

## Sister Cindy's annual explicit visit

By EMMA JOHNSON  
Editor in Chief

While she may spread the gospel to several universities throughout the nation, Christian evangelist and social media star Cindy Smock, better known as "Sister Cindy," admitted to students at Minnesota State she wasn't always so pious.

"I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive me, but I was a low low ho at the University of Florida in the mid'70s," Smock said Wednesday afternoon to a gathering crowd of students near MSU's Memorial Library.

Smock is a regular on college campuses. Her delivery is full of shock and bombast, and typically attracts a crowd. She was last on campus two years ago, but tours the country year-round. Her "low low ho" comment was just one of the many topics she covered during Wednesday's visit, which focused mainly on how dating and sex go against the gospel.

Smock started her sermon by saying one day, "each of us will stand naked before the Holy God of the universe" to confess secrets and account for one's lifestyle. She quickly shifted into her outlandish and bold Christianity-based claims by saying students could "be virgins and still go to hell" and "finding a virgin on a college campus is like finding a unicorn."



ALEXIS DARKOW • The Reporter

Christian evangelist and social media sensation Sister Cindy stopped by MSU to talk about the gospel and views on dating, sex and marriage to a group of students.

After Smock read from the King James version of the Bible about honoring Jesus and repenting for sins, Smock said she received an anonymous message from an MSU student who allegedly claimed their roommate "did the dirty" the first night on campus and "had done so

every night since." Smock also said she received another email from another student who allegedly confessed it was hard to study when their roommate was "humping their boyfriend in the same room."

Smock doled advice out to students, telling young men to be wary

about taking out young women who dress immodestly. In Smock's eyes, that meant short shorts and low-cut tops.

"Just because a girl is dressed like a ho, it doesn't necessarily mean she wants to do you," Smock

CINDY on page 2

## New senators elected, resolution discussed by Student Government

By AMALIA SHARAF  
News Editor

Student Government held a productive meeting Wednesday, electing three new senators, discussing a resolution and giving time for presentations.

Independent non-profit organization focused on advocacy and leadership. Students United presented their team and invited students to participate in the Advocacy Conference in November. Attendees of the conference will develop political advocacy skills and work with students around the state on issues impacting Minnesota students.

The next agenda item was President Roshit Niraula's report, where he shared the result of Mavs Lead the Vote.

"We had 30 students help out at 2,000-plus volunteer registration information giveaways," said Niraula. "Thank you for all of the partners who brought it together."

Additionally, Niraula shared with senate what the Green Bandanas initiative is and how students can help each other navigate mental health resources.

"These Green Bandanas help reflect an openness to mental health," Niraula said. "You are inviting folks to come in, chat with you about mental health resources available on campus. There's also a crisis hotline tag that you can hang on your backpacks."

Freshmen Norah Young, Charles Hillstead and Rajesh Karki were elected as the new senators for College of Allied Health and Nursing, Residential Life and College of Science, Engineering and Technology, respectively.

Young plans to bring new clubs to campus as well as advocating and supporting the needs of students.

"My time at Rochester Community and Technical College and on the Senate improved my communication skills and my desire to understand others expanded," Young said. "I believe this experience will translate well into the senate position. A core belief that I have is that the key to college success is communication, especially with difficult classes

STUDGOV on page 2

## Conference aimed to grow leaders

By BEN LIVINGSTON  
Staff Writer

Words. For the 12th year running, the U-Lead Conference was back at Minnesota State's Centennial Student Union.

The three-day event, co-hosted by prominent groups on campus, seeks to, as they put it, help students "gain personal and professional experience that will help them in the future."

Nathan Murtaugh, who helped put the conference together, says he has learned a lot from organizing the conference. Murtaugh says working with all the other Registered Student Organizations like the Student Events Team "really opened the door to a lot of other people" and "made me realize how big the campus is."

He said he hopes the conference will show attendees anyone can be a leader.

"You do not have to have a president's position or a super-high leadership position. ... Everyone can develop their leadership skills."

Throughout the three-day

event, there were a variety of different sessions, speakers and more. Furthermore, attending these activities provided opportunities to be entered into a drawing for multiple \$25 gift cards.

The week started with a social networking session, where student leaders spoke on a panel titled "Been there, done that." There, the panelists shared leadership tips and advice as well as personal stories with the attendees.

The next day was kicked off with the keynote address, given by Jayson Davis. Davis represents Phired Up Productions, a company that provides strategies to help college groups grow through recruitment, retention and marketing.

During his lively speech, Davis explained the philosophy of "social excellence," which emphasizes the importance of being authentic and vulnerable when recruiting and building connections. After his address, when asked what students could take away from the conference, Davis said it was up to the attendees.



MATT MILLER • The Reporter

During one of the sessions at the U-Lead Conference, the keynote speaker presented his talk in the Ostrander Auditorium.

"They have a choice. They have an active choice. They decided to be here today by whatever means, and then they have a choice to take what they learn here and make an impact on the campus and their local community," Davis said.

After the address and subsequent "Networking Social/Com-

plimentary Appetizer Buffet," attendees engaged in some of the many breakout sessions that took place throughout the last two evenings of the conference.

On the conference's final day, attendees spent the whole evening in hour-long breakout sessions, ULEAD on page 3





NATE TILAHUN • The Reporter

Student United present the organization at the Student Government meeting on Wednesday, Sep. 18, 2024. Members invited Minnesota State students to participate in the upcoming activities.

◀STUDGOV from page 1 and complex material. It is crucial that the students have an easy and accessible means for communication with their platform.”

Hillstead is an active freshman living in one of the residential halls at Minnesota State. He plans to focus on the alcohol abuse training program and increase awareness of the consequences alcohol has on an individual's development.

Karki, who will represent the College of Science, Engineering and Technology, plans to focus on mental health.

“[My objectives] include raising awareness of the college re-

sources, enhancing leadership and opportunities and advocating to mental health services tailored to international students, including peer support networks,” Karki said.

After the elections were over, Student Government senators discussed a resolution called the Priority Registration Resolution, which concerns the ability of senators to register for classes earlier. The Student Government is open to anyone interested, including freshmen, who would normally be allowed to register after the majority of the students on campus.

This creates an issue in scheduling the classes around the mandatory meetings of the Student Government.

The resolution “urges the Office of Registrar to allow priority registration for current student senators for Spring 2025,” and “recommends the Office of Registrar to continue priority registration for upcoming academic years to members and candidates of Student Government's Student Senate and Executive Officers.”

The vote on the resolution will be continued during the next Student Government meeting.

“Just because a girl is dressed like a ho, it doesn't necessarily mean she wants to do you.”



ALEXIS DARKOW • The Reporter

◀CINDY from page 1

“She may want to do your roommate or your roommate's girlfriend.”

