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The Kenyon Collegian

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8-31-2023

## Kenyon Collegian - August 31, 2023

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## Remembering Lucian Li '26, a 'man of light' around Kenyon

KATIE SPARVERO  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Lucian Li '26 | COURTESY OF KENYON ATHLETICS

Lucian Li '26 tragically passed away on July 17 at the age of 19 as a result of injuries sustained during a car accident. A beloved son, brother, teammate and friend, Lucian is survived by his parents, Eric Chen-Ta Li and Sarah Popdan; his sister, Calla; his grandparents, Bonnie and Bob Popdan and Gue-Fen Wu and Yu-Chen Li; and the innumerable people whose lives he touched.

"Lucian is our first-born son," Li said. "We've given him the name meaning 'the man of light' in Latin, obviously hoping he will follow the light, which is usually the positive direction, and also he could be the light for people who need help." From Lucian's earliest days, he perfectly embodied his name, always spirited and energized by life. "Boy, Lucian was so excited about running," Li said. "So when he learned crawling, he pretty much skipped walking. He just went straight to running."

Two months after he was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Lucian and his family moved to Burlington, Vermont. For the next few years, Vermont's natural beauty and frigid temperatures were the backdrop to Lucian's childhood. When Lucian was five, Li's new job brought the family to his birthplace of Taichung, Taiwan.

"I thought it was important for him to learn the culture and language," Li said. "He was able to learn the language just because he wanted

to play with the kids. He was able to learn in two to three months. I tried to speak Mandarin to him since he was little, but he was never interested. But I realized he was like a dry sponge — he was always kind of soaking in."

In the classroom in Taiwan, rigid academic structure often landed Lucian, a natural communicator, in trouble. "You're not supposed to speak much in the classroom," Li said. "Lucian is the kid who always had a question and liked to chime in... We always joke about how he always got to sit in a corner because that's where all the bad kids were sitting." Still, Lucian found comfort in his English classes, particularly since his mother was one of the teachers at his school.

Lucian's ability to connect with those around him shone through again when he and his family returned to Lancaster before he began fifth grade. "He was able to fit in; he was able to make friends right away," Li said. As Lucian grew up, his love for others was apparent to everyone who entered his orbit. Li described Lucian as "the best son, the best grandson."

In Lancaster, Lucian found his love for lacrosse after a neighbor suggested he pick up the sport. While lacrosse brought Lucian to the Hill, his magnetic personality and enthusiasm for others allowed him to find community wherever he ventured at Kenyon.

Lead Instructor and Director of Introductory Labs in Biology Jennifer McMahon first met Lucian as a Kenyon Educational Enrichment Program (KEEP) scholar. "He wasn't necessarily the leader, and he wasn't necessarily the quiet one. He wasn't the loud one," she said. "But he was the one that always worked well with everybody else. It didn't matter who his research partner was... It was always a good match."

As Lucian's advisor, McMahon saw him grow as an intended biology major with aspirations for medical school. "He took bio[logy] lab across the hall from me, so I got to see him quite a bit coming and going from

class," she said. "He brought a lot of energy and community into the lab classroom, and I heard that from his instructor." Always looking to inspire connection and uplift others, McMahon remembered when Lucian encouraged his classmates to wear formal wear to give their final presentations. "He liked to do these things, but he also liked to bring along people with him, because I think he really felt like the more, the merrier."

McMahon described how Lucian bettered every group he was a part of, an experience echoed by Sasha Pauline Fanny-Holston, Program Director for KEEP and Assistant Director for the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. "[H]e was a very thoughtful and generous friend who was genuinely interested in getting to know everyone and made sure to stop and say hi to them on Middle Path, at the Lowry Center or in Peirce [Dining Hall]," she wrote in an email to the *Collegian*.

No moment of kindness was too small for Lucian — Fanny-Holston fondly remembered how Lucian went out of his way to let her know that Peirce had made her favorite lemon sugar sandwich cookies. Lucian's use of food as a bridge between people stemmed from time spent cooking with his father. "I always reminded him, regardless of how happy, how sad you are, food can always bring people together," Li said.

Even years removed from his time in Taiwan, Lucian never forgot his heritage. McMahon remembered his appreciation for the time he spent in Taiwan and the chance he had to learn Mandarin. Li was eternally proud of how his son married his two backgrounds. "He has this Taiwanese side which is very respectful... Always think of others, he always opened doors for the ladies, all these things he's learned from Taiwan," he said. "And on the west side, he learned how to have fun, how to express himself among his friends and how to care for others and not [be] shy... to share feelings of love toward the girl he likes."

Across all facets of his Kenyon experience, Lucian was remembered as selfless. "He defined his day by how well people around him are doing," Vice President of Student Affairs Celestino Limas said. "That is something that was both beautiful and a source of great comfort to a lot of people for their Kenyon experience."

Lucian's teammates Owen Breen '26 and Luke Riney '26 both saw firsthand his willingness to put others first. "He probably put off his own stuff to help others," Breen said. Riney agreed: "He definitely put off his own stuff to help others... No matter what he would do, he would just approach you with happiness, and it's something super beautiful."

Whether on campus or on lacrosse trips, Lucian always brought his teammates and friends together. As his roommate on overnight trips, Riney remembered a night when he and Lucian spoke for hours in their room. "It was just so nice to have someone to talk to for that long, and, especially because my first year in college, I wasn't super, super close with anyone, and it made me feel super at home to be able to talk with someone for that amount of time," he said. "And I remember hearing his laugh and just imagining his smile in my head that night."

