horn Gallery rehires sound technicians one year after layoffs

GRANT HOLT
STAFF WRITER

Student sound technicians were rehired at the Horn Gallery at the beginning of this year, after being abruptly laid off from their positions in September of 2020.

According to former Horn sound technician Sajara Magdalena Urquieta '22, the sound technicians advocated to be rehired during the fall semester of last year, after working to make Horn events virtually accessible. Urquieta expressed disappointment in the lack of transparency and communication between the technicians and their supervisors.

"With the constant changes in the status of who our supervisor was, if/when we were going to be rehired, and the possible switch of departments of who will be overlooking the Horn Sound Technicians,

I felt like we were being left in the dark again," Urquieta wrote in an email to the *Collegian*. "Even after expressing that we wanted to be kept in the loop of things, we had to consistently reach out to our supervisor to be told what was happening and what their next steps were."

Feeling frustrated by a lack of support for their work, Urquieta and other sound technicians turned to the Kenyon Student Worker Organizing Committee (K-SWOC). They also asked for members of the community to sign a petition, and ran an email drive in October of 2020 to organize support.

"The support we received showed our supervisor and higher-ups that not only were our grievances being heard by everyone (but them) but also showed them that people supported us in our struggle to

find clarity in our job position," Urquieta said.

According to Urquieta, however, the College pushed back on this support by limiting meetings with supervisors to only allow two or three students, paring down an already small group of student workers. Wondering what the position would look like in spring of 2020, the sound technicians sent an email to their supervisors knowing that there was a possibility of hosting in-person shows.

They also reached out to LBIS, aware that management of the position would likely be switched over from the Office of Student Engagement. Despite being able to hold an in-person event in April 2021, the College did not rehire the technicians. According to Urquieta, the College's event policy at the time stated that technical support would instead

need to be arranged through the Kenyon reservation system and supported by LBIS.

In an attempt to be rehired for the 2021-22 academic year, Urquieta says that the sound technicians planned a meeting with new Director of Student Engagement Mick Steiner.

"We had all accepted the urgency to get rehired and be provided training for the job, but it was still unclear where the sound technicians would be rehired. Both Steiner and Kane had assured us that they would keep in contact with us over the summer about the status of our jobs," she said.

According to Steiner, he sent an email out over the summer to the former sound technicians to gauge interest about returning to their positions in the present academic year. He said that he went on to discuss the details of the position with them, as is customary for re-

turning student workers.

Urquieta is glad that sound technicians were able to be successfully rehired for the current academic year. However, they hope that there will be greater communication and transparency from their supervisors moving forward.

"I hope that there is follow-through with the training of the sound technicians because I have been promised the same in the past but it was always canceled last minute. I hope that there is a continued discussion on hiring and paying the Horn managers for their work instead of hiring them as sound technicians to allow them to be paid," Urquieta said. "Finally, I hope that there are no more attempts to try to separate or prevent coworkers from advocating for and with one another because each person's voice is important, not just a select few."

Chalmers Library rolls out new study room reservation system

SOPHIE PECK
STAFF WRITER

Kenyon's Library and Information Services (LBIS) recently unveiled a new reservation system for collaboration spaces in Chalmers Library that allows students to book private rooms up to two weeks in advance.

Chalmers boasts a wide variety of different study spaces for students to take advantage of. The big reading rooms offer a brighter, more communal setting for studying, while the basement levels are designed for individual use. The most coveted spaces, however, are the group study rooms, which are now open for reservation. There are spaces available on floors 1 through 4 for the purpose of group study in a more private setting.

These group study spaces are designed for collaboration and innovation between two or more people. They are complete with a whiteboard, and in some cases a flat-screen monitor for projection.

Students can access the reservation system via the Kenyon website and the tablets mounted outside of the study rooms. People may select an open room at their desired time frame for up to four hours a day. The larger rooms — with 16-person capacities — require approval to reserve, while the smaller rooms can be reserved from the website or by walk-up, if availability permits. Once the reservation is submitted, the reserver's name will appear on the screen outside the room.

While reserving a study room is a quick process, Associate Vice President for Libraries and Strategic Innovation Amy Badertscher asked students to be mindful of others' need for the rooms as well. "Be courteous and sensitive to the fact that these rooms are in high demand," Badertscher wrote in a Student-Info email announcing the new reservation system.



Students can reserve these study rooms for four hours up to two weeks in advance. | SARA HALEBLIAN

Room reservations have also created ample opportunity for stress-induced hostility. It can be difficult to find an open time to book the near-constantly occupied rooms, and sometimes the turnover of the room

from one reservation to the next can be awkward.

"I got [a room] once and my name was on the screen but I still could not get in," Karina Morey '25 said.

There is also the issue of volume control within the rooms. "Please

keep discussions quiet- the walls are not soundproof," Badertscher said.

Perhaps the most important policy is that spaces not claimed within 15 minutes of a reservation will be offered to another group, so it is important for students to be punctual.

The College suspended lease payments for Village businesses

In light of these issues, Kenyon stepped in to assist Village businesses throughout the pandemic. This was an unprecedented move by the College, which has rarely involved itself in the financial affairs of the independently operated businesses in Gambier. The College owns and leases the facilities currently housing Wiggins Street Coffee, the Village Inn, the Deli, Chilitos, the Village Market and Campus Auto. According to Ian Smith, vice president for facilities, planning and sustainability, the College is only responsible for maintaining the buildings themselves, including infrastructure such as electricity and plumbing.

The College began to waive lease payments for all six businesses with the rents due in April 2020 and continued this through June 2021, for a total of 15 months. Lease payments resumed beginning in July 2021.

Smith said that Kenyon suspending monthly lease payment requirements from these businesses was the most significant, concrete and practical step it could take to help the College's commercial tenants remain a viable part of the Gambier community.

Given Village businesses' reliance on Kenyon student patronage, the College wanted to ensure that these businesses could still survive without the normal student population present.

"The presence of businesses in Gambier is important for the overall experience of the College and so we feel that it's a partnership [that] is important and [we're] doing what we can to help to make sure that businesses could make it through the time of the pandemic," President Sean Decatur said.

Despite the College's aid, the economic impact of the pandemic continues to affect Gambier businesses' operations. The Kenyon Inn, which serves as a student residency this year, has significantly reduced its restaurant's hours due to staffing concerns. The absence of hotel guests has also impacted the restaurant's business, as students are less likely to frequent the Inn for a luxury meal than external visitors.

According to an anonymous employee, the restaurant usually closes down before people are forced to work overtime. Right now, the restaurant offers service from 11 a.m. through 2 p.m. and remains open for dinner service only a couple of nights per week.

The Kenyon Inn is attempting to increase its staff and is currently looking for anyone trained to work in the kitchen, specifically line cooks. Although historically the restaurant has hired very few Kenyon students, several students have recently joined the staff.

The most notable business struggling with understaffing is

Chilitos, which has yet to open this semester. Chilitos tends not to accept many student workers due to scheduling complications and prefers to bring in workers from outside the Kenyon community, especially those who are immigrants of Latinx descent. Former Chilitos employee Leesbeth Claros '22 noted that this component of Chilitos is crucial to its cultivation of a family-oriented atmosphere, which resonates with many Latinx students. While Chilitos hires primarily non-student workers, Claros believes the business really does love students and wants to give them jobs. "I think it is hard for them to continue to be staffed especially during midterms and finals, and during the weekends," she said. Claros expects the restaurant to reopen relatively soon.

Unlike many of the other businesses in the Village, the Market does not commonly hire student workers. Since reopening last fall, the Market's hours continue to be significantly limited due to staffing concerns. The Market has recently been known to not hire students, primarily because of students having scheduling conflicts, canceling shifts last minute or selling alcohol to underage friends.

Although the Market seems content in offering reduced service while staffing problems persist, its change in operations is seriously impacting the Kenyon Bookstore.

The Bookstore briefly shut down at the start of the pandemic but reopened to the public in May 2020. For several months, the Bookstore was the only location on campus fully open to the general public, staff and students. According to General Manager Angus MacDonnell, staffing hasn't been a struggle until very recently. He added that the biggest challenge for the Bookstore is sourcing enough product to meet the demand of the large campus population. "With the Market closed at night and on the weekends the demand for snacks and drinks has increased dramatically, which is great for us if the supply chain catches up to demand," MacDonnell said.

Both understaffing and the increase in demand are contributing to stressful conditions for Bookstore employees. Bookstore employee Stefano Frank De Maria '22 mentioned that stocking the shelves of the Bookstore is taking up a much larger portion of his job than it likely would have pre-pandemic. "Some days, if I'm being quite honest, the restocking process is akin to sweeping out floodwater with a broom. Everyone's just feeling the crunch, man," De Maria said.