Smock then went into her most famous bit: the so-called consequences of taking a woman to a Mexican restaurant. In this bit, Smock counts up to five margaritas and outlines increasingly explicit sexual acts that come with each. The speech has grown in popularity as musical artist That Chick Angel made a remix of her speech.

Smock said she “was going to spill the tea” about the artist, alleging she is married with three children. Smock then went into her own rendition of the song, swapping out sexual acts for more appropriate ones such as women “losing their pride ... being empty inside ... and losing your soul.”

Smock went on to say that, while girls may be getting an education, some of them might be getting degrees in intercourse.

“You might meet a hot upperclassman with an air of intelligence and then one night when you're out, he says ‘Hey babe, did you know it has protein?’” Smock said. “The next thing you know, the freshman girl is at the clinic with chlamydia.”

Smock reeled back from her attention-grabbing statements, saying how much she missed her late husband, Brother Jed, who passed away in June 2022. They were married for 39 years and

came to the MSU campus together many times over the years. Instead of diving into her previous love life (Smock said she's frequently asked by Women's Studies majors if she was sexually satisfied by her husband), she chose a more meaningful approach.

“It may be hard for you to believe, but I don't think much about sex anymore. I still think about my husband and I miss kissing him on the cheek and holding his hand and he was the most intelligent man I had ever known,” Smock said.

Smock even showed support for the LGBTQ+ community.

“Love is love unless it's lust,” Smock said. “I'm here for the straight hoes, the lesbian hoes and the gay men hoes.”

Freshman Ben Lusty listened to Sister Cindy speak. While he said the event was hard to describe, he learned to “not be a ho.”

Sophomore Madigan Fredericksen described Sister Cindy as “a character.” Fredericksen also received one of the famous “Ho no Mo” buttons.

“I was shocked I got one because I wanted her to sign my chest, but realized she probably wouldn't do that,” Fredericksen said.

Fredericksen also said she's wondering when Sister Cindy will “become self-aware.”

Sister Cindy appeared at the University of Minnesota Monday afternoon.

## Photo story: Education Away and Study Abroad Fair



LOGAN SCHLOSSER • The Reporter

Education Away and Study Abroad Fair occurred at the Centennial Student Union on Tuesday, Sept. 17, 2024. Students got an opportunity to learn about study abroad programs, international internships and domestic travel programs.

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## Rising rivers threaten southern Poland



TOMASZ FIJOLEK • The Associated Press

On this handout photo provided by the State Fire Service of Poland, firefighters inspecting safety of houses following heavy flooding in the town of Stronie Slaskie, southwestern Poland, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2024.

By UPDATES MEDIA  
The Associated Press

Soldiers and volunteers in southwestern Poland laid sandbags Wednesday near swollen rivers around the city of Wroclaw to protect homes and businesses after days of flooding across Central Europe.

Poland joins Austria, the Czech Republic and Romania in being hard hit by floods following record rains in the region starting last Thursday. Authorities have reported 23 deaths, with seven each in Poland and Romania, five in Austria and four in the Czech Republic.

The floods in Central Europe combined with deadly wildfires in Portugal are joint proof of a “climate breakdown” that will become the norm unless drastic action is taken, the European Union’s head office said Wednesday.

The fourth death in the Czech Republic was reported Wednesday, when police said they found the body of a 70-year-old woman who was swept away by waters on Sunday in the town of Kobylana nad Vidnavkou near the town of Jesenik, located in the badly hit northeast.

The weather has improved, with warm and sunny conditions in the Czech Republic, Poland and elsewhere. Water levels were falling in some places, allowing authorities and residents to clean up debris.

Firefighters in Poland were pumping water out of flooded streets and basements. And in Romania, about 1,000 firefighters were working across the country to clean up severely affected areas, the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations said Wednesday in a Facebook post.

But some areas are still under threat, particularly in southwestern Poland.

Prime Minister Donald Tusk held crisis meetings in Wroclaw with local officials and rescue services, urging protective measures and saying his government will help those affected. Floodwaters were expected to crest late Wednesday, and high water levels were expected to continue for many hours, even days.

Soldiers and residents in Marcinowice, near Wroclaw, laid sandbags near a bridge over the Olawa River, whose waters flow into the Oder, the major river that rises in the Oder Mountains in the Czech Republic and runs north through Poland to Germany.

The community leader of the town of Olawa, Artur Piotrowski, described the situation as difficult.

He told the Polish state news agency PAP that two villages in a low-lying area have been flooded since Monday and residents have refused to evacuate.

Thousands of Polish soldiers were in action. Some evacuated people and animals — including dogs and horses — from flood-affected areas and distributed food and drinking water.

The army also posted on X on Wednesday that it set up a field hospital in the town of Nysa after patients in a hospital there had to be evacuated earlier this week.

Soldiers also were building a temporary bridge in the town of Glucholazy to replace one that was washed away by the flooding.

Residents in another flood-damaged town, Stronie Slaskie, have appealed to Tusk to send someone to direct the cleaning and recovery action, saying it was chaotic and inefficient.

### ◀ULEAD from page 1

such as “Launch Your Career by Getting Involved on Campus,” “Elevating the Brand of Your Organization and Your Leadership,” and the cleverly named “Leadership Buffet: Strategically Filling Your Plate.”

The conference was free and open to all students, however, most of the attendees included

students who came for a class as well as RSO and other group leaders. Daria Oelkers, vice president of the MSU’s Student Events Team, attended with fellow board members.

Oelkers says she and her colleagues were able to “learn and grow as an organization, learn as a human being those leadership skills as a team and an individual.”

## Search for suspect in Kentucky highway shooting

By BRUCE SCHREINER  
The Associated Press

A body found in rural southeastern Kentucky is believed to be the man suspected of shooting and wounding five people on an interstate highway, authorities said Wednesday night. The search ended with two private sleuths joining in the dramatic discovery.

Kentucky State Police Commissioner Phillip Burnett Jr. said the body located earlier in the day was believed to be Joseph Couch, of Woodbine. Authorities hoped the discovery signaled the conclusion of an intense, nearly two-week search that had area residents on edge.

“People have been in fear,” Laurel County Sheriff John Root said. “That’s not the normal here in Laurel County. So now that this has been discovered, I hope that our county can get back to what’s normal.”

A dozen vehicles were hit and five people wounded in the Sept. 7 shooting on Interstate 75 near London, a city of about 8,000 people roughly 75 miles (120 kilometers) south of Lexington.

Burnett said Wednesday night that accessories found with the body led authorities to conclude it was Couch. He had no details on the cause of death, saying that would be determined in an autopsy, but he said a weapon was found at the site. He didn’t know how long the body had been there.

“We are very confident this brings the closure to the search for Joseph Couch,” Burnett said.