Lucian was a fixture of Breen's room in McBride Residence Hall: "One night, I walked in and he was doing his homework. One night, he was playing with some weird, little game I had on my desk. One night, I came in and he was listening to TV on volume 99." For Breen, Lucian's presence meant that a good time would follow.

Lucian was equally beloved as a teammate, bouncing around the locker room or the sidelines, always looking to make someone smile. "He gave effort every day, the highest effort," Head Coach Doug Misarti said. "I think he had a very bright future on the field, but he made everybody better. He was just that kind of person."

Always developing as a lacrosse player, Lucian scored his first goal against Wabash College in a 26-4 vic-

tory. Even when achieving his own dreams, Lucian brought joy to those around him. "I don't know if I've ever seen a sideline eruption quite like that," Misarti said. "Everybody was really happy for him." For Breen and Riney, Lucian's goal was pure Lucian. Shooting from more than 20 yards away, his teammates couldn't believe it when Lucian let his shot fly. "And then it goes in," Breen said. "And it just became a mosh pit on the sidelines." Riney was one of the first people to reach Lucian after his goal: "He had the biggest smile on his face... He was so out of breath, he couldn't even talk."

Throughout every chapter of Lucian's life, those who knew him remembered his legacy of kindness and light. Li found comfort in the fact that, even after leaving the nest, Lucian still told stories of his family to his friends at Kenyon. "When people asked Lucian about Calla, he was always proud to show Calla's artwork on his phone," he said. Lucian told friends and those closest to him about trips to get ice cream and play golf, leaving Li and Popdan proud of the young man they raised: "We had a wonderful trip to Japan and Taiwan before the accident, and I feel he came back from college freshman year to become an even better young adult."

Despite the profound loss that all of Lucian's communities have experienced since his passing, Li hopes that everyone who was impacted by his life can try to 'live for Lucian.' "Living for Lucian is really just three simple things, which is being kind, helping others and having fun," he said. Lucian's family began the #LiveForLucian campaign to help establish scholarships for those who embody Lucian's spirit.

Around Kenyon's campus and across the world, Lucian's light still shines, even though he is no longer walking down Middle Path or through the locker rooms of the Lowry Center. The communities Lucian helped to build will make certain that his memory will always be present and that everyone can work to Live For Lucian.

## Julie Kornfeld announced as Kenyon's twentieth president

AUDREY BAKER  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Julie Kornfeld will become Kenyon's 20th president on Oct. 1, the College announced in a June news bulletin.

Kornfeld, who is vice provost for academic programs and an associate professor of epidemiology at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, was appointed to the position by the College's Board of Trustees in June. She will replace former president Sean Decatur, who announced his de-

parture for the American Museum of Natural History last December.

"I see this next step as a wonderfully invigorating opportunity to join a special place," Kornfeld wrote in an email to the *Collegian*. "I am about to have the honor and privilege of leading Kenyon College, one of the nation's top liberal arts colleges — I am feeling pretty lucky!"

In a pool of several potential candidates, Kornfeld stood out, said Aileen Hefferren '88 H'12, chair of the College's presidential search committee.

"We wanted somebody who really understood Kenyon and understood its value — and appreciated it and loved it in the way that everybody who's on the committee does."

She added that Decatur — who led the College through the most successful decade in its nearly 200-year history — had done "incredible things" for Kenyon, and that Kornfeld will inherit an institution that is already doing exceptionally well.

Kornfeld has previously served as vice dean for education at Mailman

and assistant dean for public health at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine. She said that she plans on continuing to teach at Kenyon, and is excited to jump into life on campus.

Kornfeld believes that her first job as president is to "listen and learn."

"I wouldn't want to presume any priorities for Kenyon before actually stepping into the role and talking to the people who know it best," she said. "I look forward to spending the coming months getting to know Kenyon."



Kornfeld | COURTESY OF KENYON COMMUNICATIONS



# Guo joins ODEI as Assistant Director, brings new initiatives

RACHEL BOTKIN  
NEWS EDITOR

René Guo joined the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI) as Assistant Director of DEI on June 15. They are the third team member to join in the last year following ODEI’s strategic plan to strengthen diverse communities across campus.

Prior to working at Kenyon, Guo researched the intersection of Black theology and mass incarceration at Denison University and the intersection of Asian religion and systems of oppression at Yale Divinity School. They previously worked as an Assistant Minister at the Dixwell Avenue Congregational United Church of Christ, and independently founded an interfaith dialogue group to discuss religion, gender and sexuality.

“The opportunity to channel this multifaceted background into tangible and impactful initiatives resonates seamlessly with my aspirations to be an influential agent of meaningful change,” Guo wrote in an email to the *Collegian*.

As Assistant Director of DEI, Guo will be responsible for advancing gender and sexuality equity initiatives across campus. They intend to orient these initiatives toward the student body, expanding ODEI’s outreach on campus. These initiatives include a bi-weekly shuttle for transgender and gender non-conforming students to access gender-affirming care. Guo and Administrative Assistant to the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Kennedy Bell also plan to host three allyship workshops in the fall semester for students, faculty and staff, with separate workshops for athletes and Student Council.

Guo emphasized the importance of a student-oriented approach to ODEI’s programming. “The pursuit of diversity, equity and inclusion is inherently centered around people,” they said. “This endeavor necessitates a collective commitment to fostering an atmosphere where all members of the community feel valued and empowered.”

