

THE LEDGER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA



PHOTO BY MITCHELL FERMO

The online nature didn't deter student lobbyists from bringing up their issues.

Huskies on the Hill goes virtual

Student lobbyists across all UW campuses rally around student interests and human rights with local legislators.

By **GARRETT YAEN**
News Editor

For the first time, Huskies on the Hill — an annual event in which 70 student lobbyists from across the UW campuses — gathered together via zoom to lobby members of the Washington legislature regarding equity and accessibility on campus.

“Usually this is an in-person event where people go down to Olympia and actually go talk to the legislators face-to-face but COVID has made it really challenging to get meetings as effectively,” said Sam Locke, the UW Bothell Legislative Lead Lobbyist.

Student Phoebe Walker said the remote nature made the event more accessible for students who don't have the resources or time to be able to travel to Olympia.

“There's definitely a smaller turnout but we also feel like it was much more accessible because normally people would have to miss an entire day of class on Friday and take a bus at 6 a.m. an hour and a half past to Olympia and

be there all-day and come back up get back at like 7 p.m.,” Walker said.

They also explained that the number of people who signed up and attended was a higher rate compared to last year.

“I think with things being online we had a lower drop out rate between people who RSVP's, people who attended our training, and then people who actually showed up on the day,” said Walker.

Locke noted that she was surprised because the number of people who signed up and followed through this year rose in comparison to last year.

“Normally we would only have like maybe half or less than half of the people who RSVP actually show up on the day of [the event], so it was really great for it to be easier for students to actually interact with the legislators and I'm really happy with how it's gone,” Locke said.

Another student, Roy Alexander, shared Walker's sentiment of the event's accessibility.

“I'm attending the event wearing

pajamas right now, so it's definitely something anyone can do if they have the time,” Alexander said.

Conversely, Locke noted that it was also less accessible because some legislators had difficulties adjusting to zoom and utilizing it effectively. They said that misunderstandings with technology sometimes led to even more over-capacity than a traditionally in-person session in Olympia.

Although the long virtual lines may have been an early roadblock, Locke said lobbying went without a hitch once they got into a meeting with the legislators.

“Once you get the meeting, they're generally pretty receptive,” they said. “I think everything I've heard from people today has shown that the legislatures have been listening very closely and really taking note of what we're discussing and making sure that they're really hearing what the students need.”

Some of the issues brought to the forefront were diversity, equity and inclusion training, accessible healthcare, childcare for student-parents, police reform and housing security.

In light of the Black Lives Matter movement and the COVID pandemic, Locke said a popular bill among the student lobbyists was Bill SB 5227 — a bill that would mandate diversity inclusion and anti-racism training for faculty and staff and then eventually students as well.

Walker mentioned that discussions with the legislators were particularly amiable when it came to discussing childcare for students with children.

“Some of the ones I met with were really responsive to SB 5237, which focuses on expanding access to childcare for students attending community or technical colleges,” Walker said.

Another student, Cathy Pick, said they had a similar experience and lobbied for housing security regarding the ongoing pandemic.

“We got to meet with [legislators] from District 23,” Pick said. “I wanted to talk about bill HB 1166, which [they] sponsored cause there's some good data about foster kids and how they're dealing with the pandemic.”

According to Walker, the event

started with large group gatherings. It began with an introductory welcome at 9 a.m. From 12 to 1 p.m. there was an optional lunch hour and at 4:30, they had their final meetings and closing statements.

“I think students within the UW across all the campuses really care about equity and making sure that everyone is being afforded their basic human rights, and we're really seeing that today ... I mean, all of the issues we're talking about are centered in human rights concerns and students who are very enthusiastic to show up and speak out on some issues which directly impact them,” Locke said.

Looking to the future, student Rhianon Rasaretnam hopes that the technology could be incorporated into next year.

“Last year went great but it seems like it's easier for students to do this lobbying online so hopefully with next year even if it's back in person we'll be able to incorporate some of the online aspects that worked really well and kind of bring that with us for in-person stuff,” Rasaretnam said.



ILLUSTRATION BY ROSIE MENDOZA-BAUTISTA

Learn about the services provided to students, staff and faculty regarding violence prevention and protection.

You are not alone: Looking at what SafeCampus provides

A conversation with Gillian Wickwire about the purpose and need for SafeCampus.

By ROSIE MENDOZA-BAUTISTA
NEWS REPORTER

Trigger Warning: Discussion about homicide, violence, shootings, abuse, stalking, and suicide.

SafeCampus is a program at UW that seeks to provide services for students, staff and faculty that help with issues in regards to harassment or violence. This program is provided at all three UW campuses and UW affiliated programs.

Manager of Safecampus, Gillian Wickwire, spoke about the motivations behind starting this program.

“This program was formed in 2007, after we had a homicide occur at UW Seattle,” Gillian said. “That happened and then the Virginia Tech shooting happened two weeks later.”

These events caused UW to fund the SafeCampus program.

“I’ve been in my position for 12 years

now,” Wickwire said. “I got hired in 2008 as the Violence Response Specialist and I was in charge of the hotline. Then, about four years ago, I was hired into the manager position.”

Now, Gillian works with four full time staff members and student employees to meet the demands of those who are seeking help. She also noted that there are a wide variety of reasons for someone to make use of SafeCampus services.

“Someone who is experiencing, or knows someone experiencing, stalking — whether online or in-person — relationship or gender-based violence, suicide ideation, or cyber harassment should consider contacting SafeCampus,” she said.

SafeCampus services are imperative in a time where students, staff and faculty may be looking for different methods of getting help.

“A lot of people want models that

don’t go to the police department. If you see someone do violence in real time, the police will be the ones to call. We are here for things like stalking or relationship violence. We are a good first stop,” Gillian says.

Gillian Wickwire said she recognizes how people feel about policing and how they would want to redirect needs pertaining to harassment and violence prevention to services that specialize with these specific concerns.