Root said the discovery of the body wasn’t the outcome authorities wanted.

“I don’t think nobody on this stage wished that we would have found him in the condition that



TIMOTHY D. EASLEY • The Associated Press

Trees stand in wooded areas alongside Interstate 75 near Livingston, Ky., Sunday, Sept. 8, 2024.

we found,” Root said at a news conference in London. “I’d rather he’d been alive and he could have paid for what he’s done.”

The body was found following an exhaustive search of the rugged and hilly terrain in the area where the attack happened. Teams combed 28,000 acres (11,331 hectares) in the search. But it is a private couple who will reap a \$25,000 reward for their part in the discovery.

YouTube streamers Fred and Sheila McCoy from Kentucky said they searched the area for about six days and were looking for signs of vultures in the air. Fred McCoy said he saw some near the I-75 exit Wednesday, and they followed the rough terrain down a valley. They then picked up on a bad smell.

“Hey guys, you won’t believe it, we found him, oh my goodness gracious,” Sheila McCoy said while filming the search. “Now this little area (London) can rest.”

State police troopers had searched the area all day and also

noticed vultures hovering above and then detected a strong odor, Burnett said Wednesday night. While moving through the woods to locate the odor, the troopers heard voices, identified themselves and asked the others to do so, he said.

It turned out to be the McCoy’s, who told the troopers they also were searching for Couch.

“Almost immediately after that interaction between troopers and the McCoy’s, the troopers and the McCoy’s stumbled upon an unidentified body,” Burnett said.

The highway shootings led some schools to shut down and shift to virtual learning for several days as authorities warned residents to be extra vigilant. Schools reopened Tuesday with bolstered police security in the county where the shooting happened.

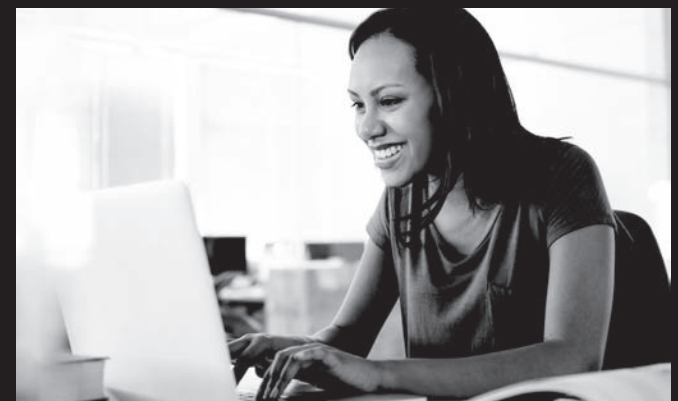
Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear called the shootings an “act of violence and evil.”

The five victims survived, but some suffered serious injuries.



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# Editorial

Editorials represent the opinions of The Reporter editorial board. The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the college, university or student body.

Emma Johnson  
Editor In Chief

Amalia Sharaf  
News Editor

Anahi Zuniga  
Variety Editor

## Inclusivity creates great leaders

At our university, we are constantly reminded that the next generation of leaders is among us. As students, we're told to hone our skills, sharpen our intellect and develop the confidence to lead. However, there's one vital aspect of leadership that often goes underappreciated: inclusivity. In today's interconnected and diverse world, truly great leaders are those who not only embrace inclusivity but use it as a foundation for their success.

What does inclusivity mean in the context of leadership? It's more than just making space for different voices; it's about actively creating environments where everyone — regardless of background, culture, or ability — feels valued and empowered. Leaders who foster inclusivity don't just gather diverse teams; they encourage open dialogue, ensure equitable opportunities, and strive to understand the unique perspectives each person brings to the table.

When leaders embrace inclusivity, they build stronger teams. Why? Because inclusivity creates an environment of trust and respect. Team members who feel valued and heard are more engaged, motivated, and likely to collaborate. Diversity of thought leads to innovation. When we bring together people with different experiences and viewpoints, we are better equipped to solve complex problems and come up with creative solutions. Leaders who appreciate this know that their strength lies in the diversity of their teams, not just in their individual abilities.

Moreover, inclusivity cultivates empathy, one of the most important traits of a great leader. By listening to others' experiences and understanding their challenges, leaders become more compassionate and considerate. This empathy translates into more thoughtful decision-making and a more supportive environment for everyone involved.

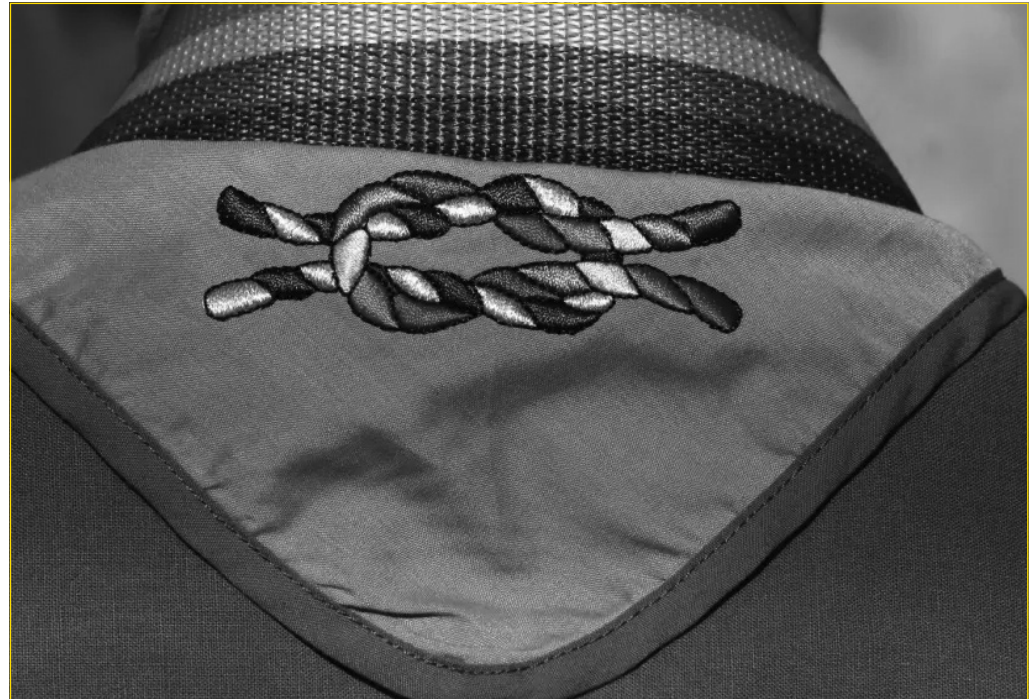
We've all experienced moments in group settings where certain voices were dominant while others went unheard. As university students, we have the power to change this dynamic. We can practice inclusivity in our classrooms, clubs, and student organizations. It starts with simple actions: inviting quiet members to share their thoughts, learning about each other's cultures and perspectives, and actively addressing any instances of exclusion.