These initiatives align with ODEI’s strategic plan for the semester, which the Office outlined in an email to the student body on Monday. In the email, ODEI expanded on three priorities for the 2023-24 academic year: trauma-informed education, increased collaboration and regular assessment of the Office. These priorities include educational events on neurodiversity and trauma, stronger collaboration among affinity groups on campus and increased transparency on decision making

within ODEI.

“Substantial progress necessitates a unified stance,” Guo said. “[T]ransformation can only be attained through a lucid comprehension of our current standing and the trajectory we aspire to chart.”

Guo looks forward to expanding ODEI’s impact on campus through new events, initiatives and programming. They are hopeful that expanded outreach will cultivate a more inclusive community at Kenyon.

“What excites me most is the opportunity to contribute to a team dedicated to fostering a campus culture characterized by respect, understanding and empowerment,” Guo said. “This journey ahead promises personal growth, continuous learning and the genuine satisfaction of enriching the fabric of an increasingly inclusive Kenyon College community.”

# Here’s what you missed: Summer brings change on campus

LIZ DEPROSPO  
NEWS EDITOR

While students were busy enjoying summer away from the Hill, Kenyon departments appointed new leadership, refurbished lounge spaces and reworked student health services in preparation for the fall semester. From building renovations to modified mental health resources, here are the latest developments that students and faculty may have missed.

After thirty years in the building across from the Cox Health and Counseling Center, the Office of Campus Safety is now located on the second floor of Gund Commons. According to Director of Campus Safety Michael Sweazey, the move across Middle Path aimed to ease constraints imposed on the department by the location and size of the former office. Specifically, Campus Safety officers wanted the new location to be in a high traffic area, to have room for students to privately provide statements and to be in close proximity to the Mount Vernon Fire Department for easy collaboration. The upgraded space includes two student interview rooms, a brightly-lit lobby and a monitoring console which streamlines the surveillance and officer dispatch process. The central location will also serve as shelter for students during future power outages, as Kenyon repurposed an old generator to ensure that the Office of

Campus Safety is able to operate during emergencies. According to Sweazey, the building-change process required significant manpower and careful preparation from several Kenyon departments. “The department and I are incredibly grateful to Kenyon’s Senior Staff, Facilities, Maintenance, LBIS, Grounds, Custodial and Students Affairs for their support and help to facilitate our move,” he wrote in an email to the *Collegian*.

Directly across the hall, the Gund Commons game room — a hub for studying, club meetings and socialization — underwent an extensive makeover. While the room previously featured classic board games such as Scrabble and Bananagrams, it now boasts a variety of digital and electronic game options as well. Among the new offerings are arcade machines, a Nintendo Switch available for students to check out and a gaming table equipped with classics such as Pacman. The redesigned space also includes a ping-pong table and two pool tables — one of which was previously located in Cromwell Cottage during President Decatur’s term as president. According to Director of First-Year Experience Don Miller, the renovations were spearheaded by the First-Year Class Committee (FYCC), which worked in conjunction with the Office of Student Engagement (OSE) to hold forums, poll students and ensure that all first-year students had an opportunity to voice their vision for the room. “All of

this is a byproduct of student involvement and really empowering students. Student advocacy and voice really is huge,” Miller said. The FYCC will continue to consult with current first-years and OSE officials throughout this academic year to ensure that future renovations to common spaces are both relevant and engaging to the student body.

Beyond the refurbishments in Gund Commons, virtual student resources also underwent summer updates. My Student Support Program (My SSP), the mental health service that replaced ProtoCall in November of last year, was recently acquired by TELUS Health. Consequently, the TELUS Health Student Support app has replaced My SSP as the 24/7 mental health resource available to Kenyon students. According to Vice President of Student Affairs Celestino Limas, the app resembles My SSP by providing students with the ability to call or chat with a counselor at any time and supporting the work of the Health Center. The free, confidential app aims to address common stressors amongst college students, including feelings of isolation and difficulties balancing work and social commitments. In addition to offering anonymous chat support, TELUS features virtual fitness classes and informational podcasts promoting holistic wellbeing. Students interested in using the TELUS Health resources can download the app, visit the official TELUS Health website or call 740-427-5555 for emergency connection to a counselor.

In addition to student resources, Kenyon saw turnover at an administrative level. Just weeks after the appointment of Julie Kornfeld as the 20th president of Kenyon, the Board of Trustees welcomed Aileen Hefferren ’88 H’ 12 as the new chair — succeeding Brackett B. Denniston III ’69, who held the position for eight years prior to Hefferren’s appointment. Hefferren, the former chair of the Presidential Search Committee, has served as CEO and Director of the Children’s Museum of Manhattan, as well as Director of Individual Gifts at New York University. Beyond her executive experience, Hefferren is well-versed in Kenyon life, having served as a Trustee in some capacity since 2003. Throughout her time on the Board, she has served on various committees, including as an Executive Committee Member. “I will always be grateful for the opportunities Kenyon gave me as a 17 year old and for shaping me into the person I am today. Liberal arts all the way!” she wrote in a LinkedIn post announcing her new position.

From the student-driven updates within Gund Commons to the resources available in the TELUS app, the unifying undercurrent behind recent campus changes was the desire to more effectively serve the student body. With new office locations, leadership and programs present all around campus, Kenyon’s offices are readying themselves for whatever challenges and opportunities the new academic year will bring.