According to MacDonnell, understaffing is not currently harming the Bookstore's business due to recent student hires. However,

the Bookstore is in need of two part-time permanent employees within the next few weeks. "For those particular positions we need permanent staff who can work all year to cover the many academic breaks," MacDonnell said.

The way back to economic normalcy for small businesses in Gambier and across the nation is not entirely clear. Glandon noted he is unsure of how the economy should be expected to rebound from the labor market complications, as no recessions have been quite like this one in terms of its rapid recovery. "In fact, if anything, economists have been talking about why recession recovery seems to be so slow. ... It's going to take us a little time to sort this all out," Glandon said.

According to Knox Pages, many businesses are attempting to reconfigure jobs to make them more rewarding through wage increases, referral bonuses, employee discounts, marketing redesigns and job postings across a number of mediums. OhioMeansJobs Knox County — an organization that assists employers in finding and retaining skilled workers, and helps job seekers find employment — is in the process of entering a contract to conduct a community employment needs assessment for the county, which is slated to be completed by March 2022.

Mount Vernon Farmers Market voted best in Ohio

THERESA CARR
FEATURES ASSISTANT

With 556 votes, the 2021 America's Farmers Market Celebration ranked the Mount Vernon Farmers Market first in Ohio, eighth in the Midwest and 29th in the country.

The America's Farmers Market Celebration is a competition run by the American Farmland Trust to publicize farmers markets across the country. From June 21 to Sept. 19, market supporters vote for their local favorites on the American Farmland Trust's website. The Trust recognizes state and regional winners, and gifts cash awards to the three organizations across the nation who received the most votes. Over 2,000 farmers markets participated in 2021.

With two dozen vendors and a prime location on the Public Square, the Mount Vernon Farmers Market is the largest in Knox County. Local vendors offer an assortment of products, including fruits, vegetables, honey and baked goods. The market also has implemented measures to make its nutritious local offerings less cost-prohibitive — Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits; Women, Infants and Children benefits; and other programs that reduce out-of-pocket cost.

The Mount Vernon Farmers Market rallied community support with messages on social media and outreach through local organizations. On Tuesday, Sept. 14, Alyssa Gómez Lawrence '10, assistant director of community

partnerships, sent an email to all students and employees encouraging community members to vote for their local market.

"I know how much you love the Mount Vernon Farmers Market..." said the subject line, "So why don't you take a moment to vote for it!" continued Gómez Lawrence in the body of the email.

When the voting was finalized, the Mount Vernon Farmers Market thanked those who voted them to the top of the Ohio leaderboard. "We are honored to take that designation and appreciate the votes and support!" the organization wrote on their Facebook page.

The Market's regional showing was strong, ranking eighth out of hundreds of participating farmers markets in the Midwest, including the nationwide winner, Columbia Farmers Market of Columbia, Mo., a larger market with regular attendance of over 4,000 and 85 vendors.

"If the last year has taught us anything, it is that farmers markets are not a luxury to communities," the American Farmland Trust web page reads. "They are essential businesses that provide a vital service and should be celebrated." Consequently, the dollar amount of cash prizes awarded to the first, second and third-place markets in the country were increased from previous years to expand those markets' reaches.

The Mount Vernon Farmers Market runs weekly on Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. May through October.

Student Council discusses December Commencement

AUDREY BAKER
STAFF WRITER

On Sunday, Sept. 26, Student Council met to discuss updates on housing and dining, a Commencement ceremony for second-semester seniors and the approval of the new Kenyon Fiber Arts Club.

Housing and Dining Committee Chairperson Ever Croffoot-Suede '23 discussed AVI's new online menu, which is intended to give students easier access to nutrition and allergen information. Due to issues at the corporate AVI level, however, this transition has decreased the number of meal options available, which may lead to an increased repetition of dishes from the previous three-week dining schedule.

"We might have to deal with limited menu options for a little bit," Croffoot-Suede said.

The Council also announced that the College will offer a December Commencement ceremony for the 37 current second-semester seniors.

"I think it's a sign that Kenyon is adapting to confront our current present challenges," said Senior Class President Grant Holt '22, who led the effort to organize the Commencement ceremony. "We need to continuously adapt and evolve to make sure the student experience is preserved, that students receive the engagement they deserve, and the recognition they deserve."

Additionally, the Council approved the

formation of the Kenyon Fiber Arts Club, a new student organization which seeks to bridge the gap between Kenyon and Mount Vernon through community service in the form of knitting hats, scarves and blankets to be donated to a local women's shelter. All levels of experience are welcome.

"We just wanted to provide a safe and supportive atmosphere where students can both learn how to knit if they want to, or crochet ... that also has the community service aspect," said Isabel Fine '23.

The Council also discussed the First-Year Class Committee elections, which close at midnight on Oct. 3, and applications for new student organizations, which are open and being reviewed by the Office of Student Life.

Finally, Vice President for Academic Affairs Delaney Gallagher '23 dispelled rumors that Kenyon would be offering an education major in the future. Instead, Kenyon students hoping to pursue careers in teaching have the opportunity to take classes towards an education certificate at a nearby university in addition to their degree.

"We don't and will not be having an education major," Gallagher said. "You can get an education certificate from Capital University in Columbus with a partnership we started last year."

Those interested in this partnership should contact Gordon Loveland in the physics department.

The next Student Council meeting will be held on Sunday, Oct. 3 at 7:00 p.m.

141 sophomores and juniors participate in fall recruitment

ADAM MARGOLIS
NEWS EDITOR

Fall recruitment for Greek organizations took place over the week of Sept. 19. A total of 141 sophomores and juniors signed up to take part in the process, and nearly 80 of those students received bids, though numbers are still being finalized.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions in place last spring, most Greek organizations decided to forgo recruitment until this fall in order to hold events in person. However, some Greek organizations, including the Archon Society and Phi Kappa Tau, held virtual recruitment events last spring.

In recent years, students around the nation have called the status of Greek life on college campuses into question. In 2020, in the midst of a wave of Black Lives Matter protests across the

country, protestors began the Abolish Greek Life movement. Additionally, as sexual assault on college campuses has become a bigger topic of conversation in recent years, studies have shown that some Greek organizations are complicit in perpetuating such abuse.

Greek Council President and member of Zeta Alpha Pi Thea Soukup '22 noted that the number of students who signed up to participate in recruitment events this fall was lower than usual. She believes the unusual timing of recruitment, coupled with a decrease in the presence of Greek life on campus, may have contributed to the lack of interest.

"We haven't had all-campus [parties], we don't do big community service or campus contribution events right now, so a lot of students don't know what Greek life does on campus, [so]

they don't really have a strong desire to be a part of it," Soukup said.

However, Soukup did stress the importance of an in-person recruitment process, explaining that generating interest through a virtual format would have made it difficult for active members to connect with new recruits, many of whom were off-campus last semester.

In-person recruitment was not guaranteed this semester. In early September, when Kenyon was experiencing an outbreak of COVID-19 cases on campus, the College implemented guidelines that restricted the number of students allowed to attend in-person social gatherings and extracurricular events. These guidelines would have impacted in-person recruitment events.

In response, President of Zeta Alpha Pi Katrina Tiktinsky '22 headed an open letter signed by

all 11 Greek organizations on campus. The organizations then sent the letter to the COVID-19 Steering Committee, imploring the College to allow them to carry out a standard, in-person recruitment process. The letter outlined a series of suggestions that would alter recruitment events to abide by the then-imposed guidelines. These included requiring students to wear masks at recruitment events and prohibiting organizations from offering refreshments while holding events indoors.

Tiktinsky cited frustrations with the College's policies limiting the size of in-person gatherings — especially since the College allowed in-person tours and off-campus athletic competitions to continue — as the reason she decided to write the letter.

"While members of Greek orgs were certainly concerned with the health of students on

our campus, we felt that the administration had very little faith in our ability to manage that risk," Tiktinsky said. "It was frustrating to see recruitment be up in the air, but football games going on as scheduled with fans in the stadium."

However, Tiktinsky noted that while the College's contradictory guidance played a role in crafting the letter, her concern for the future of Greek life at Kenyon was at the forefront. She explained that in-person recruitment was the most effective way to connect with potential new members, return organizations to their standard sizes and ensure the survival of Greek life at Kenyon.

"I don't think that anyone outside of Greek life would have the personal experience to know the meaning that Greek life has had for us as students on this campus," she said.