Inclusivity doesn't just make us better leaders; it makes us better people. As we build our futures, let's prioritize the inclusion of all voices, fostering environments where every individual can thrive. Our leadership will be stronger for it, and so will our communities.

Ultimately, the journey toward inclusive leadership is a collective effort that extends beyond individual actions. It requires a commitment to ongoing education and self-reflection, as well as a willingness to challenge the status quo. By actively seeking feedback and embracing constructive criticism, we can learn from our mistakes and continuously improve our approach to leadership.

# Perspectives

## It's time to unmute the story of Scott Ford and Scott Vance



RICK BOWMER • The Associated Press

“National wire services have carried a story from Mankato, MN., reporting that an Explorer post Advisor had refused to renew the membership of two young men who said they were homosexuals.”

That's the opening sentence of the letter written by the Boy Scouts of America National Office in February of 1978. This letter contains the first mention of what would become the BSA's official policy of excluding openly gay members.

The “story from Mankato” referenced in that letter was the story of Scott Vance and Scott Ford being expelled from police explorer's post 243 by Mankato police sergeant Lowell Creel. Prior to their expulsion Ford and Vance had come out to each other in a private conversation.

“Morally Straight: The Story of How the Fight for



Jeremy Redlien  
Staff Writer

LGBTQ+ Inclusion Changed the Boy Scouts and America,” the recently released book by Mike De Socio, tells the history of the Boy Scouts of America's policy of excluding openly LGBTQ members.

I myself have spent time researching the story of Ford and Vance being expelled from the Mankato police explorer post and how they went public to expose the existence of discrimination here. I have spent a lot of time trying to track down Vance and Ford to hear their perspectives on what happened.

De Socio was able to track down Vance and interviewed him for Morally Straight. When I reached out to him, he was even able to put me in touch with Vance, a favor I am truly grateful for.

It took a bit of work but I was also able to track down Ford and interview him over the phone. Ford's story is harrowing in many ways.

“The police sergeant that led the group, I had come out to a couple of my fellow students at Wilson Campus school and word got back to him that there were two people in his unit that were gay. And that was Scott Vance and myself,” Ford told me when I spoke with him.

After he was expelled, Ford spoke before the Mankato city council to protest what had happened. His plea was ignored by the council. “Council mute to plea from gay youth,” was the headline

COLUMN on page 5

# Pulse

“Where has been your favorite place to travel to?”

Compiled by Alexis Darkow



MACKENZIE MINER,  
SOPHOMORE

“Wisconsin Dells.”



CRISTINA FLORES-LEE,  
SOPHOMORE

“Costa Rica.”



KELLEN MOSING,  
FRESHMAN

“Portugal.”



MURPHY KUJAWSKI,  
FRESHMAN

“Hawaii.”



DANIEL LIU,  
FRESHMAN

“Delaware.”



SOPHIA WINDINGSTAD,  
SOPHOMORE

“Myrtle Beach.”



# Letter to the Editor: Choose Kamala Harris over Donald Trump

Donald Trump had four years to lead the United States and failed us by his own choosing.

Whether it be in foreign policy or domestic policy, he did not protect the nation as commander in chief.

Trump talks a lot but doesn't say much other than to hurl insults and make false statements.

Quality of life is not a business decision. But rather, it is a humane choice to be empathetic to those

who cannot help themselves.

Kamala Harris has that empathy and is returning the United States to an era when we were respected internationally because of how we treat our citizens domestically.

This election is a clear choice between those who have never had it so good and those of us who know we can do better.

Kamala Harris will lead us there.

We've had an African-American president before and that worked out just fine.

Fellow citizens, exercise your right to vote to preserve your sacred heritage, promote your children's future and obtain the blessings of liberty we all cherish.

To maintain a sense of decency in the United States rise and vote! Our democracy is at stake.

- Joe Bialek

## Sheriff puts video of 2 teens online

By KATE PAYNE  
The Associated Press

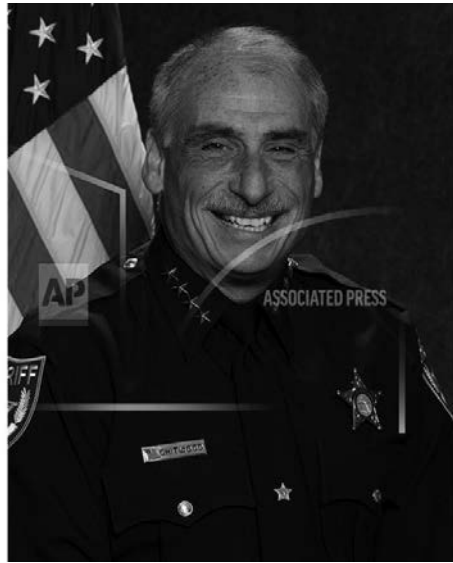
Around the country, communities are being battered by a wave of school shooting threats, sparking emergency notifications, urgent group chats and heightened fears among parents that their child's school could be the next Parkland or Sandy Hook or Uvalde — or any other town hit by mass shootings.

On Florida's Atlantic coast, Sheriff Mike Chitwood of Volusia County said he got some of these same notifications after he walked his grandchildren to school this week.

"It just stuck with me because my cell phone was going off telling me about the other threats. Thinking to myself, how many parents in this country have done just what I just did," Chitwood said, "and they never, ever, ever get to hold their loved one again."

Fed up with school shooting threats in his community, Chitwood pledged to publicly identify students accused of making such threats.

On Monday, he posted the name and mugshot of an 11-year-old boy arrested for allegedly threatening to carry out a shooting at a middle school in his county. The decision swiftly drew praise and criticism amid the ongoing national debate over what it would take to stem the gun violence plaguing the nation. On Wednesday evening he released another video online showing two more young people, identified as 16- and 17-year-olds, in handcuffs and being led to jail over what he called another school threat.



VOLUSIA COUNTY, FLA. SHERIFF • The Associated Press

This undated photo provided by Volusia County, Fla. Sheriff office shows Volusia County Sheriff Michael J. Chitwood.

The initial video posted by Chitwood online showed what an arrest report described as "various airsoft style rifles and pistols, magazines, fake ammunition ... and several knives and swords" that investigators say the 11-year-old boy gathered. The footage later cuts to an officer leading the handcuffed boy from a squad car before he's locked into an empty cell. The boy's face is frequently visible in the video, which already has gained hundreds of thousands of social media views.

Then on Wednesday, Chitwood was at it again, posting a message online: "Two more students are in custody following a school shooting threat" and adding of the teens, "We will introduce you to these two in the very near future."