SafeCampus is well-trained and utilizes policies around not forcing individuals to share more than they wish about themselves or the people they know.

“They don’t have to give any information that they don’t want to give to us ... They can stay anonymous. We work in trauma-informed matters. We aren’t going to say or do things that will make things worse. We can help,” Wickwire said.

SafeCampus also provides other forms of aid set around community awareness that takes form through training students, staff and faculty on preventative measures.

“Right now, we have past recorded zoom sessions available for anyone to watch. We will start back up with live sessions in the spring quarter. You will be able to ask questions in real time,” she said.

Asides from this training, SafeCampus has also collaborated with the UW Graduate Student Union to create the Empowering Prevention and Inclusive Communities, or EPIC, a program that revolves around sexual harassment training.

“This is a relatively new program and specifically for graduate students. It’s bystander focused to teach people what their options are,” Gillian said.

Gillian said that in the midst of quarantine, SafeCampus has seen these

issues worsen. Now more than ever with stresses running high, it’s important for students to seek help for the issues they face.

“We’re all in this storm together, and I think everyone can use some support and some resources. There are many resources at the university and we’re just one of them. So I encourage people to consider talking to a counselor. All kinds of relationships are hard right now. I think people should be present right now and focus on what can get them forward.”

The number that students, staff and faculty can use to reach SafeCampus is 206-685-7233. SafeCampus has a 24/7 answering service, 7 days a week. Though it’s advised to call during 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., since you will be easier to speak to a live representative then.

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Zoom Link: <https://washington.zoom.us/j/93330183616>

Office: MAT 151
Phone: 253-692-4428
Email: ledger@uw.edu

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Tacoma housing crisis spurs action from community

As the housing crisis worsens, activists have begun taking it upon themselves to ensure the homeless needs are met.

By **LUKE DENUELLE**
NEWS REPORTER

This week, the Ledger dove into the Tacoma housing advocacy scene, interviewing two prominent activists; Former Congressional Candidate and Spokesperson of Tacoma Housing Now Rebecca Parson and Gerrit Nyland of the Pierce County Tacoma Coalition to End Homelessness. Both people, and both groups, have been doing advocacy work around the issue of homelessness in the Pierce County area.

Homelessness in Tacoma was declared a State of Emergency in 2017 by Mayor Marilyn Strickland, when 1,300 people were experiencing homelessness during a count.

According to Pierce County's time count in Jan. 2020, 1,800 people were found to be experiencing homelessness. Since the declaration of a homeless emergency, the rate of homelessness has only risen. There has subsequently been a rise in housing advocacy within the United States. From activists seizing unoccupied buildings to tenant lobbying groups, the issue has become a rallying call in Tacoma.

However, the organizations may have differing perspectives and disagreements

on how to approach the issue. Nyland explained that if one wants to look at the problem of homelessness, they need to start at the housing market: make it cheaper to build.

"So step one is making it cheaper to build housing ... make it cheaper to build. I don't care if it's affordable housing or not you just have to have more housing stock," Nyland said.

They advocate following these things with three other interventions: one time financial assistance, rapid rehousing — which would find housing and cover one's rent for 6 months — and finally, fully subsidized housing guaranteed to the day one dies.

Parson pointed to an issue that runs deeper than simply shifting the market. "The cause is our profit driven housing system where so many people simply can't afford it and we just need to build more public housing, social housing, or turn buildings we have into that."

While they stated they support longer term goals such as Community Land Trusts, they said their main focus right now was getting people places to sleep.

"Some places have done Community land trusts, but as a kind of means to promoting homeownership, that's really not what we're interested in, I

mean nothing wrong with homeownership but we just want to get people in buildings that have warm and dry beds," Parson said.

To this effect, Parson has called for the use of federal funds to pay for hotel rooms for the homeless via either the Cares Act or FEMA Public Assistance Funding. FEMA PAF guaranteed a 75 percent reimbursement from the federal government under the administration of Donald Trump, and was increased to reimbursement of 100% under Joseph Biden. This was echoed by Nyland, who expressed confusion as to why the City was not making use of the funds.

"I do not understand the hesitancy. I know it's hard money to use like that's clear, it's hard money to use but it's not impossible money to use and both the city and county are using different parts of that type of money already," he said.

Aside from lobbying, direct action remains popular. Rebecca Parson and the Tacoma Housing Now group have expressed willingness to occupy unused property to use it as housing for the unhoused, a strategy known as 'squatting.'

They had previously occupied Gault Middle School — an abandoned Middle School located in Tacoma that had potentially been slated to be turned over

to the Tacoma Housing Authority for mixed housing and community center. THN had hoped for it to be turned into a community land trust. After being forcibly evicted from Gault, they attempted to stay in the Fife Travelodge, asking for the city to make use of FEMA PA funds, which resulted in their forcible eviction again.

While there exists criticism of the direct action, Parson pointed to their results.

"Since Tacoma Housing Now started [three months ago] the city has added 195 new shelter beds ... they've made the east side warming shelter 24/7, it used to be inclement weather only," she said. "The fact that we've only been in existence for three months now, and we've already gotten all these results that I mentioned earlier, indicates that our strategy and tactics are working."

A concern that exists throughout activism is representation. Nyland explained the Coalition is constantly looking to hear the voices of those affected, but it can be difficult to get homeless folks present at meetings.

Nyland acknowledges that to have the time and means to make it to these meetings is indicative of privilege that many of the homeless do not have.

Another way they plan on supporting the community is through the "Speakers Bureau." Nyland said this program is designed to get the local community in touch with underprivileged people.

"The goal of that is to have people with lived experience to learn how to be really effective telling [their] own story and communicating that to people so that when there's, you know, a church meeting that would like to have you know someone that's homeless they're like we have folks that are prepared to come and speak right there they're comfortable with it and we're also using that as an opportunity."