Adelante hosts writer Gabby Rivera for Latinx Heritage Month

ARI BLUFFSTONE
NEWS ASSISTANT

HUIJUN MAO
STAFF WRITER

On Sept. 24, Adelante, Kenyon's Latinx student organization, hosted Gabby Rivera as the keynote speaker for Latinx Heritage month. Rivera is a queer Puerto Rican-American author, and the author behind Marvel's America comic and the novel *Juliet Takes a Breath*. In her keynote address delivered over Zoom, Rivera spoke about her experience as a queer Latinx writer and her path to authorship.

Betania Escobar, co-president of Adelante and a moderator of the event, spoke about the experience of bringing Rivera to campus. "I felt so lucky, honestly, to just be in that virtual space with her and to get to co-moderate with her as well," she said. "It was just so cool and I felt very at home."

In 2016, Rivera published *Juliet Takes a Breath*, which imagines the experience of a 19-year-old Puerto Rican girl learning to "love her queerness," and "discovering a deeper connection to her Puerto Rican identity," according to Rivera. While writing the novel, Rivera rejected literary tropes common for novels by featuring woman-identifying, gender nonconforming and plus-sized protagonists. "It starts with this idea that you got to hate yourself and wish that you were not like this. I'm not doing that," Rivera said.

After the success of her first novel, Rivera was invited by Marvel comics to write the storyline for *America*, which premiered the first queer Latinx superhero in a Marvel series: America Chavez. "She is one of the strongest characters in the Marvel Universe," Rivera said. "She punches portals into other dimensions, meaning that she can go anywhere. For so many Black and brown women and just people in general, there are borders in our way ... but America Chavez shows us how we can go wherever we want."

Growing up in the 1990s in the Bronx, Rivera noted that she lacked examples of queer joy. "There is no media that shows happy gay people," she said. "There are no

television shows with gay people and families. We do not survive the end of the movie." Rivera decided to put her feelings into words, and started her career as a writer at the age of 17.

Rivera's discussion of Latinx identity in her work resonated with Escobar as someone who identifies as both queer and Mexican-Salvadoreña.

"I appreciate that she is making these stories about loving yourself and every single part of your identity, even if it contradicts other parts," said Escobar. "She centered her talk around these three words: queer Latinx joy. ... I remember that she said queerness is her power, and we see that in her artwork."

Escobar also discussed how colorism and the erasure of Black and Indigenous ancestry — central themes in Rivera's talk — have also arisen in discussion among members of Adelante.

"I appreciated that in her talk she complicated the term Latinx, and made sure to bring up, 'Who is 'Latinx' for?' Is it for people who identify as Latinx who are lighter-skinned, that present as heteronormative, that come from specific countries? Who does it not serve?"

Rivera's presence also reaffirmed Escobar's commitment for Adelante to be an inclusive space for all Latinx students.

"I really wish for Adelante to be a place of comfort for Latinx students on campus, and a place where all different parts of our identities can be celebrated, and talked about openly," said Escobar. "That's why it's so important to have [Latinx Heritage Month]. ... It's so important to have these moments of joy and community with one another."

Another recurring theme in Rivera's talk was looking toward the future. "Puerto-Rican queer kids deserve to be in the future," said Rivera about her character BB Free from her ongoing comic series. "I want to see big happy brown babes making magic from here and forever."

Escobar emphasized the importance of recognizing intersecting identities, and promoting a campus that actively supports students who identify as queer, Latinx and non-white.

"It's important to mention that we don't

LATINX

HERITAGE MONTH 2021

OPENING CEREMONY

Thursday, September 16 @ 11:00 AM
Co-Sponsored by Adelante and ODEI

EMPANADAS AND MORE FOOD TRUCK

Saturday, September 25 @ 11:00 AM
Lowry Athletic Center
A Grab And Go Event
Co-Sponsored by Adelante and ODEI

CULTURAL TASTING EVENT

Saturday, September 18 @ 4:00 PM
Allen House Lawn
A Grab and Go Event
Sponsored by Adelante

ADELANTE GAME NIGHT

Friday, October 8 @ 5:00 PM
Sponsored by Adelante

ADELANTE LEADERSHIP DINNER

Friday, September 24 @ 5:00 PM
By Invitation Only

LATINX HERITAGE MONTH READING

Friday, October 15 @ 7:00 PM
Sponsored by Adelante and ODEI

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Featuring Gabby Rivera
Friday, September 24 @ 7:00 PM



Kenyon

COURTESY OF ADELANTE

have a Latinx counselor in the [Cox Health and] Counseling Center," said Escobar. "I've heard members talk about, 'Where's our Latina counselor?'" she said. "Kenyon needs to do more work on supporting students of color as a whole: Latinx students, Black stu-

dents, indigenous students, queer students ... not only to have these wonderful events where we try to center our community, but where we are making sure that we're taking care of everybody that's in those communities year-round."

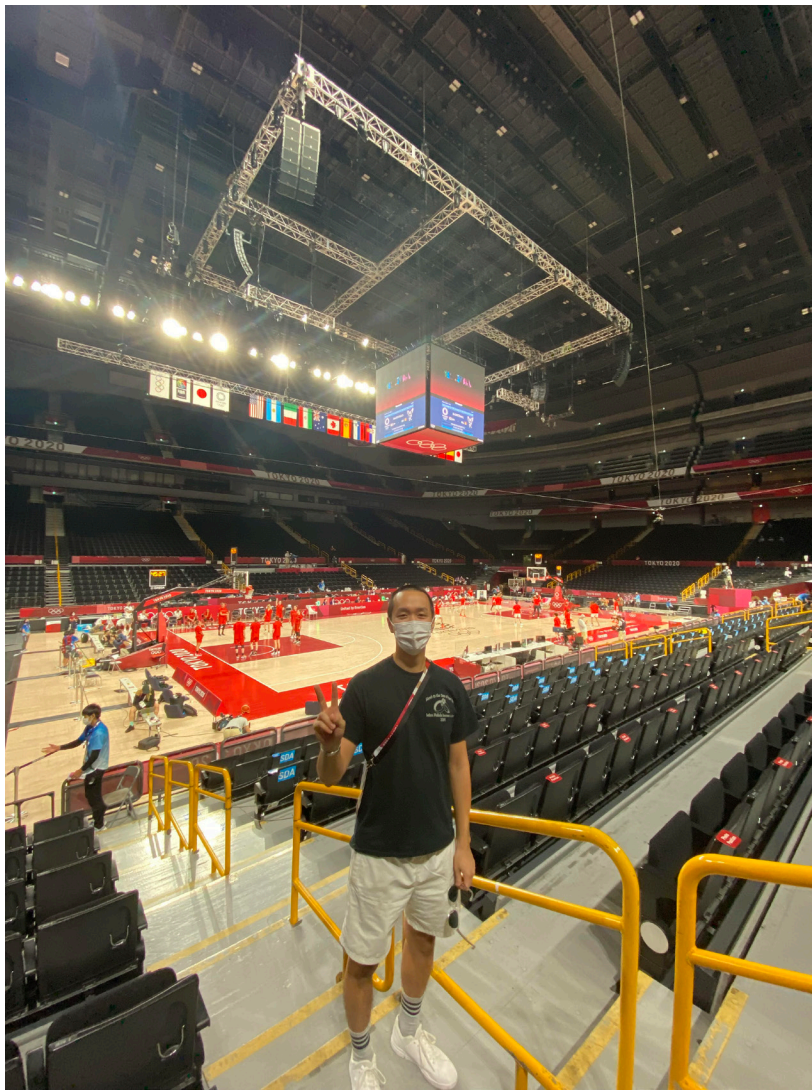
Syou Nam Thai '23 takes year off to cover Olympics for NBC

CHLOE GOLDSTEIN
STAFF WRITER

While some students were learning or working virtually over the past year, Syou Nam Thai '23 had the unique opportunity to work for the Olympics with NBC. Thai, who is currently in his home city of Tokyo, received a position as a technical logistics assistant through a friend and Kenyon alumna. After giving the job a try, Thai enjoyed his experience and eventually decided to take an entire year away from Kenyon to continue his work at NBC, which holds all of the broadcasting rights for the Olympics. Though the Tokyo Olympics finished in August, Thai and his coworkers are continuing to pack up the remaining production equipment.

Before his experiences in Tokyo, Thai had already known that he wanted to work in film or television, but could have never predicted that he would be able to pursue these interests midway through his college career. In his first three years at Kenyon, Thai did technical work in the theater and helped build sets for many Kenyon productions.