Hours later the sheriff posted a Facebook video showing

two teens being led in handcuffs from a law enforcement van into separate empty cells. He is heard saying in the post: "Go talk to the families who have lost a loved one in a school shooting. These little knuckleheads think it's funny? Go talk to those parents and see how funny this is."

The AP generally does not identify anyone under 18 accused of a crime or transmit images that would reveal their identity.

Chitwood this week told The Associated Press he doesn't know if publicly shaming accused juveniles will be effective. But he had to act to get through to students and their parents.

Since the school year started a few weeks ago in Volusia County, Chitwood said, his office has reported more than 280 school threats compared to 352 in all of last year.

during a press conference in which the Associated Press had a journalist present. While the plan for the press conference was to have Ford speak, Ford froze and instead Vance told their story. Afterward, according to Vance, while he encountered those who expressed support and appreciation for what he had done, he also became the target of threats and harassment. Both Vance and Ford felt that the Mankato police turned their backs on them following their experiences. While both

had entered the explorer's post with the intention of becoming police officers, neither ultimately would.

In May of 2024, the Boy Scouts of America announced it would change its name to Scouting America in 2025 as part of their attempts to be more inclusive. The policy of expelling LGBTQ members was repelled in 2015.

One hopes that these changes hold and that Scouting America never goes back to a policy of exclusion.

◀COLUMN from page 4

in The Free Press the next day.

As a result of being outed to his family, Ford would be forced to undergo conversion therapy, which included electroshock therapy. After one treatment, Ford refused to undergo any further treatments and was kicked out of his home.

"I just don't like going back to Mankato at all because of that experience," Ford said.

Vance, whose story can be found in "Morally Straight," told De Socio that he spoke

## Venezuela's opposition ex-candidate forced to sign letter



ARIANA CUBILLOS • The Associated Press

Venezuelan opposition presidential candidate Edmundo González waves to supporters during a political event at a square in the Hatillo municipality of Caracas, Venezuela, June 19, 2024.

By VENEZUELA ELECTION  
The Associated Press

Venezuela's former opposition candidate, Edmundo González, on Wednesday said he was coerced into signing a letter effectively recognizing his defeat in July's presidential election, which electoral authorities claim was won by President Nicolás Maduro. The revelation of the letter is the latest strain to the country's political crisis, which was exacerbated by the disputed election results and González's recent departure for exile in Spain. González and the Unitary Platform coalition he represented on July 28 claim they defeated Maduro by a wide margin.

The document states it was meant to be confidential, but Jorge Rodríguez, head of the National Assembly and Maduro's chief negotiator, presented it during a nationally televised press conference hours after a local news outlet published parts of it. The letter shows González as the sender and is addressed to Rodríguez, who signed it as recipient.

Rodríguez told reporters González signed the letter of his own volition.

González, however, in a video posted on social media said he signed it under duress.

"They showed up with a document that I would have to sign to allow my departure from the country," González said. "In other words, either I signed or I would face consequences. There were very tense hours of coercion, blackmail and pressure."

Rodríguez, questioned about González video message, threatened to reveal audio of his conversations with González if he did not take back his assertions.

Venezuela's National Electoral Council, which is stacked with Maduro loyalists, declared Maduro the election winner hours after polls closed.

Unlike previous presidential elections, electoral authorities did not provide detailed vote counts. But the opposition coalition collected tally sheets from 80% of the nation's electronic voting machines and posted them online.

## HUGE 2-DAY SALE!

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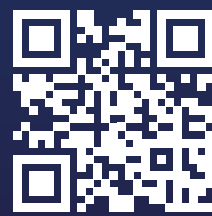
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# SPORTS

## Green Bandana Project promotes mental health

By EMMA JOHNSON  
Editor in Chief

The bright flash of green and the bag tags on student-athlete backpacks aren't just a fashion trend. They are symbols to raise awareness for mental health, especially among athletes.

The Green Bandana Project was started 10 years ago by Betsy Gerbec, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls after her son Daniel died by suicide. Daniel usually wore a bandana, which became the symbol of the initiative. The color bright green symbolizes mental health awareness.

Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) Co-President Jade Jackson said every student-athlete at Minnesota State receives a green bandana which student-athletes are required to make visible anywhere on their bags. Student-athletes are also given a bag tag with numbers for the National Suicide Hotline and other mental health resources, both on-campus and off.

Jackson said throughout the year, all athletic teams participate in one "green bandana" game where fans wear green in support.

"This year, the soccer team is doing green pre-wrap with the visiting teams to show support," Jackson said.

Jackson said the symbol of the green bandana shows mental health impacts everyone, including athletes who are sometimes seen as student leaders.

"I think it's so important to have that reminder that not only you're being an advocate for others to come up and ask you questions and being an advocate for others for mental health, but being an advocate for yourself and saying 'Hey, I can take some time to myself,'" Jackson said.

Grad Student and MSU foot-

ball team member Tony Anger said mental health affects students on and off the field.

"A lot of your mental health comes from your game performance and that can take a lot on you. Mix it with poor academic performance and then it can start piling on real fast," Anger said. "Making sure you're staying on top of your mental health and not having your identity surrounded around your sport is something really important when it comes to athletics."

Senior Abby Gronholz is a part of the Women's Swimming and Diving team. She said mental health is like a muscle that needs to build up strength over time.

"It's a big jump from being a high school athlete to a collegiate athlete. You're battling being a student and working towards what you are going to do the rest of your life and then doing something you're passionate about," Gronholz said. "I've been surrounded by a lot of great resources on campus and I'm thankful for that."

Anger said while there's a stigma around men not talking about their mental health, he said administrators and Football Coach Todd Hoffner have been helpful in promoting mental health resources.

"If you need help, (Hoffner) is going to tell you to get help and he'll be the first person to reach out to you and ask you if you're doing okay," Anger said. "Having those leaders in your life that are promoting looking after mental health just as you would your physical health is really good for us."

Gronholz said the project helps build a community while destigmatizing the idea of athletes being tough, similar to the idea men don't cry.

"I think the program is just



Courtesy of Centennial Student Union Blog

Green bandanas and bag tags are given to student-athletes and they are encouraged to wear them on their backpacks to show solidarity for mental health awareness.

trying to let athletes not feel so alone about their mental health if they are struggling and letting them feel comfortable in reaching out when they feel like they need help," Gronholz said. "It's normal to struggle."

When it comes to athletes talking about their mental health, Anger said it's especially important as student-athletes can be seen as leaders and people students look up to.

"If you're having those thoughts like you're not good enough or you're better off not here, then it's hard to express that to people because you're supposed to be strong. You're supposed to be this individual striving to be the best," Anger said. "People don't want

to show that because of the way they think they'll be perceived, so they put on a facade of strength to make themselves look stronger than they may feel."