Parson, on the other hand, explains that THN is led by activists that are homeless.

"The household members of the coalition make the decisions ... Every time the city would offer something we would go back to, you know, the members of the camp and ask them, 'This is what they've offered, do you want to accept it?' And they would tell us no. When we would say 'Okay, the city is telling us that there's this asbestos so we have to leave it's not safe. Do you want to leave?' And they said 'No, because we prefer asbestos to freezing to death.'"

Faculty Spotlight: Meet Erik McDonald

Erik McDonald shares a peek inside his life along with the plans of the STEM faculty of UW Tacoma in response to COVID-19.

By **ROSIE MENDOZA-BAUTISTA**
NEWS REPORTER

The Ledger had the opportunity to speak with Erik McDonald, a 10 year UW Tacoma associate teaching professor in the division of mathematics and sciences. Besides being a professor, McDonald is a major coordinator for environmental science, faculty advisor and Capstone supervisor. His career path and acquisition of these positions are all a product of submerging himself in what he loved most; fishery biology.

Before he got to where he is today, McDonald received his undergraduate degree in Biology from Central Washington University in 2006.

"I didn't have a clear path on what I wanted to do. I only knew that I liked biology," McDonald says.

Soon thereafter he began working with fisheries and on projects with the Department of Fish and Wildlife along with the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

"Both of these projects were different but interesting. And they got me thinking about going to graduate school," he said.

Following these projects, he traveled farther east to attend Central Michigan University in pursuit of his graduate degree in biological sciences.

"It was a rigorous experience, it was one that ultimately paved the way towards what I wanted to do. I loved fishery biology but I also found out that I really enjoyed teaching," McDonald says.

With his graduate degree and teaching assistant certificate, he moved back to teach in Washington state. Where he now provides ample opportunities for students.

"I love getting students hands on job experience in conservation and research and the networking needed with these jobs," McDonald says.

McDonald loves helping his students obtain experiences and connections that will assist them in finding jobs later on. Locally, he holds events to help students at middle school and college levels work together to carry out STEM-related work.

Despite the challenges of online learning, McDonald shared his thoughts regarding the changes and difficulties the pandemic has imposed on the biology program, and also addressed the importance of communication with faculty.

"I'm genuinely interested in the well-being and success of all students at UWT," McDonald said.

However, there is no doubt that COVID has placed challenges on not only him, but the rest of the faculty in the STEM department as well. To face these

hurdles, they've all dedicated a lot of time and effort creating beneficial virtual labs in lieu of in-person ones.

McDonald attends monthly meetings with the department of environmental science and the topic of Capstones is soon to be up for discussion.

"I feel very optimistic. Understandably, it is difficult on everybody. But, we will come out of this stronger," he said. "We are coming up with propositions that are going to help the students; better help them with a career."

He has asked students to stay tuned for upcoming words on the subject and hopes to have better virtual opportunities for Capstones in the coming spring and summer quarters.

"Capstones aren't closed. This is really important to tell environmental science students. There are capstones out there that are available for students. Contact faculty on campus if you have similar interest in their research."

As words of encouragement, McDonald wants students to know that the faculty understands what they are facing due to the difficulties COVID has caused and are trying their best to support them. He also recommends seeking paid work, internships or volunteering to build a skill-set.

He also recognizes that each student

may come from a different place and perspective. To allow himself to be more understanding and helpful to students during the COVID pandemic, he has done more reading, professional development and anti-bias training.

"With COVID-19 and societal issues like the Black Lives Matter movement, it has really inspired me to continue to delve deeper into that subject matter that I'm not well versed in," he said. "I want to understand the barriers for students, particularly in STEM."



COURTESY OF THE UWT DIRECTORY
Erik McDonald, a professor genuinely interested in his students' success and well-being.

FUN FACTS

He has an eleven year old Black Lab Great Dane mix and a one and a half-year old baby.

He's passionate about hiking, snowshoeing, and wildlife photography.

He describes himself as a morning person and an old soul.

His mother graduated from UWT with a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing in 2013.

He's also recently watched the Queen's Gambit and highly recommends it.

The President as a figurehead

Biden is nothing but a return to the same oppression that America has always stood for, no matter how many executive orders he signs.



COURTESY OF ALEX WONG

Joe Biden is sworn in as U.S. President on January 20, 2021 in Washington, DC.

By ANDREA NADA
OPINION EDITOR

With the election of President Joe Biden and the return of the status quo, there has been a collective sigh of relief from many Americans. At the promise of no longer being assaulted by the white supremacy and oppression that rules this nation, the promise to sweep it all back under the rug and to continue to assert ourselves as the land of the free. To “re-unite the country” and to continue to make symbolic gestures rather than radical change. But the reality is that it doesn’t matter how many executive orders he signs, or how many empty promises he makes.

The costs of these actions are clear, the status quo was the problem and BIPOC can no longer afford to be collateral damage for white comfort in America. Biden was always just a way to get Trump out of office, and for many that was enough. His first week was filled with executive orders signed in the name of reversing Trump’s America. But these orders do little more than that, they are not a sign of true progress.

At first glance many of Biden’s initiatives may seem to be a sign of progress, but when explored in more depth, it becomes clear how much is really missing. In the New York Times article, “Biden’s 17 Executive Orders and Other Directives in Detail,” Aishvarya Kavi explains these orders concisely,

allowing us to examine what the true impact of these orders will be.

Among the executive orders signed by Biden, there are a number that deal with immigration issues. Amid these orders is one that supports the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. This program was created to protect immigrants brought to the United States as children from deportation, and Biden’s order “also calls on Congress to enact legislation providing permanent status and a path to citizenship for those immigrants,” according to Kavi.