While the summer Olympics were in session, Thai worked in technical logistics, and most of his daily operations consisted of working in a massive warehouse in the middle of Tokyo. "There were hundreds of millions of dollars worth of equipment in this warehouse that NBC needs to broadcast the entirety of the Olympics, including cameras, studio pieces, sets and lighting," he said. Thai's



Thai will continue his work in Beijing for the 2022 Winter Olympics. | PHOTOS COURTESY OF SYOU NAM THAI

team managed inventory, and was responsible for the distribution of the equipment. Before the Olympics began, Thai and his team were working to ensure the production equipment was properly handled, but once the broadcasting began, Thai and his coworkers had plenty of free time to watch and enjoy the games.

But Thai's work for NBC will not end in Tokyo. "NBC offered me a job to work at the Beijing Olympics, which is happening in about five months. So after this, we are headed right to Beijing to begin preparing for the 2022 Winter Olympics," Thai said.

Although he is excited about his upcoming experiences at

the Winter Olympics, Thai also misses Kenyon's campus and being back at school with a full student body present. "It hit me a couple of weeks ago that I won't graduate with my best friends, but taking a year off has been an eye-opening experience for me to see what kinds of jobs there are out there for me," he said.

While taking time away from Kenyon, Thai has reflected on the importance of a college education and his growth as a student and a learner. "What you learn or what your major is in college doesn't really matter. If we have the critical mind to be able to solve problems, that's more important than anything else," he said.

Community Roots continues to attract student volunteers

MIA SNOW
STAFF WRITER

When urban ecologist Kim Frye returned to her hometown of Mount Vernon in 2016, abandoned greenhouses on West Gambier Street sparked memories of her childhood. Intrigued, Frye reached out to the owner, curious as to whether or not the land was in use. Little did she know that those very greenhouses would become the launching point for her organization Community Roots. The nonprofit provides horticultural rehabilitation programs for probationers, agricultural programs for schools and countless other programs that provide agricultural education for the Mount Vernon area.

Prior to their abandonment, the greenhouses were used as the nursery where Frye first learned about horticulture and gardening. In 2016, after leaving her teaching position at DePaul University's environmental sci-

ence department, Frye hoped to apply her expertise to the greenhouse horticulture. She reached out to the previous Mount Vernon landowner, and discovered their mutual interest in using the space for rehabilitation programs. "It happened organically from there," Frye explained. "Over the next year we developed relationships in order to recruit board members for our new nonprofit."

The first year of Community Roots allowed Frye and the board members to experiment. "It felt like we were throwing things at the wall to see what would stick. We did everything from crafting fairy gardens to drilling gourds for bird feeders to winter seed sowing," she said.

Since its inception, Community Roots has matured into an organization that offers distinctly funded programs, one of which centers around probationers dealing with opioid recovery, offering them cognitive behavioral therapy through therapeutic horticulture. Explaining the reasoning behind the use

of plants for the therapy, Frye said that the plants provide an outlet through which participants can practice coping mechanisms. "The goal is to focus on the process, not the product. We use the plants as an indirect focus to deal with anger management, forgiveness, compassion and resilience," she said.

Community Roots also brings agricultural projects to schools, a program funded by a United States Department of Agriculture Farm to School grant, and has helped Twin Oaks Elementary School in Mount Vernon install raised garden beds. The school is now planning for the fall season, involving students in the planting of radishes and carrots. As these beds are neglected in the summer, Community Roots steps in when parents and teachers are unable to care for the beds.

The volunteer opportunities open to Kenyon students at Community Roots are endless. Most commonly, groups of students are organized and provid-

ed with transportation to community gardens. "That was a big hit in the past — sorting seeds in the spring and fall, as well as putting the community beds to rest for the winter with weeding and mulching," Frye explained. She also highlighted both a summer and full-year position open to students post-graduation, which offers roughly \$6000 for student loans or graduate school tuition. "This gives students experience in helping up and coming nonprofit organizations develop," she said.

Frye emphasizes that Community Roots' popularity amongst Kenyon students stems from feelings of isolation. "Community Roots can provide that outlet for those in a small world needing an escape," she said.

To volunteer, students can sign up for time slots through www.community-rootsohio.org or they can contact Community Roots directly on Instagram @communityrootsohio.

On the record with AVI’s Bill Kollas, fusion station legend

JOE MEYERSON
STAFF WRITER

MADELEINE MAGILL
STAFF WRITER

Everybody loves Bill Kollas from Peirce’s fusion station. The patron saint is known among Kenyon students for his tasty cooking and his gregarious disposition, his quick wit and his unmistakable laugh. He’s a Peirce fixture, a campus tradition, a much-needed voice of reason in the hustle and bustle of mealtime chatter and overly busy days.

But not everyone *knows* Bill. The *Collegian* was lucky enough to catch up with him for a few minutes on a break between meals last Saturday afternoon.

Hey, Bill. How long have you been working at Kenyon?
Almost four years now.

What inspired you to work here?
It was actually a random phone call. Someone recruited me. And they’re not even here anymore.

Interesting. What were you doing before Kenyon?
I was technically in between things. Had been working in the ranching business in Clarke, Colorado.

So how did you get into food?
It’s kind of like the third career chapter of my life. Straight out of high school I joined the Army. That was my first career. Then I ended up in the IT business right here in Ohio, for about 18 years.

When did you enlist in the Army?
Reagan was president.

And what did you do?
I was an intelligence analyst.

Did you always know you wanted to join the Army?
I kind of did. I was born into a military family. Downstate New York, Newburgh. Right across the street from USMA West Point. In retrospect I don’t know if I would’ve made that decision.

You must have moved around a lot as a kid.
Saw the Atlantic and Pacific before I was nine. It’s kind of a mnemonic. That’s how I remember when something happened — [by asking,] “where was I living when it happened?” ’72 Olympics, Mark Spitz won seven gold medals in swimming — I was living in North Dakota. Woodstock, you know, I was in Southern California. I was on the wrong end of the country for that.

And what about when you were serving? Where did that take you?
You could just follow the dots on the map. From here to Missouri to Texas to Frankfurt, Germany. If you’ve talked to me, you’ve probably heard me joke about that. I got to live in Germany for nearly 10 years on somebody else’s dime.

What was your favorite part about living there?
Most people would say beer. Twenty years ago I prob-

ably would have said beer. But I think the scenery and the culture and the history. I mean, they’ve got buildings that got blown up and rebuilt and they’re still older than the entire country we’re sitting in now.

And your least favorite part?
The rain. Sleep deprivation during deployments.

Sounds like you’ve been to a lot of places.
I don’t know if I claim any place as home anymore, if that makes sense.

So the Army, and then 18 years of IT. What made you switch to cooking?
I wouldn’t use the phrase “burnout,” but I was perilously close to it. It felt like I was just beating my head against the wall. So I went back to school and got a degree in culinary arts. One of the little community colleges on the Oregon coast.

Do you remember which one?
Southwestern Oregon.

That must have been an experience, going back to school as an adult.
(chuckles) As an “alternative student”? It was definitely interesting.

What’s your favorite thing to cook?
Have you ever asked a parent who their favorite child is?

But if aliens were invading the planet, and you had to

make one dish to save the human race...
I’d probably make something with curry. Chickpea curry.

What if they ask for dessert?
I like banana bread. I don’t know if that counts as a desert.

I noticed you have some pretty cool tattoos. Can you tell us a little about them?
(pointing to arm) That’s actually Bruce Lee quoting the Buddha.

“As you think, so shall you become.”
As the Buddha said it, it was, “What you think, you become.” But I like the way Bruce Lee said it better.

Do you see yourself getting more tattoos?
Oh, probably. I mean, if you look at some of the people in the food business, I’m barely qualified to be a beginner. I’m just thinking about the sheer amount of them I’ve seen on campus this year.

Do any of them stick out to you?
I think all of them, because every one of them is uniquely personal and has some meaning, and probably the most authentic and open people you’ll ever meet have tattoos. And they’ll tell you about them if you just ask.

I totally agree. People with tattoos usually have some interesting things to say.

Do you have any recommendations for students dining in Peirce?
I guess maybe one suggestion, a lot of people don’t know about it: There’s a bulletin board right over there, just before you go into Thomas [Hall]. It’s a little suggestion box with little green and white cards.

Do you guys actually read those?
We do.

Any tips on the panini press?
Keep the temp on 350.

Do you have a message for the kids? What would you have wanted to tell yourself at our age?
Thinking about it sounds cliché, but a lot of people, when their stress level goes up, their confidence kind of drops off, especially around midterms and finals. And I’m constantly telling everybody that you got this. You got this far, there’s no reason to stop now. Don’t give up on this.

Is there anything else you’d like to add?
I did the math one day, and if you come here right out of high school and graduate right around the ripe old age of 22, minus breaks and stuff, you spend 20% of your life going back and forth on Middle Path and eating at Peirce and doing things on this hilltop. And my goal is to not ever be a negative part of that. I do what I can to cheer people up. Keep people motivated.