## The Kenyon Collegian

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# Annual Community Feast fosters connections on campus

**SACHA FRANJOLA**  
FEATURES EDITOR

On Aug. 25, students ushered in the new academic year with sunflowers, pet rocks and a concert from the Symphonic Wind Ensemble at Kenyon's annual Community Feast. The product of a herculean effort from AVI and the Office of Campus Events (OCE), the Feast is a newer College tradition that is cementing itself in the hearts of Gambier residents, one bite of locally-sourced food at a time.

The event began as an annual picnic hosted by the Office of Student Engagement, but it didn't develop into a true "feast" until 2014, when the Gund Gallery hosted a farm-to-table meal to complement its exhibition at the time, titled *Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art*. The gallery collaborated with the Cinearts Club to bring food trucks to campus and screen food-related films, such as the movie "Chef," in a series of showings aptly titled "Dinner and a Movie." A 2014 *Collegian* article emphasized the importance of the community spirit in making or breaking the Feast: "Because the people of Gambier and Kenyon are so intertwined, the 'Feast' program has pulled the already close-knit stitches of the community a little tighter, allowing citizens, students and faculty to bond by eating together on Ransom Lawn." The Gund Gallery continued to host the event until 2020, when it was canceled due to the pandemic. In 2021, OCE hosted the festivities for the first time, though attendance was limited to just students in an effort to comply with COVID-19 restrictions. Last year, the Feast returned in full force for all members of the community to enjoy.

At this year's event, the OCE worked to improve upon the existing tradition without abandoning the Feast's heritage: "The Office of Campus Events strives to make the Community Feast better every year," Howard Grier, Director of Campus Events, wrote in an email to the *Collegian*. "We start with what worked the last time and try to add more of that or new elements."

The primary concern for Grier's office was one worryingly outside of their control — the unpredictability of Ohio weather, made even more stressful by the numerous thunderstorms that had battered campus in the days leading up to the event. "As with all outdoor events, weather can present an issue," Grier wrote. "Two nights of storms did not bode well for the picnic element of Community Feast, but fortunately, most of the lawns dried in time."

Alongside the OCE, AVI worked to provide feast-goers with a meal fit for the occasion, closing the Peirce Dining Hall servery after lunch to prepare for the hungry attendees. The menu included local grains, Amish potato salad and hamburgers, as well as plentiful vegan options and an impressive array of cookies for dessert. Watermelon proved to be a favorite among guests.

In addition to the meal, the Feast featured a litany of activities for attendees both young and young at heart to engage with. They included face painting sponsored by the Kenyon Staff Council, crafts sponsored by the Center for Global Engagement and the Office of Student Engagement, button making with the Gund Gallery and pet rock painting with the BFEC. Kenyon's Symphonic Wind Ensemble also treated picnickers to a concert of new and old repertoire, made more impressive by the fact that the ensemble had held only one rehearsal prior to performing. Grier stressed the importance of having such community-building activities at the Feast: "Proximity does not create community; positive interactions do. Bringing everyone together at the beginning of the academic year in a social environment is meant to strengthen relationships, whether people are gathering a team to play corn-hole, bonding over crafts or just catching up while eating a delicious meal."

Though it may not be as longstanding a Kenyon tradition as the First Year Sing or avoiding the Peirce seal, the Community Feast is evolving into a highlight of the fall semester. Grier summed it up best: "Community Feast has existed with different names and in various iterations for many years. There is no right or wrong way to do it."

The Kenyon community got the chance to enjoy delicious food, make crafts and bond with each other. | BRITTANY LIN







On August 25th, the Ransom Notes (left) and Owl Creeks performed at the cabaret. | BRITTANY LIN

## A cappella groups open semester with captivating cabaret

**DOROTHY YAGUB**  
ARTS EDITOR

On Friday afternoon, shortly before the annual Community Feast, students streamed into Rosse Hall to watch Kenyon's many a cappella groups come together to perform a cabaret. A cappella is one of Kenyon's most popular extra-curriculars: There are ten separate groups on campus, each with a unique musical style ranging from folk to classical to jazz. In addition to being a fun musical event, the cabaret served as an opportunity for each group to advertise themselves to potential recruits, especially the incoming first-years.

The show began with a per-

formance from Kenyon's oldest a cappella group, the Chasers, who were founded in 1964. The Chasers are multi-genre and gender inclusive, giving them a versatility that was reflected in their moving renditions of "Midnight in Harlem" and "Amazing Grace."

Next up were the tenor-bass Kokosingers, known affectionately on campus as the "Kokes." Several of their members graduated last spring, so there were only five performers on stage, but their powerful voices more than made up for their diminished size when they sang Big Star's "Thirteen" and The Tallest Man on Earth's "The Gardener."

The following two ensembles took a humorous ap-

proach. Classical tenor-bass group Männerchor sang a whimsical sea shanty about grog and tobacco, and the Ransom Notes donned funny hats while singing Pitbull. The audience laughed especially hard at the expert trumpet impression given by Ransom Notes member Sylvan Maney '24.

The jazz-focused Take Five were next, followed by the soprano-alto Owl Creeks, whose sweet but spirited arrangement of Sara Bareilles' "Love Song" was one of the show's highlights.

After the Owl Creeks, musical theatre group the Broken Legs took the stage, performing a skillful rendition of "Rainbow Connection" star-

ring Soren Roeser '26 as the voice of Kermit the Frog.

The next group, POCapella, Kenyon's newest a cappella ensemble, features students of color performing songs written by artists of color. They sang Joji's "Slow Dancing in the Dark" and CeeLo Green's "Forget You."

Afterwards came soprano-alto group Colla Voce, whose genres of choice are classical and folk. They performed one song on their own before collaborating with Männerchor on the entertaining folk song "Chicken on a Raft," written by Cyril Tawney.