Other orders include blocking attempts to “exclude noncitizens from the census count.” Overturning “a Trump executive order that pushed aggressive efforts to find and deport unauthorized immigrants.” And ending “the so-called Muslim ban, which blocked travel to the United States from several predominantly Muslim and African countries.” As well as the termination of the national emergency declaration that allowed funds to be redirected to construction of the wall on the US-Mexican border wall, thus halting construction.

While each of these are great initial steps, they are nothing to celebrate. They signify only a return to the same abusive, racist immigration system that existed previously. These actions are not bold enough, people are still at great risk under the immigration system as it exists currently. Hundreds of thousands of people are still detained in inhumane conditions, hundreds of thousands of people are still being denied at our bor-

der, children are still being separated from their parents and efforts to reunite families are not being prioritized. The actions being taken surrounding immigration are not enough, and more lives will continue to be lost and harmed under the Biden administration, just as they were under Obama’s.

As Kavi continues, aside from orders surrounding immigration are those that Biden signed focusing on climate change. Deciding to re-center the U.S. in the Paris climate accord has been one of Biden’s most popular orders thus far. While a nice symbolic gesture, the Paris climate accord falls far short of any meaningful change. The goals of these accords are selfish and prioritize western “developed” countries’ profits along with their continued exploitation of the global south over any meaningful action on climate change.

Biden also focused on reversing many of the environmental policies introduced by Trump’s administration, “including revoking the permit for the Keystone XL pipeline; reversing the rollbacks to vehicle emissions standards; undoing decisions to slash the size of several national monuments; enforcing a temporary moratorium on oil and natural gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and re-establishing a working group on the social costs of greenhouse gasses.”

While strides like these appear to be a good start, they are far from what is needed when it comes to climate

change. Biden’s refusal to ban fracking and his oversight on major issues, such as The Dakota Access Pipeline, show the true colors of his administration; they do not care about the environment or the peoples whose lands are being irreversibly damaged, they care about profit and their ability to get away with doing the bare minimum for people and the planet.

Finally, executive orders emphasizing justice and equality for BIPOC were signed. Among them, Biden reversed “Trump’s executive order limiting the ability of federal agencies, contractors and other institutions to hold diversity and inclusion training. Biden also “designated Susan E. Rice, who is the head of his Domestic Policy Council, as the leader of a ‘robust, interagency’ effort requiring all federal agencies to make ‘rooting out systemic racism’ central to their work.” An emphasis was also placed on “[ensuring] that Americans of all backgrounds have equal access to federal government resources, benefits and services.”

These goals fall incredibly flat, especially in light of the sustained efforts of the BLM movement. Biden fails to address the real issues facing communities of color and claims to envision a world without systematic inequality while simultaneously making no real efforts towards achieving this goal.

Creating a “data working group as well as the study of new methods to measure and assess federal equity and diversity efforts” is just one small

piece of a much larger puzzle, and it is a far cry from the structural change that has been demanded by communities of color across the United States of America.

We are still seeing our people murdered at the hands of the state and its officers, we are still seeing our people unjustly imprisoned at higher rates and with longer sentences, and we are still facing unequal access to housing, education, and job opportunities.

On inauguration day, with one hand on his family Bible and the other hand raised to the American people Biden swore his oath to the office of the President of the United States of America. He swore an oath to “unite the nation” and to bring back all that America has stood for. With that, he swore that he does not care of the cost to BIPOC in this country if it means maintaining the comfort and privilege of White America. Biden has shown his hand with these symbolic executive orders. We cannot afford the inaction of those in office, and we cannot fall for their political theater.

This status quo is deadly to BIPOC. Lives are being lost every day in this country and abroad because people are afraid of radical change. We don’t have the luxury of waiting for those in power to do the right thing, we never did. White comfort has always come at the cost of BIPOC’s lives, and we must refuse to be complicit in these deaths any longer.

Loving 365 days of the year

Valentine's Day is the one day out of the year where people make the effort in showing their loved ones affection and appreciation, let's explore the ups and downs of this.