Wasps swarm outside Peirce Hall, frustrate dining students

HANNAH SUSSMAN
STAFF WRITER

Peirce is the hive of Kenyon life. It is filled with students bustling in and out, buzzing from table to table, pausing to eat and bond with their hardworking peers. However, the normal flow of Kenyon life was recently interrupted due to restrictions on indoor dining following rising COVID-19 cases. These regulations not only disturbed the metaphorical hive, but also brought attention to the literal hives all across campus.

With students more frequently eating outside as a result of the restrictions, it did not take long for the wasps on campus to find their new hunting grounds. Steve Vaden, Kenyon’s grounds manager, explained that the combination of the time of year and the additional

food being eaten outside created the ideal conditions for the wasps and yellow jackets on campus.

“In late summer, [yellow jackets] become ‘sugarholics’ and substitute sugar for plant nectar. Items such as Kool-Aid, pop, orange juice or anything else with a sweet taste are attractive to them. Fruit also becomes a preferred meal,” he said.

During the summer, the size of each yellow jacket nest can increase to as many as 4,000 workers. These nests are difficult to locate, but can be found underground, in the walls of buildings or in the holes of trees. Yellow jackets are more likely to sting than other wasps, but their sting is less painful.

In addition to being a general nuisance, the wasps also harm bees’ reputations, according to Ilana Richter ’22, the vice president of Kenyon College Beekeeping

Club (KCBeeC). Unlike bees, wasps will sting without provocation and can sting multiple times. “Bees are friends. Wasps are terrible look-alikes,” she said.

In response to the increased wasp population, the Maintenance Department has been dosing located nests with insecticide. Destroying these nests will limit the number of nests that will develop next year.

“There is no area treatment to ‘make them leave the area.’ I have treated several nests this year, but by the number of [yellow jackets] at the tents, it is clear we haven’t even made a dent,” Vaden said.

While this method may not be the most efficient, Richter cautioned against general pesticides because they cause extensive damage to the wider ecosystem.

“KCBeeC condemns the general use of pesticides, as they indiscrim-

inately kill pollinating insects. Pollinating is a vital ecosystem function,” Richter said. Insecticide, meanwhile, targets only the wasp nest as opposed to a large area.

Although the wasps may be a nuisance for students, Richter explained that they do still provide some environmental benefits, such as pollinating plants.

“They eat pest insects and pollinate plants, so they’re generally good for the environment,” she said.

Ultimately, the wasps are simply an aspect of living in rural life, and they will naturally go away as winter arrives.

Luckily for Kenyon students, a decline in COVID-19 cases means the Peirce hive is open for indoor dining. Hopefully, students can continue to enjoy the warmth and shelter from wasps that Peirce offers for the rest of the year.

Arab poet takes audience on a journey through translation

CECILIA OSHINS
STAFF WRITER

Kareem James Abu-Zeid, a translator of Arabic literature with an affinity for poetry, visited Kenyon last Thursday to discuss his work. The excerpts he read spanned from the sixth century to the modern day, taking leaps through time and genre to give the audience a broader understanding of not only the texts, but the process and value of translation.

Abu-Zeid has a Ph.D. in comparative literature from the University of California, Berkeley, and has won many awards for his work as a translator, writer and scholar, including the PEN Center USA's translation prize, *Poetry Magazine's* translation prize and the Northern California Book Award for Best Translated Poetry. He also has written an original book, *The Poetics of Adonis and Yves Bonnefoy: Poetry as Spiritual Practice*, and essays on translation. His translation of *Chaos, Crossing, and Other Poems*, a collection of French poems by Olivia Elias, will be published by World Poetry Books in 2022.

Abu-Zeid's lecture began with the very first of the Mu'allaqat, or the "Hanging Poems," which were poems said to have been hung on the Kaaba in Mecca. The first poem was written by Imru al-Qays, who was exiled from the Kindah Tribe by his father, the king. The poem goes on for about 100 verses, which were translated into English by Abu-Zeid.

The Department of English Presents:



Talk with

Kareem James Abu-Zeid

Arab Poetry through the Ages: A Journey in Translation



In this hybrid talk/reading, Kareem James Abu-Zeid will take us on a whirlwind journey through Arab poetry, using his own recent translations as stopping points.

September 23, 2021
4:30 p.m.

Community Foundation Theater, Gund Gallery

Sponsored by the English Department, Richard L. Thomas Chair, Kenyon Review, and Modern Languages & Literatures Department

COURTESY OF KENYON COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

The next piece from his selection was *Songs of Mihyar the Damascene* by Adonis (written in the early 1960s), which is considered the "summit" of the Arabic modernist poetry movement. This is a book-long translation, following Mihyar the Damascene as he takes on different historical personas to contradict myopic views of Arab culture.

Next, Abu-Zeid turned to two books by Najwan Darwish, *Nothing More to Lose* (2014) and *Exhausted on the Cross* (2021). The first poem he read from Darwish, titled "We Never Stop," is a political piece about Palestine, where the poet is from.

Abu-Zeid said that he loves translating Darwish's work. "His poetry is so varied that there's always something new in there for me (in terms of tone, form, subject matter, musicality, etc.)," he wrote in an email to the *Collegian*. "Najwan has become a close friend as well, which makes the process much more enjoyable."

Talking about his experience in translation, Abu-Zeid explained that the process is essentially a deconstruction and reconstruction of a text. "I need to decide which aspects of the source text are the most important or critical ones to convey in English," Abu-Zeid wrote. "It is rarely (if ever) possible, as a translator, to recreate all the various aspects of the source text. So it's my job to decide which ones are the most critical, the ones that absolutely have to come through in the English."

Sex Education's third season grows in emotional maturity

BRYN SAVIDGE
ARTS ASSISTANT

In its third season, Netflix's teen comedy-drama *Sex Education* has reached a new level of emotional maturity, resonating with young adults now more than ever.

Sex Education, created by Laurie Nunn, follows the lives of the students and staff of Moordale Secondary School in England as they navigate personal issues. Since its release in 2019, the show has been known for candidly discussing sex. The show features Otis Milburn (Asa Butterfield), the nerdy and inexperienced son of a sex therapist, as he runs a secret "sex clinic" to help his peers overcome their problems with intimacy.

After a series of outrageous events in season two, such as mass hysteria over a rumored chlamydia outbreak and an incredibly erotic alien school

musical, Moordale is dubbed the "sex school" by the public. To patch up its spotty reputation, Hope Haddon is introduced as the new head teacher. While Haddon seems to have the student's best interests in mind, she is quickly established as the antagonist.

Sex Education has always been a bit unrealistic and absurd, and season three stays true to that. Haddon's wildly controversial and outdated views make her seem like *Matilda's* Miss Trunchbull, as she uses public shaming to punish students, introduces abstinence programs into the school's curriculum and crushes any inkling of individuality. Once the students acknowledge Haddon's tyrannical behavior, they band together despite their differences. Compared to previous seasons, the lack of drama and cattiness between the students themselves is refreshing.

As the students of Moordale are learning pivotal life lessons about

expression, community and prioritizing their individual needs, the adults in the show are also undergoing transformations. One of the most notable subplots is that of former head teacher Mr. Groff, who unpacks his trauma from growing up with an emotionally abusive father. Towards the end of the season, the audience finally sees Groff learn to express his emotions, as he works to rebuild his relationship with the family he has neglected. The season's ability to work through trauma and explore character background adds another layer of meaning to an already thematically important show.

Additionally, characters are given equal screen time as they explore deeply complex personal struggles. Season three creates space for characters to lash out and make selfish decisions as they transition from teenagers to young adults. However, they aren't vilified for doing so. *Sex*

Education has certainly matured in later seasons, embracing inevitable mistakes and allowing characters to prioritize their own growth.

While the show's focus has always been on sex, it seems to have taken a more serious turn in the third season, placing an emphasis on emotional growth and maturity. Even beloved sex therapist Dr. Jean Milburn surprisingly says, "Believe it or not, I don't think everything comes back to sex."

Overall, this season of *Sex Education* plays incredibly well with the sentiments of its audience, as many young adults are entering a new school year and learning how to live post-pandemic. The bittersweet season finale shows many characters growing out of old relationships and into new stages of life, drawing parallels to reality and providing plenty of potential content for the recently confirmed fourth season.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Students should be patient with Village businesses given staff shortages

Amid an increase in student population on campus this year, the surrounding Gambier and Mount Vernon communities are experiencing significant labor shortages, particularly affecting retail and service industries.