The final act to perform was the folk ensemble the Stairwells, whose use of acoustic instruments makes them tech-

nically not an a cappella group but certainly doesn't take away from the joy of watching them. Their closing song, "Seven Bridges Road" by the Eagles, was a perfect closing number for the show.

The various performances highlighted each group's distinctive qualities, and many of the students in attendance came away from the show with plans to try out for one or more of the groups. The groups all held their auditions over the next few days and have since welcomed new members into their ranks. Whether you're a soprano or a baritone, a theater geek or a classically trained opera singer, Kenyon's expansive a cappella scene has something for you.

## Excess consumerism clouds feminist critiques in "Barbie"

**LEILA KOHN**  
STAFF WRITER

"Barbie," director Greta Gerwig's latest endeavor and arguably the film of the summer, is a riotous good time and one of the craftiest advertisements for a toy I have ever seen. Hordes of moviegoers are flocking to clothing stores and Mattel's website to join the Barbiecore bandwagon, while social media influencers show off their hot pink outfits and new Barbie Mattel eyeshadow palettes on Instagram and TikTok.

Gerwig, however, has tried to add substance to what appears to be an elaborate marketing campaign. The film addresses complex themes of mother-daughter bonding, healing one's inner young girl and breaking free of viewing the self as a product to be marketed to a patriarchal society. Unfortunately, Gerwig and co-writer Noah Baumbach have dumbed these ideas down in their execution, relying on heavy-handed monologues

dispersed throughout the latter half of the film.

Considering that this film is marketed to the general public, particularly teenage girls, I can see why Gerwig and Baumbach chose to present their ideas in this more palatable manner, especially with Mattel most certainly watching their every move. It is commendable that they managed to create some nuance in a film which bases itself around an initially unfeeling doll and which has to remain marketable for one of the largest toy companies in the world.

Despite some essential shortcomings within the screenplay, Margot Robbie as Barbie and Ryan Gosling as Ken give stellar comedic performances. Although Robbie's Barbie often feels cold, this is somewhat understandable, considering she embodies a plastic toy. Gosling is surprisingly perfect as a doltish Ken and provides a flamboyant contrast to Robbie's more subdued Barbie. Supporting characters such as Michael Cera's Al-

lan and Kate McKinnon's Weird Barbie are priceless and practically steal the show from Robbie. Conversely, the two main human characters – America Ferrera as Gloria and Ariana Greenblatt as her daughter Sasha – feel underdeveloped and more like plot devices than actual people. I was disappointed that they remained devoid of much personality despite a suspenseful buildup to their reveal in the film.

The film's design is impeccable. The set designers and makeup and costume departments have created a candy-colored world as vibrant and exciting as the actual dolls and their accessories. Perhaps this is why the film has inspired, more than anything in my opinion, consumerism on the part of young women hoping to look like their new favorite character. Although I take no issue with pink making a comeback, the film's dependency on its brand deals causes the feminist message to feel co-opted by Mattel as a marketing ploy.

If you loved "Barbie," I don't blame you. The songs and costumes are fun, Robbie and Gosling are a great on-screen pairing and the film really did make some hilarious and bold creative choices in terms of dialogue. However, I am skeptical of supporting this new wave of intellectual-property- and brand-based movies, as art becomes co-opted by consumerism, and thought-provoking messages on gender and society must be dumbed down to cater to brands' general markets and to increase sales.

If one goes into the theater without expectations of an overly intellectual message, "Barbie" holds up; it is an entertaining meta retelling of what every young girl goes through as she realizes that fitting into patriarchal society's idea of what a woman should be in the contemporary world is not indicative of happiness. Viewers must look beyond the consumerist trends this film has inspired to achieve a true sense of self and place in the world.



STAFF EDITORIAL

Writing Kenyon's  
unwritten rules

Before classes reach full throttle, we at the *Collegian* would like to take this opportunity to welcome first-years and transfers to the Hill for the first time. In lieu of another feast, we have decided to finally write down some of Kenyon's unwritten rules for your convenience.

Let's start with the basics: Legend has it that if you walk through the Gates of Hell as the bells of the Church of the Holy Spirit strike midnight, you will be transported straight to Hell. And the gates really can make your life a living hell: If you walk on opposite sides of the post as someone else, your relationship will end. Trust us — we've seen it happen.

Cars may not be allowed on Middle Path, but treat it like a road and stay to the right. And even though love may be in the air with your Kenyon Krush, please keep the Middle Path PDA to a minimum.

On to Peirce Dining Hall: Old Side is dominated by athletes, but don't be intimidated: Anyone can enjoy the long tables, books in the windows and the occasional bat. The hustle and bustle of New Side may be intimidating, but the streaming sunlight can make it a perfect location to do homework. Or to not do homework. Also, no matter how much of a rush you're in, don't step on the Peirce seal, unless you're OK with not graduating in four years.

Moving on to the broader campus rules, pranks are encouraged, but vandalism and destruction are not. Included in the general rule against destruction, no one thinks it's cool to hit an exit sign off of the wall, or to throw your trash on the ground. You lose triple points if you break a glass bottle and risk the safety of all campus critters. And, really, no matter how drunk you are, don't tear your CA's posters off the wall.