By **BENGISU CICEK**
OPINION COLUMNIST

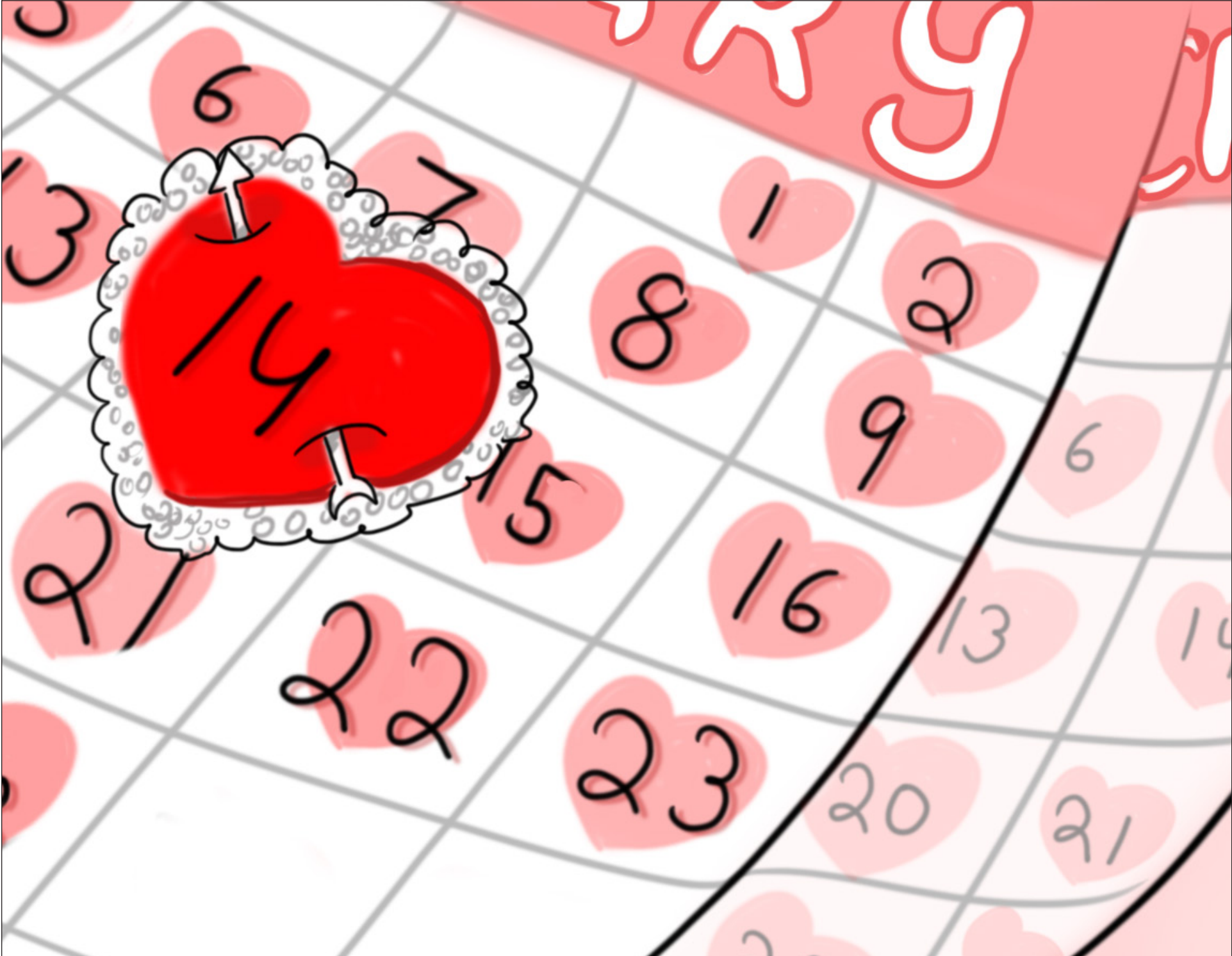
Valentines Day, Feb. 14, a day that people around the world each celebrate differently. This day has origins in the Roman festival of Lupercalia, which was annually on Feb. 15th, and was to ward off evil spirits to protect the city. As we see stores stock their shelves with heart shaped chocolate boxes, teddy bears with hearts, Valentine's Day cards and more red and pink items to symbolize romance and love, I wonder: Why have people become accustomed to expressing love on just this day? This practice may have started when we were young, if we were to bring the class cards and candy, acknowledging our feelings and appreciation for our classmates. Or something we have seen on TV shows

where they acknowledge the special significance of this day for love, or even just in romantic movies coming out specifically on or near Feb. 14. From a romantic point of view, I think celebrating Valentine's Day and going above and beyond on this one particular day when we don't do it the other 365 days is something that we need to recognize and be critical of. When we are with our partner, or with our beloved family members, we sometimes have that sudden spark of giving where we want to do something special for our loved ones. We want to show appreciation for them being them, and this act of giving can happen anytime out of the year as it comes randomly. Those random acts of kindness and appreciation should be practiced more. When we plan things out or base some-

thing off of Valentine's Day, we might unconsciously develop expectations for this particular day. Whether it's because we assume we will be given something special or we are supposed to give as well, these expectations can be damaging to our relationships as we unintentionally compare ourselves to what the ideal person should get or do on this day. "Valentine's Day is a day in which couples are basically forced to evaluate their status, and profess their undying love for each other. Strong couples do that at their own pace, and don't need a specific day in which to do so," says Chrissa Hardy in her article "Why Strong Couples Don't Need To Celebrate V-Day," from Bustle.com. This is especially valid for couples who are currently fighting or are going through unresolved issues. While it can

be a positive that they have a reason to put aside these problems to enjoy each other's company, it interrupts their space to communicate and solve these issues. Not meeting the expectations of Valentine's Day can also potentially create more issues on top of everything. Chrissy makes another important point in the article for single people on this day in stating, "Having a date on this holiday has become a status symbol more than anything else. It means that you're somehow better, and more successful than your single friends — which is obviously outrageous. Single people can be just as happy as serious couples, and they shouldn't be boxed out of a major holiday simply because they're without a significant other." As a single person witnessing this day, I am happy 365 days of the year for my friends who are happily married

or are with a significant other. It warms my heart to see my friends, and others, happy in the name of love. However, being single on this day does make me feel left out due to the commercialization of having a significant other to celebrate with. I can buy myself flowers, chocolates and a bear for a self-love type of day, but I don't need a day to tell me to do this. I can do this when the feeling sparks within me to take care and love myself. People are allowed to celebrate this day, and it's their own decision, what's important is that we do not limit ourselves to showing appreciation and love on this day solely and remember that we can do it anytime out of the year. Our loved ones will love and appreciate us the same.



Valentine's Day is the one day out of the year where people make the effort in showing their loved ones affection and appreciation, let's explore the ups and downs of this. ILLUSTRATION BY LORE ZENT

High-risk groups and COVID 19; who is being left out of the conversation

People who have a substance use disorder are still people and need to be treated as such, especially if we want to beat COVID.

By MADI WILLIAMS
A&E COLUMNIST

Many people are at risk of potentially contracting COVID, but did you know that those who have a substance use disorder are also among the group of individuals who are at a larger risk due to their weak immune systems? This group has been pushed to the sidelines for years, and now is the time to make that change and show them that we do care about their wellbeing, especially during a time in which COVID is still rampant.

Substance use disorder, as defined by the Mayo Clinic, is “a disease that affects a person's brain and behavior and leads to an inability to control the use of a legal or illegal drug or medication ... When you're addicted, you may continue using the drug despite the harm it causes.”