As Kenyon students, we've all lamented the delayed opening of Chilitos, the short hours at the Village Market and unexpected closings of the Deli this semester. But we must give grace to these businesses in their time of struggle. While it's important to patronize these businesses — especially after a year of economic downturn due to the pandemic — it's also necessary to be cognizant and forgiving of their current limitations.

Our community is not alone in its staffing problem. Around the country, restaurants are seeing a large influx of customers after they faced over a year of lockdowns and various restrictions. However, people are much less willing to work long, tedious hours in the service industry due to low pay, fear of contracting COVID-19 and a lack of childcare services, leading some businesses to temporarily or permanently shut down due to low staffing.

Gambier in particular has gone through a huge adjustment with the arrival of a full student body. Chilitos has been closed since May, the Market's hours have been drastically reduced and the Kenyon Inn restaurant is closed due to staffing issues. Many restaurants in downtown Gambier have had to transition from a year with minimal service due to COVID-19 restrictions to over-full capacity for serving a larger student population. This transition meant that employees are working longer hours, and, in some cases, are working full time at what was a part-time job.

There are reports that the Kenyon Bookstore staff is overworked as well. With the Market closing at 6 p.m. daily, students are frequenting the Bookstore more often in the later hours in search of late-night snacks.

All of this is to say that our community's workers are struggling significantly. We must be conscious of the fact that there are faces behind these businesses who are being overworked. We sometimes forget that Kenyon would not exist without these members of the community — restaurant and retail staff, AVI workers and the Maintenance Department are all vital contributors to the community, and they are the reasons why Kenyon runs smoothly. It's easy to get caught up in complaining about long waits and limited business hours, but we must extend a little more patience to those who are working so hard behind the scenes.

The staff editorial is written weekly by editors-in-chief Jordy Fee-Platt '22 and Linnea Mumma '22, managing editor Amanda Pyne '22 and executive director Joe Wint '22. You can contact them at fee-platt1@kenyon.edu, mumma1@kenyon.edu, pyne1@kenyon.edu and wint1@kenyon.edu, respectively.

WEEKLY COLUMN

Discovering a bizarre American phenomenon: deep-fried butter

ANGIE TRAN
COLUMNIST

Tell me, what keeps you up at night?

Is it the creepy crawlies on your bedroom walls, readying their scrawny insect legs to pounce on you in your sleep? Or the vociferous pandemonium from your roommate's ninth grand prix round of Mario Kart? Or perhaps it's the 11 p.m. Red Bull you impulsively drank as an attempt to hydrate yourself after a long, torturous day of seminars.

You know what keeps me up at night?

At the beginning of my transition from school in Vietnam to school in the United States, I was sent an accidental email from my high school's administration about the removal of my student account. As distressing of an experience this was for a naive 14-year-old international student, it was not as distressing as my discovery of Iowa State Fair's infamous deep-fried butter.

Deep-fried butter. That's what keeps me up at night.

Distressing is probably an understatement. There are many words in the English dictionary I can think of to describe my feelings towards this popular American carnival food: abysmal, revolting, offensive and a crime against the food and beverage industry, maybe even humanity. Strange that there are people out there who are completely turned off by buttered frog legs, or fresh oceanside sashimi, but are brought to so much jubilation by drenching spoonfuls of sugar syrup over sticks of greasy fried butter. You're trading off delicious protein for a spike in your cholesterol levels. It also says a lot about what your standards of food are.

Let me give you a little history behind this quick-trip-to-the-ER concoction. Deep-fried butter was created by Larry Fyfe to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Iowa State Fair's infamous life-size butter sculpture of a cow, which apparently attracts flocks of Americans every single year. Please tell me what is more stereotypically American than a bunch of people gathering at an annual fair to eat deep-fried food and take pictures of butter animals.

Described by the *New York Times* as an Iowa "entrepreneur," Fyfe spent decades inventing and selling carnival treats from foot-long corn dogs to fried brownies. Not to discredit this guy's work at all — and I'm sure he probably is kind and fun-loving; after all, he is a carnival man — but please! Steve Jobs, who co-founded Apple, the world's first private-sector company worth \$1 trillion, is an entrepreneur. Indra Nooyi, CEO of PepsiCo and ranked by *Forbes* as one of the world's most powerful women, is an entrepreneur. If being an entrepreneur means throwing random fridge items into batter and soaking them in splattering oil for 10 minutes, any home cook could be an entrepreneur.

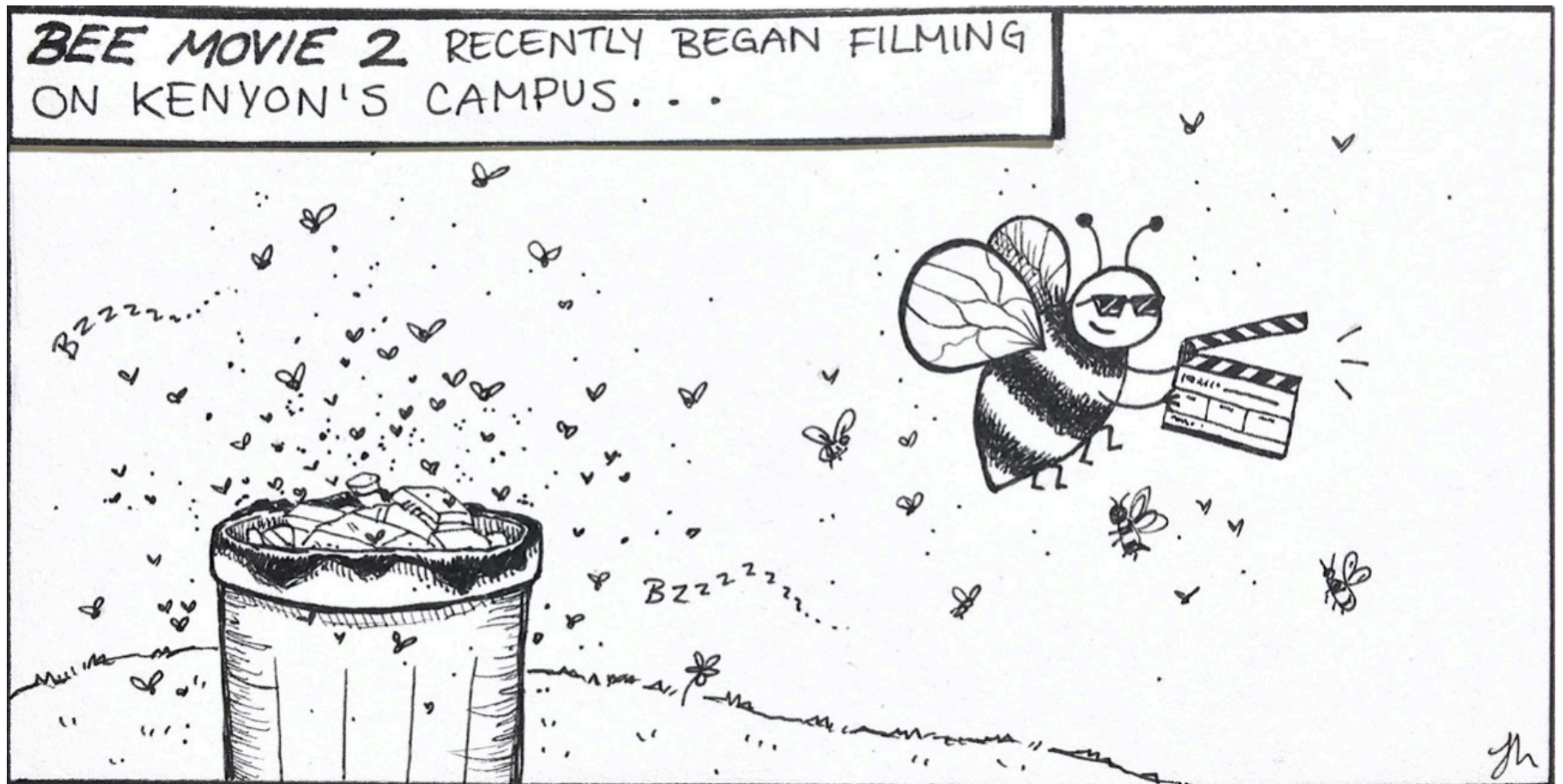
There is no dignified way to eat deep-fried butter. And there shouldn't be. Besides oozing hot grease all over your already sweaty face and clothes from being out in the carnival sun all day, it will clog up every single one of your arteries that are probably already holding on for dear life — a rebuke of your decision to try it. You must accept that.

I firmly believe in the saying "don't knock it till' you try it," except when it comes to fried butter. I don't care that it "tastes like French toast" or if it's on a stick or shaped into cute little melon balls. I would not spend \$4 for five years off my life expectancy. And neither should you.