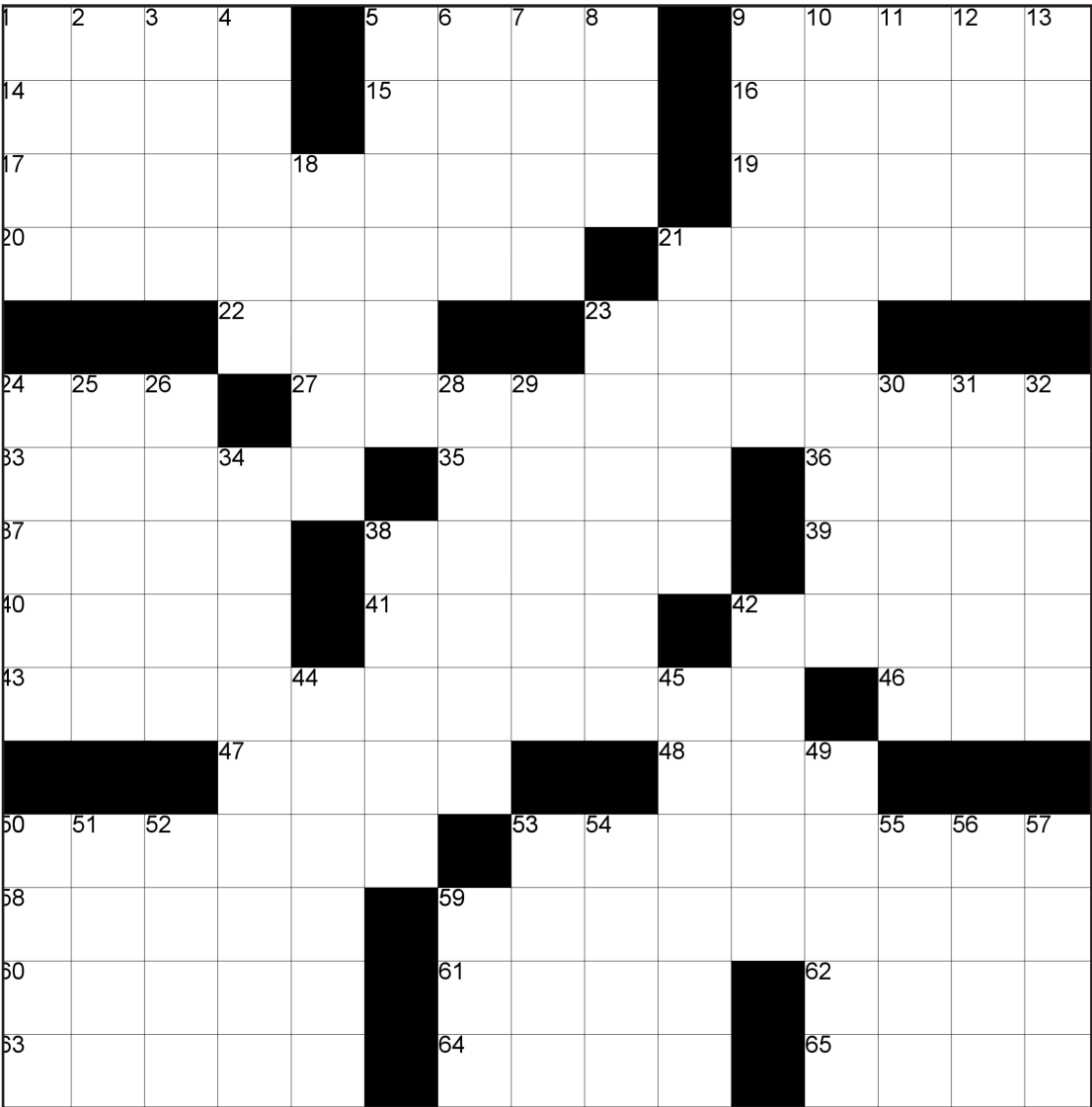
This rule is actually written, but we felt it warranted repeating: Do not steal other people's things. This is simple enough, but it applies to the umbrella someone leaves in the Peirce entryway when it's raining. And that bike that's taunting you from the bike rack you pass on the way to class? It's not there to take a joy ride or to shave a few minutes off your commute.

Finally, there are unwritten digital rules. Your wallet deserves an allstu email; your lost pen does not. If you find something, bring it to Campus Safety, and if you lose something, check Campus Safety. As for YikYak... Well, we'll let you figure out YikYak once you finish reading this.

As the year continues, we are sure that you will discover even more rules to guide your life at Kenyon, but before we sign off we hope to give you just one more: Always read the *Collegian*.

Sincerely,  
Hannah, Katie and Audrey

The staff editorial is written weekly by editors-in-chief Katie Sparvero '25 and Audrey Baker '25 and managing editor Hannah Sussman '25. You can contact them at [sparvero1@kenyon.edu](mailto:sparvero1@kenyon.edu), [baker10@kenyon.edu](mailto:baker10@kenyon.edu) and [sussman1@kenyon.edu](mailto:sussman1@kenyon.edu), respectively.



KYLE KELLEY  
CROSSWORD EDITOR

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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.

The *Kenyon Collegian* reserves the right to edit all letters submitted for length and clarity. The *Collegian* cannot accept anonymous or pseudonymous letters. Letters must be signed by individuals, not organizations, and must be 200 words or fewer. Letters must also be received no later than the Tuesday prior to publication. The *Kenyon Collegian* prints as many letters as possible each week subject to space, interest and appropriateness. Members of the

# Department of Athletics welcomes sixteen new coaches



From left to right: Coach Gero, Coach Wall, Coach Adams and Coach Shellhouse | COURTESY OF KENYON ATHLETICS

**MICAH ARENSTEIN**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Sixteen new coaches joined the Kenyon Department of Athletics during the off-season, a dramatic uptick from last year's four coaching appointments. From cross country to volleyball, more than half of Kenyon's 20 athletic teams welcomed at least one new hire to their flock.