Drugs, in this case, can be anything from meth and cocaine to legal drugs like alcohol, marijuana or nicotine. Any one of these substances can lead someone into a substance use disorder and stressors can be a major trigger for someone with these disorders. With the unexpected and continued stress of the pandemic along with the lockdowns, many individuals with substance use disorders are at a higher risk of relapse.

The risk for those affected by substance use disorders is not just in a potential relapse, but also in an increased risk of infection from the virus. In her article “New Evidence on Substance Use Disorders and COVID-19 Susceptibility,” Dr. Nora Volkow ex-

plains that the reason for the increased risk of infection is because “many kinds of chronic substance use harm or weaken the body in ways that make people who use substances more vulnerable to infection.”

It is well documented that people who have compromised immune systems are at higher risk of contracting COVID. In her article, Dr. Volkow discusses a study that showed an “analysis of electronic health record data from more than 73 million patients at 360 U.S. hospitals, of whom 7.5 million (10.3% of the sample) had an SUD [Substance Use Disorder] and 12,030 had COVID-19.”

Essentially, out of the 7.5 million people who have a SUD, 12,030 contracted COVID at some point. And while this might not seem like a substantial amount, it is 12,030 people who were at high risk and potentially didn't know that they were.

Yet, with all of this evidence mainstream media is not emphasizing the risk for these individuals, the focus remains on the elderly and health care workers. We don't hear about it because many see those who have any type of substance use issue as a burden to society, and suggest they did what they did to themselves, so why should we have to pick them back up? When, in reality, these individuals need access to help and the support of others around them.

Programs in Tacoma, like The Tacoma Needle Exchange, help those who use substances stay healthy and safe.

On their website there is a message that reads “Due to the COVID-19 pan-



ILLUSTRATION BY LORE ZENT

demic, we have made the difficult decision to temporarily close all of our fixed sites. During this time, we will be available for no contact deliveries Monday-Friday, by appointment only. Limited to 1x/month for each person.” This greatly affects people who rely on this organization to get clean needles. This access is important in order to minimize the risk of disease through sharing needles.

The CDC Director, Robert Redfield, stated “The disruption to daily life due to the COVID-19 pandemic

has hit those with substance use disorder hard. As we continue the fight to end this pandemic, it's important to not lose sight of different groups being affected in other ways. We need to take care of people suffering from unintended consequences.”

As a society, we need to stop looking at people who have substance use disorder as an issue in society, if they got the help that they needed and the support these numbers would be less.

SEEKING HELP?

If you or someone you know needs help with substance use go to:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

FIND SUPPORT AND GET YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

Top Comfort Foods

By Madeline Hiller,
A&E Editor

It's getting colder outside and while vaccines are starting to roll out, we haven't quite seen the end of this pandemic yet. In light of this, we could all use a little joy and comfort through this hard winter and what better way to do this than with some popular foods from Tasty!

CREAMY LEMON BUTTER CHICKEN PASTA

DIRECTIONS

Melt the butter in the pan. Fry the onion and garlic until softened, 3-5 minutes.

Add the lemon zest and juice. Give the mixture a quick stir and add chili flakes and thyme.

Stir in the water and double cream. Add the spinach and cook for about a minute until wilted.

Return the chicken to the pan and add the pasta. Stir and cook until the pasta is al dente.

Mix in the parmesan. Remove the pan from the heat.

Serve with more parmesan, if desired and enjoy!

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

2 chicken breasts, diced
1 tablespoon butter
½ red onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 lemon, zest and juice
1 teaspoon chili flake
1 teaspoon dried thyme
¼ cup water
½ cup double cream
2 cups baby spinach
1 ½ cups fresh egg pasta
2 tablespoons parmesan cheese, plus more for serving



COURTESY OF KALHH AT PIXABAY.COM

BROWNIE FUDGE PUDDING

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).

Whisk the brown sugar and butter in a bowl.

Whisk in the egg and vanilla.

Fold in the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt.

Stir in the chocolate chips.

Divide the batter between 4 ramekins, or any other oven-proof pots you may have lying around in the kitchen.

Bake for 15 minutes, or until cooked but still fudgy inside.

Serve with whipped cream and enjoy!

The best way to cure a hard day's mood is with any form of chocolate. Chocolate is like an edible version of happiness and is sure to bring some light to this dark, cold and hard time.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

½ cup brown sugar
½ cup butter, melted
1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¾ cup plain flour
¼ cup cocoa powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
¼ cup dark chocolate chip
¼ cup white chocolate chip
whipped cream, to taste



COURTESY OF WLaura IANCU AT PIXABAY.COM

Black-Owned Businesses in Tacoma

Treat yourself to something nice and help support your community with these Black-owned businesses.

By **LORE ZENT**
A&E COLUMNIST

February is Black History Month. With the recent protests against police brutality and industrialized racism, it is as important as ever to support our black brothers and sisters. While money alone won't solve the issues they face, supporting black-owned businesses is a way to put money into the hands of those who work in those spaces and create deeper conversations about structural racism.

Here is a list of a few black-owned businesses in Pierce County you can support year round.

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ADORNED ABODE

Benita Smith is a Saint Louis native hoping to bring a little southern charm to Tacoma. She sells fine gifts at her boutique, Adorned Abode, in Freight-house square. Here you can find a variety of items from scented candles and soaps, a zodiac section and crafts to

jewelry and metaphysical items. Under COVID conditions, she is currently taking shopping appointments and accepting orders online.

BITE ME

Deborah Tuggle is the owner of Bite Me, LLC. Bite Me is a wholesale bakery located in Lakewood that produces cookies for three brands: "Bite Me," "Friday's" and "Bite Free." Bite Free is their vegan and gluten-free brand. Each can be found on various grocery store shelves or their online store.

CAMPFIRE COFFEE

Owned by Quincy Henry, this modern outdoorsy-themed coffee shop is located across from the Greater Tacoma Convention Center on market street. They roast their coffee beans over a hot fire — the traditional way. Coffee can be ordered in-house, to-go, mobile or online. They also have a storefront that offers a clothing line, roast packets and coffee cups.