Angie Tran '25 is a columnist for the Collegian. She is an undeclared major from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. She can be reached at tran1@kenyon.edu.

The opinions page is a space for members of the community to discuss issues relevant to the campus and the world at large. The opinions expressed on this page belong only to the writers. Columns and letters to the editors do not reflect the opinions of the *Collegian* staff. All members of the community are welcome to express opinions through a letter to the editor.

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JANA HECKERMAN

Letter to the editor: A K-SWOC election is essential

I will address two concerns about K-SWOC-UE in this letter: the importance of the upcoming union election and the significance of the union for student workers. Though I appreciate the chance to express my views, I do not speak for Kenyon's student workers. They are more than capable of doing so themselves. Please talk with them to hear their perspectives.

Student workers at Kenyon have the right to vote on whether they need or want a union. Some people I have talked with claim that student worker jobs are not hard or dangerous enough to warrant the protections unions provide. This is a decision only Kenyon's student workers can make. There are no universal criteria by which to measure who has the right or need to organize. The election K-SWOC-UE is organizing gives those who are experts in what they do as workers the chance to decide, without interference, whether a union is right for them. This is a far more democratic way of answering the question than having that choice dictated to them by others.

What is the value of a student workers' union? The most obvious answer is that employers, well-meaning as they might be, are poorly positioned to know what's best for their employees. Even if they do, they are not necessarily motivated to act on that knowledge. That is only part of the answer. The other part concerns the roles unions can play in strengthening institutions. Administrators and trustees often take on the mantle of "the College" when speaking for all participants in the institution, frequently

without meaningful input from those participants. This stance equates the decisions and actions of a few with the interests and aspirations of many while leaving the definition of what constitutes the common good up to the unelected, who claim to speak for the entire Kenyon community.

The quality of the choices made this way is less important than the fact that when administrators speak for the institution as a whole, the voices of those who comprise that totality are lost. Unions are one means by which those who were not appointed to positions of power can have their say, and a say which cannot be ignored, in determining the common good that defines an institution's culture and purpose. A student workers' union, rather than being an outside force, helps ensure its members' full participation in the college they love.

How does this work? Done well, unions offer their members the chance to participate as equals in the negotiations that determine how the institution of which they are a part operates, what goals it seeks, what its priorities are and how it achieves them. That experience is especially invaluable for student workers. It is invaluable because it heightens their sense of self as they play significant roles in conversations that matter. It is invaluable because they learn the responsibilities that come with sharing power and the things that can be achieved by working with management as equals to solve problems. It is invaluable because such interactions prepare them to act with others to address difficulties they will face in future workplaces and public ven-

ues. Unions may not be the answer to every situation our students will face after graduation, but learning how to stand with and for peers in pursuing shared objectives is a skill that pays dividends no matter what they do. The future of the U.S. and the world depends on undergraduates here and elsewhere honing just these capacities.

Does this sound too idealistic? What is idealism but the capacity to imagine that which does not currently exist and then act together to bring that vision to pass? Without idealism in this sense, nothing changes. Without solidarity, nothing gets done. A quick look around the world indicates that preserving the status quo in Gambier or anywhere is not a viable plan.

Are our students up to that challenge? They better be. The moment they step off the stage at graduation, we and others expect them to fulfill their promise as adults on whom the world's future depends. They will be better able to meet those demands before they leave the Hill if they develop their skills as leaders now, if they come to appreciate the power of cooperative action here and if they learn at Kenyon to insist on having meaningful roles in shaping policies that affect them and their communities. For all these reasons, I hope to see a student workers' union at Kenyon before the end of the academic year. This form of power sharing is, in my mind, very Kenyon.

Sincerely,
Ed Schortman,
Professor of Anthropology

Kenyon prevails over Oberlin 24-21 for first win of season

JACKSON WALD
SENIOR SPORTS EDITOR

It took 21 days, three hard-fought, taxing losses and a whole lot of resilience and fortitude, but the Kenyon College men's football team has won its first game of the season: a nail-biting, 24-21 victory over their rival Oberlin College. This is Kenyon's second straight win over the Yeomen (the Lords won 12-7 in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic). With the victory, the Lords knotted up their record against Oberlin at 6-6 since 2009.

In the first quarter, the Lords, who lost their last two games to the College of Wooster and DePauw University by a combined score of 93-7, looked lethargic. Led by quarterback Ryan O'Leary '23, who was making his first start, Kenyon's opening possession resulted in an interception at the Oberlin 1-yard line, followed by a turnover on downs on their next possession. However, thanks to inspired play by their defense, the Lords exited the quarter only down 7-0.

"It was tough. For some reason this year, we've been traditionally slow starters," head coach James Rosenbury said. "So I think being able to regroup — you know, we were breaking in a new starting quarterback and just settling him down a little bit — and starting to play the football we know we're capable of."

The Lords' first points of the game came at the 14:48 mark of the second quarter, off a 29-yard field goal from kicker Rocco Danese '23.

"It's actually really interesting," Danese said of his approach to kicking. "On the sidelines, I'm always nervous, always kind of stressing out. But the second I step onto the field with the field goal team, everything just goes away. I feel locked in. My focus is on the target. And actually, it feels really calm out there."

An Oberlin touchdown pass



Drake Lewis '25 had six carries for eight yards and three scores. | PHOTO COURTESY OF MIKE MUNDEN

put the Yeomen up 14-3 just minutes later, but two Drake Lewis '25 touchdown runs, the second coming after a botched punt by the Yeomen just before the end of the second half, put the Lords up 17-14 going into halftime. Lewis would finish the game with six rushes for 8 yards and three touchdowns.

According to Rosenbury, Lewis, who was coming off an injury, was meant to be eased back into game action. But once Rosenbury saw him play, he knew Lewis had to stay on the field.

"Drake is a tough, hard-nosed runner and he's a 'go' kind of guy — he makes a decision and, for better or worse, that's it. He doesn't dance, he doesn't juke, he

just goes downhill," Rosenbury said. "And so when we got to the goal line, I just had a sense that Drake was feeling it on Saturday and so I went with the hot hand. And luckily, I was right."

A Drake 5-yard touchdown run in the third quarter, bringing the score to 24-14 for the Lords, was ultimately the deciding factor. While the Yeomen converted a touchdown pass with only three minutes left in the fourth quarter, the Lords were able to come away with the win on homecoming weekend, in front of 750 fans.

Perhaps the Lords most impactful player wasn't on the offensive side of the field: linebacker Jimmy Lane '22, finished with 10 tackles (one of which coming

on Oberlin's last-ditch attempt to convert a fourth and sixth with less than two minutes left) and two forced fumbles, securing him the NCAC Defensive Player of the Week.

According to Rosenbury, Lane was originally recruited as wide receiver, transitioned to safety his sophomore year, and then ended up as a linebacker. Through all the adversity, Lane has maintained a stable and even-keeled presence.

"He's never complained about [his position changes]. He always wants to do what's best for the team," Rosenbury said of Lane. "I'm so proud of his leadership, his stability and he really stepped up in a big way when we needed somebody to do that on defense.

That's Jimmy."

The Lords will look to build on their momentum when they travel to Meadville, Pa. this Saturday to face their conference foe Allegheny College, currently 1-3 overall, and 0-3 in the NCAC.

"[Allegheny is] a very good football team. They were beating Wabash [College] into the third quarter, [and] they went toe to toe with an undefeated Ohio Wesleyan [University] team last week. So we've got our work cut out for us," Rosenbury said. "I think we played about two-and-a-half good quarters against Oberlin, but if we can play four quarters of good football [against Allegheny], I think we're going to be in a spot to win a football game on Saturday."

Kenyon Ladies dominate DePauw and Wooster, moves to 6-2

CATHERINE SPARVERO
STAFF WRITER

The Kenyon field hockey team was dominant this week, putting in a strong defensive effort against the DePauw University Tigers (Ind.) in a 2-0 victory on Sunday, and defeating the College of Wooster Fighting Scots 2-1 on Wednesday.

The Ladies went into Sunday's game looking to extend their three-game win and shutout streak, in addition to an eight-game winning streak against the Tigers. The entire 60-minute affair was hard-fought, with the two goals coming from the team's leading scorers Sarah

Metzmaier '22 and Bella Kern '23.

While the first quarter was scoreless, Metzmaier broke the tie in the first minute of the second quarter, firing a shot past DePauw's goalkeeper. For the next 43 minutes, the Ladies faced a defensive test, particularly in the third quarter when DePauw accelerated their efforts to break the tie. Kenyon's Payton Doan '23 turned away DePauw's five shots on goal throughout the game, helping to keep the Ladies in front. Though Metzmaier's goal was all the offense the team needed, Kern, the reigning NCAC Field Hockey Athlete of the Week, tacked on an insurance goal in the 58th minute, converting a rebound after a penalty corner.