One of the biggest shocks of summer was the departure of men's soccer head coach Chris Brown and assistant coach Darren Moore on June 20. Brown began his tenure in 2005, and Moore joined his staff eight years later. In the 18 years since Brown's arrival, the Owls compiled an astounding overall record of 238-72-36. Together, the coaches won eight NCAC regular-season championships, five NCAC Tournament titles and three NCAC Coaching Staff of the Year awards while also making 10 NCAA Tournament appearances in the last 12 seasons.

Coach Travis Wall was chosen to replace Brown one month after Brown's departure. Wall, a Columbus, Ohio, native who played for and graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU) in 2012, joins Kenyon from St. Olaf College (Minn.) after serving as head coach for four years. Overall, St. Olaf went 43-18-3 across the previous four seasons. Wall is no stranger to the NCAC, as he is an inductee in OWU's Athletics Hall of Fame and was named to the NCAC's 2004-2013 All-Decade Team. During his time as a collegiate athlete, Wall was a two-time first team All-American and a captain of OWU's 2011 national championship team as well as the 2011 NSCAA National Player of the Year. "I accepted the Kenyon job because it's a top program in the country, with some of the best soccer facilities in the country, at one of the best academic institutions in the country," Wall wrote in an email to the

*Collegian*. "Kenyon is the only job I would have left my previous position for."

Newly hired Assistant Coach Nick Tajjan, a graduate of Cleveland State University, arrives from Baldwin Wallace University, where he served for three seasons as the assistant coach and video coordinator.

Staying on Mavec Field, Women's Soccer Head Coach Kelly Bryan announced the appointment of Maddy Ireton as an assistant coach for the Owls. Ireton, who served as the assistant coach at Lake Erie College (Pa.) for the past two years, played for Wooster College as a goalkeeper. As a captain during her 2018 senior season, Ireton helped lead the Fighting Scots to their first ever NCAC Tournament title and was named to the NCAC All-Tournament team.

After six seasons at Kenyon, women's lacrosse head coach Jess Good announced that she would be stepping away from coaching. On Aug. 21, Angelica Gero was appointed as the new head coach, as announced by Director of Athletics, Fitness and Recreation Jill McCartney. Gero joins the Owls from Aquinas College (Mich.), where she coached for the past five years. Gero, who is the 11th head coach in program history, will be looking to improve on women's lacrosse's stellar 2023 season, in which they went 18-2 and ended with a No. 21 ranking in the national poll. "I hope and plan to bring a lot of passion for our sport, as well as a lot of positivity and appreciation for being on a great team and having the opportunity to compete alongside fellow elite student-athletes," Gero wrote in an email to the *Collegian*. "I am looking ... forward to working in a great, collaborative work place with high standards and an exceptional support system."

On the gridiron, Head Football Coach Ian Good announced four new coaching changes, including new hires for the offensive and defensive coordinator positions. Blake Cattrell was promoted to offensive

coordinator after serving as the offensive line coach for the past two seasons. Cattrell also served as the team's director of football operations last season. Then on Aug. 4, Good announced that Nate Wilson would join the Owls as an assistant coach. Wilson comes from Capital University, where he coached running backs and tight ends. On the defensive side of the ball, Brett McMurray earned a promotion to defensive coordinator back in January after serving as the defensive line coach the previous season. He will be joined by Dylan Hyatt, the new defensive backs coach and video coordinator. A graduate of DePauw University, Hyatt arrives in Gambier from Anderson University (Ind.).

On the hardwood, recently hired Men's Basketball Head Coach Steve Phillips appointed Justin Sosinsky as assistant coach of the Owls men's basketball team. Sosinsky worked alongside Phillips at Williams College (Ma.) where they both served as assistant coaches. During their tenure, the Ephs went 55-22 and qualified for two NCAA Division III Tournaments.

Then on Aug. 18, the Department of Athletics announced that Brittany Stawovy joined the women's basketball team as an assistant coach. Stawovy joins the Owls from Seton Hall University (Pa.), where she served as a graduate assistant coach. Stawovy graduated from West Virginia Wesleyan College in 2021, where she was a two-time team captain.

Kirk Shellhouse, who was appointed the head coach of men's and women's cross country back in December 2022, will finally begin to coach as the fall season begins. Shellhouse arrives from Oglethorpe University (Ga.), where he served as the head coach for both the track and field and cross country programs for seven years. Additionally, Shellhouse will serve as an assistant coach for Kenyon's track and field teams.

After volleyball head coach Emma Ol-

son stepped away in mid-July, Sharon Adams was named the interim head coach of the team a few weeks later. Adams has over 30 years of coaching experience at the club, high school and college level. Joining Adams is Lauren O'Flaherty, the new volleyball assistant coach, who has experience mostly at the club level in and around Toledo, Ohio.

In late May, the Department of Athletics announced that Danielle Korman '06 joined the Kenyon swimming and diving program as an associate head coach. Korman, a seven time All-American, returns to Gambier after successful coaching stints at Yale University (Conn.), Massachusetts Institute of Technology and University of California, Berkeley.

On the diamond, head softball coach Emily Miller announced the hiring of Emily Engel as assistant coach. Engel is making her coaching debut with Kenyon after playing first base for NCAA Division I University of Massachusetts Lowell.