EZELL'S FAMOUS CHICKEN

Lewis Rudd is the owner of the over 36 year family-owned business, Ezell's Famous Chicken. Since its beginning in the Central District of Seattle, the franchise has been able to open fifteen locations across Washington State. And having expanded, it now houses a location on 19th and MLK just a few blocks away from the UWT campus. They are known for their quality and size of the chicken. Weighing in at three pounds — a pound heavier than the average bird — cutting it into eight pieces instead of nine and cooking it in vegetable oil.



COURTESY OF INTENTIONALIST.COM

Benita Smith is the owner of Adorned Abode, a fine gifts business.

Their spicy chicken uses their famous New Orleans-style seasoning.

HOT BABE HOT SAUCE

You can find this Caribbean-styled sauce brand that offers unique flavors on the shelves of Tacoma Boys and Central Co-op, as well as other various retail locations and farmer's markets listed on their website. Some of their products include Cranberry Spice Hot Sauce, Mango Spice Chili Sauce, Scotch Bonnet Mustard Pepper Sauce, Xtra Hot Lime Hot Sauce and their Scorpion XXX Fermented Pepper Sauce.

POPS WITH MOPS CLEANING

Pops with Mops Cleaning is a family-run cleaning business that was

founded in 2019 and specializes in commercial cleaning. They offer a multitude of services, such as commercial cleaning, pressure washing and carpet cleaning. People can schedule a one-time, recurring or monthly appointment. Their service area spans throughout South King and Pierce County.

POSH AND PAMPERED BEAUTY BAR

At this full-service spa, their estheticians specialize in providing treatment programs that "are designed to safely and effectively treat acne, hyperpigmentation and pigmentation disorders of multicultural skin." Some of their services include chemical peels, dermaplaning, microdermabrasion, profes-

sional laser teeth whitening, tooth gems, micro blading, ombré powder brows and eyelash extension.

QUICKIE TOO

This family owned vegan café has been located in Hilltop on 14th and MLK since 1991. They have a wide variety of food options including pizza, wraps, salads, cakes, pies and many other plant-based comfort foods. They are currently open for takeout and online orders.

These are only a few of the black-owned businesses in Tacoma. If you're interested in finding more, check Tacoma Urban League's directory or Eat Okra's website or mobile app.



COURTESY OF SEATTLE ROTARY

Lewis Rudd is the owner of Ezell's Famous Chicken, a culinary business.

Celebrating the legacy of Jackie Robinson

With the celebration of Black History month, it is important to recognize the people that paved the way for athletes everywhere to be able to follow their dreams.

By **BROOK MOELLER**
SPORTS COLUMNIST

Sports fans everywhere recognize the name and importance of Jackie Robinson. He not only had an impact on the game of baseball, but on society as a whole. His impact is still recognized today by sports figures everywhere and his story is one that needs to continue to be told.

Robinson was born on Jan. 31, 1919 in Cairo, Georgia where he was the youngest of five children. It was his older brothers, Mack — who was a silver medalist at the 1936 Olympics — and Frank, who inspired Jackie to pursue athletics.

In high school, Robinson earned a varsity letter in football, basketball, track and baseball. In baseball, he earned a spot to play alongside future hall of farmers Ted Williams and Bob Lemon in the annual Pomona baseball all-star tournament.

Following high school, Robinson went on to enroll at Pasadena Junior College where he continued to compete in athletics. In baseball, he was named to the All-Southland Junior College Team and was selected as the region's MVP.

His performance at PJC allowed him to enroll at UCLA where he became the school's first athlete to win varsity letters in four sports. He was one of only four black players on UCLA's 1939 football team which made them college football's most integrated team at the time.

After a stint in the military, the Kansas City Monarchs of the negro league sent him an offer to play for them and Robinson accepted. The contract was for \$400 per month and his performance landed him a spot in the 1945 East-West All-Star game.

After this, Robinson would pursue opportunities to play in the major league where no black players had played since 1884. He eventually received a tryout with the Boston Red Sox but quickly realized that it was merely a publicity stunt and the Red Sox had no intention to actually sign him to a contract.

However, later that year Brooklyn Dodgers president and general manager Branch Rickey signed Robinson. He was first assigned to the minor leagues to play with the Montreal Royals where he faced racial issues immediately. When Royals manager Clay Hopper asked Rickey to assign Robinson to any other club besides his own, Rickey refused. Spring training

took place in heavily segregated Florida where Robinson was not allowed to stay in the team hotel with his teammates.

In 1947, Robinson was finally called up to the majors. Officially breaking the league's color barrier by becoming the first black player to play in a game since 1884, he went on to win the first ever rookie of the league award for his performance. This brought mixed reviews in a time of heavy racial tension when there were talks in the Dodgers' clubhouse regarding players who would rather sit out than play alongside Robinson who was also known to receive hate from other teams and would hear constant racial slurs from dugouts.

However, Robinson received encouragement from several other major league players, including his teammate Pee Wee Reese who famously put his arm around Robinson during a game while fans were shouting racial slurs at him. This sign of unity and support is one of the moments that would continue the integration of major league baseball and give encouragement to black athletes everywhere. Racial tension continued to ease when several more players broke the color barrier in 1947.

Robinson retired in 1956 and finished



COURTESY OF JACKIEROBINSON.COM

Jackie Robinson is one of the greatest and most influential baseball players in history.

with a total of 1518 hits and 197 stolen bases. Obviously, Robinson's legacy goes much farther than the baseball field where he was one of the pioneers and motivators of the future civil rights movement. Martin Luther King Jr. mentioned the importance of Robinson in stating he was "a legend and a symbol in his own time," and that he "challenged the dark skies of intolerance and frustration."