While the Green Bandana Project originally started for student-athletes, Jackson said she'd like to see the project expand to the general student population. She said it's not student-athletes who experience burnout — it's all students and faculty.

"It's so much more inclusive when we can involve the whole student population," Jackson said. "We want to make this easily accessible to others and we want others to feel they can make a change as well."

Jackson said students should

consider joining the project as it opens up the conversation and shows other Mavericks people are there for them.

"Everyone needs to make sure their mental health is good and you have no idea how many people deal with it," Jackson said. "Joining it is just another symbol of saying 'Hey, I'm here for you when you need me.'"

Anger said he thought of one question when he joined the project.

"Would I want my friends to reach out to me if they wanted help?" and the answer is immediately a 'yes,'" he said. "If I save one of my friends' lives or make them feel more comfortable and safe than their own being, then it's worth it."

## Judge dismisses assault lawsuit against former Knicks owner

By JANIE HAR  
The Associated Press

A U.S. district judge has dismissed a federal lawsuit by a woman who alleged that New York Knicks owner James Dolan sexually assaulted her a decade ago and then set her up to be molested by jailed movie mogul Harvey Weinstein.

U.S. District Judge Percy Anderson on Tuesday dismissed the lawsuit filed by Kellye Croft in Los Angeles in January. Anderson said that Croft had failed to plausibly allege a commercial sex act in which she was paid for sex under the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act.

The judge also declined to hear her claims based on state —

and not federal — law against Dolan of sexual battery and aiding and abetting sexual assault and against Weinstein of sexual assault and attempted rape.

Croft's lawyers posted on X that they disagreed with the decision, saying it "incorrectly interprets the federal sex trafficking law and undermines critically important protections for sex trafficking survivors," according to attorneys Meredith Firetog and Kevin Mintzer of Wigdor LLP.

Dolan's spokesperson, Mikyl Cordova, said in an email Wednesday that the lawsuit was "a malicious attempt to assert horrific allegations" by what it called an unscrupulous law firm.

Weinstein's attorney, Jennifer Bonjean, did not immediately



JOHN MUNSON • The Associated Press

Former Knicks owner James Dolan sits courtside at a basketball game.

respond to an emailed request for comment but at the time of

the January filing also dismissed Croft's assertions.

According to the lawsuit, Croft was a licensed massage therapist in 2013 working on a tour for The Eagles in which Dolan's band, JD & The Straight Shot, opened for the rock band. Dolan allegedly used his influence on the tour to repeatedly manipulate and pressure Croft "to submit to sex with him," the lawsuit stated. It claimed Dolan orchestrated a meeting between Croft and Weinstein, a friend of his, in a hotel elevator in early 2014. She alleged in her lawsuit that Weinstein sexually assaulted her in a hotel room.

The Associated Press does not typically name people who say they were sexually assaulted unless they come forward publicly or consent to being identified, as Croft has done.



# White Sox dealt their 117th loss, Angels advance

By JOE REEDY  
The Associated Press

Eric Wagaman scored with one out in the 13th inning when Jordyn Adams' grounder deflected off the glove of third baseman Miguel Vargas, and the Los Angeles Angels dealt the Chicago White Sox their 117th loss, rallying for a 4-3 victory on Wednesday.

Instead of winning consecutive series for the first time in four months, the White Sox tied the 1916 Philadelphia Athletics for the third most losses since 1900. Chicago (36-117) needs to go 7-2 in its final nine games to avoid the post-1900 record of 120 losses by the 1962 expansion New York Mets. The 2003 Detroit Tigers hold the American League mark with 119 losses.

It doesn't get easier for the White Sox, who begin a three-game series at San Diego on Friday. The Padres hold the first NL wild card spot but have closed within 3 1/2 games of the slumping Los Angeles Dodgers in the NL West.

"We get the same question every day, we're focused on one series at a time and one game at a time. Everything else is irrelevant right now," interim manager Grady Sizemore said. "It's going to be a hard series (in



Los Angeles Angels' Eric Wagaman (34) scores off of a walk-off single hit by Jordyn Adams during the thirteenth inning of a baseball game against the Chicago White Sox in Anaheim, Calif. The Angels won 4-3.

ASHLEY LANDIS • The Associated Press

San Diego). They're playing for something and we have to play our best ball to have a chance."

After the series in San Diego, the White Sox close the season with a six-game homestand against the Angels (Sept. 24-26) and Detroit Tigers (Sept. 27-29).

The Angels had the bases loaded in the 10th and 12th innings, but were finally able to walk it off in the 13th.

"We had opportunities throughout the game to do something, we just couldn't stretch that run, especially in

extra innings. But we kept going and finally caught a break," Angels manager Ron Washington said.

Wagaman was the automatic runner on second base and advanced to third on Logan O'Hoppe's ground ball to right

field. With the infield drawn in, Adams hit a sharp grounder off Jairo Iriarte (0-1) that Vargas wasn't able to field cleanly, giving the Angels their fifth walk off victory of the season.

"I was just trying to put it in play and give the runner at third a chance to score," Adams said.

The White Sox had the bases loaded with two out in the 13th, but José Quijada (2-0) struck out Yoán Moncada to end the frame. It was Moncada's his first big league at-bat since April 9. He was activated from the 60-day injured list on Monday after missing five months because of a left adductor strain.

The game went into extra innings tied at one. Each team scored in the 10th as Chicago's Korey Lee scored on Vargas' sacrifice fly and Los Angeles' Gustavo Campero had an RBI base hit.

The teams again traded runs in the 11th on RBI singles by the White Sox Andrew Benintendi and Wagaman.

Andrew Vaughn led off the fourth inning with his team-tying 19th home run. The designated hitter — who is 7 for 20 with two homers during a five-game hitting streak — drove an elevated, inside sinker from Halos starter Jack Kochanowicz into the bullpens in left field as he went deep for the second time in the series.



## DR. KELLY MORELAND

**Dr. Kelly Moreland, Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Composition and Director of First-Year Writing is our September Textbook Hero!**



Dr. Moreland started looking for and using open educational resources around 2017 when she realized that her field was doing an excellent job of publishing a variety of rigorous course materials open access. She uses an OER in her English 101 classes and coordinates the some 50 sections per semester of English 101, who also use her OER. **That's over 1250 students using OER as their main course material!** She also uses library resources such as journal articles and unlimited access eBooks in her three graduate courses. Dr. Moreland writes, "It just makes sense to me that if there are really good materials out there that cost nothing to students, why wouldn't I use them?"

**Thank you Dr. Moreland for being a textbook hero!**

<https://link.mnsu.edu/textbook-heroes>





# VARIETY

## Maverick Adventures: Access More Outdoor Fun

By TINA DOLAN  
Staff Writer

The Maverick Adventures program recently launched its outdoor rental shop, which provides students and locals with easy access to equipment for their next adventure.