Elsewhere, Taylor Geaglone joined the field hockey coaching staff as an assistant coach for the upcoming season. A recent graduate of University of New Haven (Ct.), Geaglone played under current Owls head coach Morgan Brozena for the first two years of her collegiate career and was voted the Northeast-10 Defensive Player of the Year in 2022.

Despite the unusually large amount of hires leading up to this academic year, McCartney is as eager and optimistic about the upcoming Athletic school year as ever. "We are very excited to have a number of new coaches join our department over the summer. They bring experience and enthusiasm as well as an eagerness about being part of Kenyon," she wrote in an email to the *Collegian*. "Their energy in the department is contagious and I am very grateful to have them with us."

## WRITE FOR THE KENYON COLLEGIAN

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## SERF competes at Division III Nationals, focuses on future



**KATIE SPARVERO**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The word ‘serf’ holds a different meaning on Kenyon’s campus than it does beyond the Hill. Specifically, Kenyon students associate SERF with the flying plastic discs and acrobatic moves that embody Ultimate Frisbee.

Co-captain Liam Savona ’25 and his fellow teammates find much of their time at Kenyon occupied by frisbee. “Despite playing a pretty silly game, on SERF we take what we do fairly seriously (importantly, different from taking ourselves seriously),” he wrote in an email to the *Collegian*. “[W]hen we’re not actively playing, working out, planning, watching film or traveling to a tournament, I guarantee it’s on our minds. Frisbee is the main conversation topic at every social interaction; we chat about strategy and playing time and event planning at every waking moment.”

SERF’s nearly single-minded focus on frisbee paid off, as the team qualified for the 2023 USA Ultimate Division III College Championship, held in Obetz, Ohio, from May 20 to 22. Playing under an hour and a half away from their home fields, co-captain Ethan Wagner ’25 described a sense of pride in playing for the Buckeye State in an email to the *Collegian*: “It gave us a little home field advantage and some extra incentive to represent Ohio in the best way possible.”

The 2023 tournament also offered Wagner his first chance to compete on the national stage, a chance he relished. “Even though SERF went to Nationals my Freshman year, I was injured [with an ACL tear] that year and was unable to compete,” he said. “This just made this Nationals experience even sweeter.”

Though a sprained ankle put Savona on the sideline for much of SERF’s playoff berth this year, the chance to watch his friends and teammates perform made the tournament even more special: “While it really hurt to have to watch all my best friends enjoy that moment, I think it also allowed me to appreciate it more fully. Natties was super cathartic and served as a celebration of all the hard work we put in up to that point.”

After going 2-1 in pool play with victories against Berry College (Ga.) and Occidental College (Calif.) on the first day of competition, No. 8 SERF punched its ticket to the quarterfinals with a 15-11 victory over the University of Rochester (N.Y.). Unfortunately, SERF’s run came to an end against No. 2 St. Olaf College (Minn.) in a tightly contested game. “Even though we ended up losing 15-13, it was still the most exciting game of Ultimate I’ve ever played in,” Wagner said. “Having all of the parents and Blu-Ray cheering us on from the sideline created an electric atmosphere that I will never forget.” Savona was proud of the season the team put together, as SERF ultimately finished tied for seventh place in the

country: “[W]hen we have the best competitive season the club has seen in over a decade and make it to quarters at nationals, it means a lot.”

For Savona, SERF’s camaraderie is what makes the team special. “One of the things that makes the Kenyon Ultimate community so strong is the collective commitment to building a community rather than just a club,” he said. “Everyone really cares about making it feel like a family, and so it does; this kind of thing doesn’t just happen without intentional engagement and effort.”

Wagner credited the relationship that SERF and its sibling team, Blu-Ray, have developed as a key foundation for the team’s success. “Kenyon Ultimate is made special because of how tight knit SERF and Blu-Ray have become,” he said. “A lot of other college Ultimate teams don’t have as good of a relationship with their counterpart team as we do. SERF and Blu-Ray compete in mixed tournaments together and weekly scrimmages to go along with any off-the-field events.” For Savona, the relationships that he has formed with alumni from both programs stay with him to this day: “Many of my favorite people I’ve ever met are SERF and Blu-Ray alums from the past couple years; it’s hard to quantify the kind of positive impact the community has had on me and so many other people.”

Though some Kenyon students may be intimidated by the barrage of flying discs that criss-cross the Ransom and Peirce

lawns some afternoons, both Savona and Wagner emphasized that the Kenyon Ultimate community is open to anyone. “Some people come in like me, having already developed a passion for Ultimate, and encourage their friends to give it a shot,” Savona said. “And even for people who have never played, the team is an automatic group of friends so they end up joining since it’s fun to hang out with people who go out of their way for you.”

With SERF’s run at the 2023 National Tournament in the history books, Wagner and Savona are looking forward to the coming season. “I’m excited to teach our first-years about how to play Ultimate Frisbee and what it means to be a part of SERF,” Wagner said. “After graduating a very talented class of seniors, it is imperative that we develop the first-years into polished players to try and fill in any gaps.”

Despite the challenges SERF may face, Savona believes that a new crop of frisbee fiends can help bring Kenyon Ultimate back to the national stage: “[T]he new first-years have shown up in droves thus far, with many future studs among them. It’s hard to go into this year with lofty expectations given last year’s performance and the significant turnover, but I think a good fall season and large recruiting class will have us primed for another strong showing in the spring.”

*Sports Editor Micah Arenstein ’26 is a member of SERF.*