After that, Kenyon was able to run out the clock against the Tigers and secure a 2-0 win.

"The team did an excellent job remaining calm and collected during the game, especially in the second half. Our team communicates well with each other, and this also helped us," Kern said of the conference victory.

On Wednesday, the Ladies managed to battle back from an 1-0 deficit and secure a competitive 2-1 victory. After Wooster scored a goal in the 14th minute, the Ladies answered right back, with Kern scoring a goal two minutes later off an assist from Metzmaier. Metzmaier, who tallied six shots, including five on

goal, knocked in what proved to be the game-winning score in the third quarter.

Kern credits the success they've seen this season to the team's cohesive identity. "I know we have a really special group of girls who all have so much love for each other and the game, so I think if we keep being resilient and cheering each other on, this will continue to be a really successful and rewarding season," she said.

Kenyon's win over Wooster puts their record at an impressive 6-2 on the season. Their next game is at home on Saturday, Oct. 2 against conference opponent Allegheny College at 12:00 p.m.

Lords obliterate Allegheny 7-0, Ladies split two tough games

FINN ANDERS
STAFF WRITER

Lords:

Last Saturday, the Lords matched up against Allegheny College, a longtime conference foe. Throughout the last few years, the Gators have been a relatively easy matchup for the Lords; not only has Kenyon beaten Allegheny in their last 11 games, their counterparts haven't scored on them in nearly four years. The Lords' dominant streak continued Saturday, as they exploited the vulnerable Allegheny defense to win 7-0.

Kenyon wasted no time reaching the back of the net, as Gerardo Martinez '25 capitalized on Allegheny's goalie being out of position in the fifth minute. Following an onslaught of shots from the Lords, Sebastian Brylka '23 converted on a pass into the box during the 36th minute, concluding the Lords' half.

Unfortunately for the Gators, Kenyon was not finished. The first of five second-half goals came in the 52nd minute, when Mac Nardiello-Smith '23 slot- ted it past Allegheny goalie Jack

Baron-Sluga. Just four minutes later, Sebastian Gaese '23 used his height to head the ball into the back of the net, which was followed by a tap-in goal, courtesy of Johan Johannsson '23, in the 57th. Alem Duratovic '25 was Kenyon's next scorer, when his shot rolled straight past the Gators' defense in the 70th minute. Three minutes later, Atli Hrafnkelsson '23 scored the game's final goal.

The Lords will find themselves in the thick of the action once again this Friday, Oct. 1 when they face Wittenberg University at 7:45 p.m. Kenyon will look to extend their winning streak to eight, and again prove the team is a formidable contender for a national championship.

Ladies:

Last Saturday, the Ladies' first conference match of the season was a grand success, winning 4-1 against Allegheny College. Their next match, though, ended in a hard-fought 1-0 defeat against Wilmington College. The results of these two matches leave the Ladies with a 4-6 record on the season.



Jackie Thompson '24 strikes the ball. | PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTY FULLER

Just minutes after the kick-off against the Gators, Kenyon's Olivia Carriero '23 chipped the ball into the back of the net after a tussle inside the box. At the 32nd-minute mark, Olivia Dion '22 sent a beautiful cross right to the foot of Lara O'Callaghan '23, which O'Callaghan converted into the Ladies' second goal. Kenyon's last two goals came in quick succession in the 51st and 53rd

minutes. The first came from Samantha Hayes '22, who took advantage of a defender deflection, and the second from Sadie Gould '24, who found the net just minutes later.

Following a decisive victory, the Ladies' loss against Wilmington was a heartbreaker. In the first match between the two teams since 2013, Kenyon played rather well despite the final score

sheet — with seven shots on goal compared to the Quakers' four. Unfortunately, none of Kenyon's attempts converted, and an early goal by Heidi Edens gave Wilmington the lead until the sound of the final whistle.

The Ladies' next match will be at Wittenberg University this Saturday, Oct. 2. They hope to secure another conference victory and bounce back from their loss.

Volleyball drops both games against Oberlin and Capital

MAGGIE FOIGHT
STAFF WRITER

This past week, the Kenyon Ladies volleyball team competed on the road against Oberlin College and Capital University. At both away games, the home team had the advantage and the Ladies fell 3-1 and 3-0, respectively.

On Sept. 23, Oberlin's Yeowomen made some errors very early in the first set, but took advantage of the Ladies' mistakes in the return game. While the frame was briefly tied at 17, Oberlin ultimately won 25-21. During the second set, Kenyon turned the tables and took the lead, forcing the home team to take a timeout. This interruption did not work in the Yeowomen's favor, however, and the Ladies took the set in convincing fashion, 25-16. Kenyon's offensive momentum rode into the third set, but Oberlin responded well and tied the set at 12. A timeout from the Ladies did nothing to deter the Yeowomen run, and Oberlin took the third set 25-20.

In the final set, the home team found its stride, making only two attack errors in the entire frame. The Yeowomen won the set 25-14, despite the Ladies' fight until the end. Jac Cousineau '23 recorded a total of 21 assists during the four sets, while Macy Reimbold '23 successfully produced 10 kills; additionally, Ellie Luciani '23 secured 14 digs, a team high.

Five days later, Kenyon fell to Capital at an away game in Bexley, Ohio. This time, the home team won the first three sets, ending the match quickly. In the first set, Capital rapidly built an insurmountable lead. In the second, the Ladies were more competitive and took leads at 14-10 and 17-12, but Capital rallied and won the second frame 25-22. In the third and final set, the Ladies were able to keep close to Capital early on, leading 12-11. The game quickly fell to Capital after they went on a scoring streak that ended with the home team winning five of the set's last six points.

Despite the loss, there were some remarkable performances from several individual Ladies. Elyse Davidson '22 led the Ladies offensive with nine kills and only two errors out of 21 attempts. Cousineau returned with 22 assists on Kenyon's 24 kills, and Luciani again offered a team-high number of digs, this time contributing 10. Lindsey Abramson '24 and Lauren Limbach '22 also posted eight and seven digs, respectively. Paige Milhon '23 assisted the Ladies with four blocks, the most of any Kenyon player in the match.

The Ladies compete next on Oct. 2 against Allegheny College in Pennsylvania. Kenyon has only played one NCAC match thus far and now heads into the core of its conference scheduling.

Lords falter; Ladies, led by Vasquez, shine at Kalamazoo

JACKSON WALD
SENIOR SPORTS EDITOR

Lords:

The Lords tennis team travelled to Toledo, Ohio this past weekend to compete in the Rocket Invitational. Hosted by Toledo University, the tournament featured a fierce lineup of opponents, including Case Western Reserve University and the University of Chicago, the No. 2 and No. 3 schools in the NCAA Division III Central Region, respectively. Also competing in the tournament were two Division I schools — the aforementioned Toledo, and Bellarmine University (Ky.).

It was a forgettable competition for the Lords. They were able to score three victories in the singles bracket, led by Jack Wagner's '22 victory over Toledo's Wojciech Szczesny. The Lords also accumulated two victories against the University of Northern Ohio (Luis Andres Platas '23 defeated Sergio Conde, and Rakkan Audeh convincingly beat Jacob Ramizez 6-0, 6-0). However, their overall singles record was a disappointing 3-14, and Kenyon failed to win any of their doubles matches, finishing 0-10.

The Lords will look to bounce back at the ITA Regional Championship on Oct. 1-3 at Kalamazoo College (Mich.).

Ladies:

The Ladies tennis team, led by Victoria Vasquez '24, dominated at the ITA Central Regional Championship at Kalamazoo College (Mich.) this past weekend. Vasquez shone bright both in singles and doubles, reaching the semifinals in both brackets.

In the singles competition, ninth-seed Vasquez breezed into the quarterfinals, where she competed against her toughest opponent thus far — No. 2-seeded Shianna Guo of the University of Chicago (Ill.). Vasquez persevered, winning a hard-fought, three-set match 4-6, 7-6(3), 6-2. In the semifinals on Sunday, Vasquez lost to Miranda Yuan, also from the University of Chicago, 6-3, 3-6, 6-4.

In doubles, Vasquez and teammate Daria Beshentseva '22 made it one step further, reaching the finals of the competition. The duo, which entered as the No. 4 seed, defeated the No. 5 and No. 2-seeded teams in the quarterfinals and semifinals, respectively. However, they fell tragically in the finals to the top-seeded squad of Guo and Sylwia Mikos from the University of Chicago, 4-6 7-6(1), 10-4.