When students have access to the right outdoor equipment, they can explore Mankato's extravagant parks, lakes and other outdoor settings.

"There's been a demand for increased opportunities to get outside for a long time from students, and a lot of times, equipment has been one of the barriers that hold students back from exploring the outdoors," Maverick Adventures Program Coordinator Sam Steiger said.

Maverick Adventures wants students to create experiences outdoors when they are not doing school work or other campus activities.

"Our vision for this rental shop has always been to give students more things to do when they are not studying or doing other things on campus. We want to give them opportunities to explore the natural resources around us," said Steiger.

A rental shop on campus benefits students by allowing them to experience outdoor activities inde-



**NATE TILAHUN • The Reporter**  
The Maverick Adventures program recently launched its outdoor rental shop, which provides students and locals with easy access to equipment to explore the outdoors with.

pendently rather than with a student program.

"It's important for students to have the freedom to go and do some outdoor activities on their own," Maverick Adventures Assistant Program Coordinator Madison Vandersee said. "Maybe a student has done a program with Maverick Adventures and understands how to, for example, fish,

and wants to go do that with their friends. The rental shop is the next step in expanding your experience at a low price."

While the weather is still nice, students have been interested in renting gear that involves water and camping.

"We have had students rent inflatable stand-up paddle boards. They can carry them in backpacks

and pump them at the lake," said Vandersee. "We also have camping gear; for example, we have camping-style stoves, or anything you would need to go camping comfortably around here for at least three seasons."

The rental shop wants to be inclusive in its equipment, whether a student is living on campus, off

**ADVENTURES on page 11▶**

## Attention to Artists: A 'RAYE' of light in the music industry

By EMMA JOHNSON  
Editor in Chief

As much as I love the pulsing beats of modern-day pop, the clever lyrics of R&B and rap and the invigorating, electric feeling of EDM when I'm on a dancefloor, it can get a little ... repetitive. I didn't know my ears were craving a taste of something new until I was driving around town with my friend and a song called "Escapism" came on.

Enter my obsession with RAYE. Born Rachel Keen, she's no stranger to the music industry, having written for major artists including David Guetta, Rihanna and Beyonce. Her feature on the 2016 Jax Jones hit, "You Don't Know Me," snowballed on social media platforms.

She gained more media attention when her record label, Polydor Records, allegedly refused to release her first album, despite several successful collaborations and a handful of EPs Keen had released. In 2022, she shot to stardom when her song "Escapism" featuring 070 Shake went viral on Tiktok before releasing her first independent album "My 21st Century Blues" in February 2023.

When "Escapism" came on the radio, I sat silently, soaking up this unique, refreshing sound. The graphic, raw lyrics coupled with a snappy beat transitioned into a spoken monologue with high-pitched strings. I couldn't remember the last time I heard a song sounding so different from the "copy-and-paste" songs I'd grown accustomed to.

It didn't take me long to dive into her discography. Her successful 2020 EP, "Euphoric Sad Songs," is a sharp contrast from the songs she's now releasing. Lyrics of love, lust and loss are hidden underneath pop tracks, making listeners forget their troubles. Songs like "Regardless" and "Love of Your Life" are dance songs with addictive choruses while others like "Change Your Mind" and "All Dressed Up" are slightly more somber, yet addictive.

RAYE's album "My 21st Century Blues" brings back a sense of music time seemed to have left in the 20th century, one that shouldn't have been left behind in the first place. Her introductory monologue transports listeners back to the jazz clubs of the mid-20th century before transitioning into "Oscar Winning Tears," a piano ballad of an ex begging to get back with her and pulling out all the stops. Modern pop and trap are intertwined throughout the songs "Hard Out Here," and "Black Mascara." R&B is at its finest with her sultry songs "Flip A Switch" and "Five Star Hotels," featuring Mahalia.

**ARTIST on page 11▶**

## Welcoming back feminists at MSU

By ANAHI ZUNIGA  
Variety Editor

What's better than pizza?

Great discussions and activities with new friends about interesting topics.

The Gender and Women's Studies Program and Students for Reproductive Justice hosted their Welcome Back Feminists event Wednesday in the Women's Center where MSU students engaged in discussing certain topics while also enjoying free pizza.

Senior Deyton Drost, president of Students for Reproductive Justice, said the purpose of the meeting is to not only discuss certain topics with students but to also help them connect with each other through similar interests.

"The purpose is to get everybody that wants to be involved back together or to meet each other. Because I think a lot of the certain group that we're trying to target doesn't really know each other," Drost said. "Our major is Gender & Women's Studies and it's quite small, but the minor is a lot bigger and we want everyone to meet each other and get involved, and also just people that aren't in the major or minor that are like minded to us, but want to be more involved."

Vice President Avalon Lueh-



**TROY YANG • The Reporter**  
The Gender and Women's Studies Program and Students for Reproductive Justice hosted their Welcome Back Feminists event Wednesday in the Women's Center.

man says the meeting can also help students gain an insight on the Gender and Women's Studies program.

"People who are interested in feminism, reproductive justice and women's rights, but aren't necessarily wanting to major or minor in Gender & Women's Studies, it's like an opportunity for them to get a bit of the experience of what it could be like to take that class, but to

make it less professional and more peer-based and peer-led, finding like minded people. In my mind, it's like a support group," Luehman said.

For the welcome meeting, Drost and Luehman plan to discuss a variety of topics, saying that even if their organization's mission is reproductive justice, they still wish to cover several intersectional subjects involved with the term.

"We're going to talk about sex education, so more specifically, comprehensive sex ed, STDs, birth control and healthcare. Reproductive justice and reproductive freedom; they're kind of similar, but they're also different," Drost said. "Reproductive justice goes as an umbrella term for reproductive health and all those other things that we mentioned.

**FEMINISTS on page 11▶**





RAYE attends the Kering Foundation's Caring for Women dinner on Monday, Sept. 9, 2024 at The Pool, in New York. EVAN AGOSTINI • The Associated Press

◀ARTIST from page 10

She isn't afraid to talk about controversial topics, but she does so in eloquently crafted lyrics. "Ice Cream Man" is about the aftermath of several sexual assaults RAYE has faced in her life. "Environmental Anxiety" highlights humankind's faults in a breathless pace, sirens screeching in the background. "Body Dysmorphia" has a simple beat complimenting the complex thoughts around eating disorders. "Mary Jane" has a twangy bass line as RAYE sings about her love-hate relationships with her drug and al-

cohol addictions.