Today, Robinson's legacy is remembered in many different ways, including the retirement of his number 42 through-

out all of Major League Baseball so no player will ever be allowed to don it again. The only exception being April 15, or annual Jackie Robinson day, when every player wears 42 to honor his legacy.

The story of Jackie Robinson is one that must be continued to be told. The adversity he faced in a time of hate and the strength he showed is something to be looked greatly upon for future generations.

A night with the legends in "One Night in Miami"

In her directorial debut, Regina King unites four African American greats in a night of drama and introspection.

REVIEW

"One Night in Miami"

★★★★★

The Good:

- Powerful dialogue and storytelling
- Captivating performances
- Great cinematography

The Bad:

- Setting is static and not too much happens
- Film can drag on towards the end
- Very dialogue heavy. Great for some, not for others

By **HENRY NGUYEN**
FILM CRITIC

Today, you don't see a lot of films that celebrate African American history while also presenting it in a manner that teaches the viewer while simultaneously pushing them to think about the struggles that African Americans go through while living in a segregated and white dominated society — especially in a time like

1960s America.

Taking place in the backdrop of sunny Miami, which is going through the civil rights movement, "One Night in Miami" unites Cassius Clay, boxer and heavyweight champion played by Eli Goree, Sam Cooke played by Leslie Odom Jr., singer songwriter Jim Brown — who brought the world hits like "You Send Me" — played by NFL Superstar Aldis Hodge and Malcom X, played by

Kingsley Ben-Adir.

Set in 1964, right after a young Cassius Clay adopted the Muslim religion and became known as Muhommad Ali, Ali joins Malcom X, Jim Brown and Sam Cooke in a celebratory night after an unexpected victory against Sonny Liston that rendered him as the Heavy Weight champion.

In their hotel room, they discuss what it means to be Black and successful. While most of them agree that they are in very favorable positions in their communities, they all have differing opinions on what the future holds for them and what they should do in their respective positions of power.

This film is more than just a meeting of great minds, it tells the story in a nuanced perspective. Each of the four have their own motives and ideas which can sometimes conflict with each other. Although it's an interesting way of telling their story, it might not be for everyone and may take some paying close attention to from the viewer in order to fully enjoy.

With that being said, besides a couple of scenes, the setting primarily takes place within their hotel room. This lack of setting change feels dragged out towards the end of the film. And while the captivating performances are enough to keep the viewer engaged, not

too much happens.

Nonetheless, the acting in the film is superb and worth noting. With one of the most powerful performances of the bunch, Kingsley Ben-Adir's portrayal of Malcom X is one not to be missed. The way his speech patterns and mannerisms matched X's real life public persona, while still managing to add his own flair to the role, made for captivating scenes and was often the driving force of each scene to its dramatic climax.

The set and costume design was also extremely well done. The characters' sharp wardrobe really showcased each character and who they are. The viewer is treated from time to time with a few beautiful drone shots of the entire world that the filmmakers have created — it's a treat to look at whenever the scene wanders out from its singular driven setting.

This is a great film to watch if you want to see what would happen if four great minds were to be put into one room. However, for those who are not looking for movies that are dialog heavy, then this is probably not the film for you. Although, I do urge at least a single watch as it is a story that doesn't come up often in today's narratives.

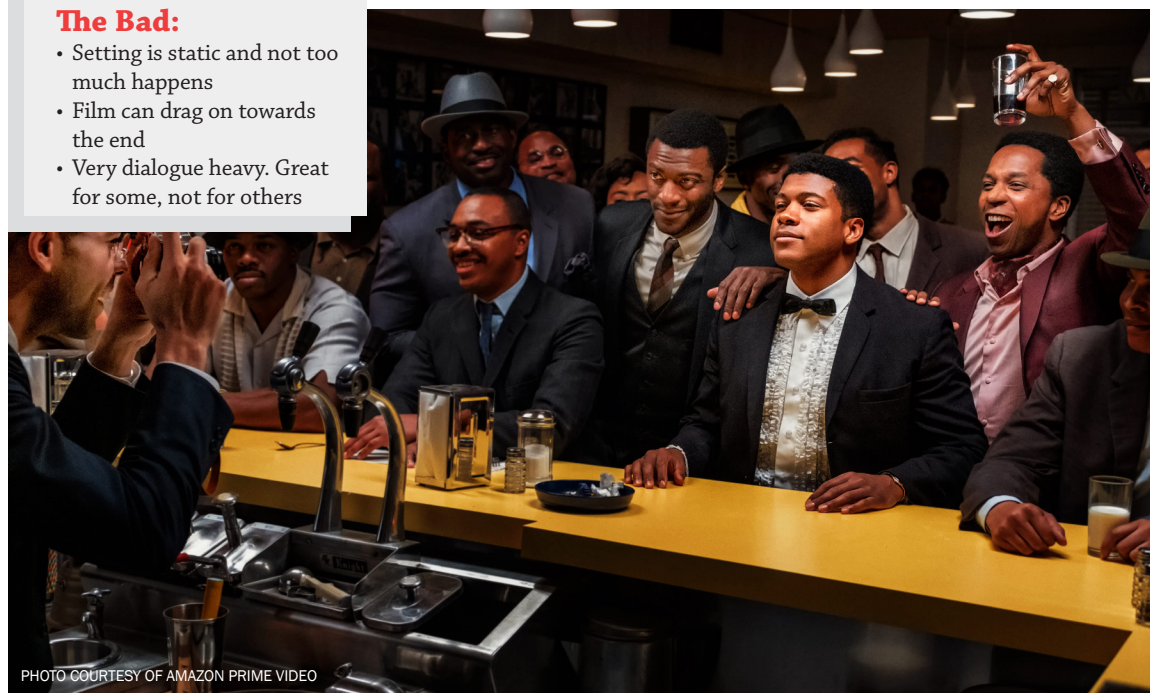


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