What sets RAYE apart from other artists is how no two songs of hers sound alike. She's not afraid to experiment with her music, pushing boundaries of what modern music sounds like. Her most recent song, "Genesis" might be one of her best creations, a "Bohemian Rhapsody" reminiscent song consisting of seven minutes broken into three parts. A spoken monologue with angelic backing vocals pivots 180 to two verses of rap before the final third of the song is performed like the big-jazz bands of the '40s and

'50s. During the song, RAYE highlights 21st-century problems including social media, mental health and toxic relationships while trying to find the hope of it all through the verse "Let there be light."

RAYE has the freshest perspective brought to the music industry in the longest time. Amidst artists who stick to their tried-and-true methods, she's taking risks and speaking about issues applicable to everyone through catchy tunes. The "RAYE" of light we've all been looking for, but didn't know we needed.

◀ADVENTURES from page 10

campus or an international student. "We've been carefully looking into different equipment that might be better for international students, students that live on campus, and those who live off campus; we want a wide variety that can appeal to any student. There's something in the rental center that people will be interested in," said Steiger. The rental shop hopes students

can connect with each other and nature as it can be an educational and healthy experience.

"We want to help students connect with the outdoor world, and a big part of that is education," said Steiger. "Maverick Adventures already does a lot of educational activities ... but we want to give students an opportunity to be healthy and outside. There are so many benefits to spending time in nature,

especially after the pandemic; we saw all the mental aspects of outdoor recreation as being an important part of the college experience."

If you want to rent equipment from the Maverick Adventures Outdoor Rentals shop, visit Myers Field House 130 every weekday, except Wednesday, from 4- 6 p.m., or visit mnsu.edu and search for Maverick Adventures.

◀FEMINISTS from page 10

violence, sex ed; they all fall under reproductive justice."

"Information on consent and how that can relate back to reproductive justice and comprehensive sex ed. We're called Students for Reproductive Justice and our primary focus may be on reproductive justice, but we do cover a whole plethora of topics," Luehman said. "And many of those things do relate back to reproductive justice. It's just that people may not know that and how it is; how domestic violence can relate back to reproductive justice and how sexual assault can."

As Students for Reproductive Justice prepare to introduce their activism for reproductive rights this year, Luehman shared what the organization's main goals are.

"Our main focus is a lot for voter registration, political advocacy and education. So that would come with voter registration events partnering with different organizations, both on campus and in the community that have to do with voter rights, registration, political advocacy, and then also doing our own events that focus on education and the topics that we care about. So that would be like the teach-ins that we did last year on abortion bans; sex toy bingo and other events like

that," Luehman said.

With voting registration being an important subject matter for the organization and the MSU community, Luehman shares that a future concert will be featured on campus on Oct. 1, with its sole purpose of encouraging young women at the university to vote as the voter registration deadline for Minnesota is Oct. 15.

"This is a concert that the College Democrats are putting on campus and it is to increase the voter turnout for college-aged women. And we're really going to be focusing on female candidates. So it is going to be women that are running for office in more of the Southern region of Minnesota such as Rachel Bohman and Amy Klobuchar," Luehman said. "Some of them will be in person. Some of them will be submitting videos, and then also having women performers from in the community come and there's going to be singing. And we're going to be talking a lot about the importance of voting."

After attending the welcome event, first-year graduate student Breanna Kesler encourages students to discover and learn more about the topics associated with sex education.

"I really liked the event. I met a lot of new people and learned a lot

of new things about sex education that I feel like high schools do not teach people, so it's really informative," Kesler said.

Drost and Luehman explained why it's overall important for MSU students to learn about reproductive justice and other intersecting topics as there can be misconceptions about them.

"Incoming freshmen or just college students in general, have kind of a blurred idea of what consent really is, and the idea of a perpetrator. That's just an example and also sex ed and learning about consent is a good example of why it's important to realize what it actually is because it's dangerous to not be aware," Drost said.

"When we talk about wanting reproductive justice, immediately, everyone's mind goes to abortion, and abortion is included in that but it's also having autonomy over your body," Luehman said. "Being able to make decisions, deciding whether or not you want a hysterectomy, deciding whether or not you want a child, if you have access to birth control, if you have access to a safe provider, if you're able to pay for your medical care."

To learn more about Students for Reproductive Justice, visit Mav Central.

## 'Agatha All Along' sets Kathryn Hahn's witch on a new quest



CHUCK ZLOTNICK • The Associated Press  
This image released by Disney+ shows Kathryn Hahn, as Agatha Harkness, in Marvel Television's "Agatha All Along."

By KAITLYN HUAMANI  
The Associated Press

As she reprises her role as the witch everyone loves to hate, Kathryn Hahn says it "makes total sense" she's continuing the story.

The "Agatha All Along" star, who first introduced Agatha Harkness to the world in the hit 2021 Marvel series "WandaVision," said the rich complexity of her character excites her.

"It's so juicy. You can see her as a simple bad witch, but she's not. No one is bad," Hahn said in a recent interview with The Associated Press. "There's always something that they're covering up that they put all these levels on top of, so the fun was trying to keep the mask on with all these meteors of truth banging at that core."

The Marvel Television series, which premieres Wednesday on Disney+, picks up after "WandaVision" as Agatha forms a makeshift coven to travel down the mythical Witches' Road on a quest to regain her powers. Although Elizabeth Olsen's Wanda Maximoff/Scarlet Witch captured Agatha's magic in "WandaVision," Hahn said she has felt empowered by the role.

A symbol that has become a crucial part of her character is the Neopagan triple goddess — the maiden, mother and crone as depicted on a brooch Agatha wears in both shows. Hahn says those symbols of transformation in the female life cycle have been reflected in her own life.

"I did feel, walking into this, like I was going to be walking through a portal into my crone area, what-

ever that means, and it did feel very powerful to feel wise while walking through this journey as a woman," Hahn said.

Beyond references to Neopaganism, Wiccan culture and other witchy motifs, "Agatha All Along" is ripe with allusions. Several films, television shows, musical groups and more permeate the show's otherwise spooky aesthetic, but none appear more prominently than "The Wizard of Oz."

Jac Schaeffer, the series' head writer, director and executive producer who also created and wrote "WandaVision," said the 1939 film felt like a natural touchstone. "We're in the land of witches," she said.

"Early on, it was clear that it needed to be a quest structure. And for me, the movies of my childhood that I love so much are all quests," Schaeffer said. "Once we were sort of locked into that as the structure, it was like, 'How many allusions can we bring in and what makes sense and what's delightful, what's witchy enough for us?'"

Schaeffer said the series also alludes to Fleetwood Mac, Kate Winslet in the gritty crime drama "Mare of Easttown" and "Big Little Lies," which she described as a "prestige lady drama soap" where everyone has "sweaters and good hair." She also said the group on that show, led by Reese Witherspoon and Nicole Kidman, are a coven in their own right.

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