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Homecoming Commences

Sarah Burton '24

Today, October 7th, concludes the activities for Houghton's annual Purple and Gold week, though as Homecoming Weekend commences, a new wave of activities flows into campus.

At 7:30 pm tonight, Wesley Chapel will host the Homecoming Collage Concert, in which the Greatbatch School of Music students will perform a number of astounding pieces. When the concert ends, the homecoming dance will begin at the Nielson Center, where students are encouraged to dress comfortably and fashionably, in all kinds of evening wear.

On Saturday, October 8th, there will be several Homecoming sporting events, including Cross Country's Invitational on



Students chat with President of Houghton University Wayne D. Lewis, Jr.

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the Field of Dreams at 11:00 am, Field Hockey at 12:00 pm, Women's soccer at 2:30pm, and Men's Soccer at 5:00pm - all of which will be located on Burke Field. The Equestrian Center will also be hosting an Open House event starting at 9:00 am and running through 5:00 pm.

Throughout Saturday, Houghton will be hosting Family Weekend, where several Alumni class reunions will be held and activities for families of the campus will be conducted. The "Hands-On Houghton" Festival will be located in the Kerr-Pegula Field House from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm,

where all members of the community are encouraged to learn more about the opportunities for active participation on campus. Representation of numerous clubs and groups can be found there, as well as games and activities.

To formally conclude Homecoming Weekend,

the student body will gather in Wesley Chapel at 9:00 pm for the annual and highly-anticipated SPOT. There, hosts, seniors Colin Campbell and Bekah Fenn will feature a number of goofy and spunky numbers, acts, and bits presented by numerous students. The winners of Purple and Gold week will also be announced.

When asked about the planning process of these events, senior and CAB Director Joey Schunemann stated, "It's fun, but equally as stressful sometimes. Trying to create an array of events that are diversely enjoyable by people of all walks of Houghton life proves to be a challenge, but having a CAB staff that tries to explore those differences is a great first step to ensuring we represent

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Equestrian Center Open House

Hanna Avery '23

The Houghton University Equestrian Center is bustling with activity this fall semester with the conclusion of the annual Houghton Horse Trials, Combined Test, and Dressage Show in September.

If you missed the opportunity to check out show day, there are still many opportunities to explore Houghton's beautiful equestrian facilities, starting with the annual Homecoming Open House event on Saturday, Oct. 8th, from 9-11 a.m.

The Open House is "an amazing opportunity to show the community, especially alumni, how much the equestrian pro-



The outside of Houghton University's Equestrian Center.

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gram has changed in such great ways," said Equestrian Society President, and senior, Cassidy Kuhlmann. "We also love to give people hands-on experience at the barn to show them what we love so much about the barn!"

The Equestrian Open House will host a variety of activities, including a

photo booth, pony rides, and hay rides. There also will be a variety of demonstrations from the upperclassmen who will showcase disciplines such as jumping, dressage, and horse training.

The program's assistant barn manager and event coordinator, Hannah Williamson, and the

Equestrian Society Club have remarked that this year's open house may be the biggest one after the COVID-19 pandemic, and a lot has changed over the course of these past few years. It gives an opportunity to students, alumni, and community members alike to get out and experience what is

happening at the equestrian center and see the four-legged teachers that help get the job done through a variety of fun activities.

Included in the Equestrian Center's changes, a brand new custom jump course was recently unveiled - a project made possible by generous donors. The program is very excited to have these jumps, which includes a custom "Houghton University" banner, for the students to learn with, and put to good use at events and shows.

"The new jumps mean a lot to our program. We so rarely get things custom made for [the program]," said senior, Izzy Gritsavage. "One of the great things about them is

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Queer Students Wrestle with Their Place at Houghton

Nina D'Amato '22

Queer students are reckoning with the severity of their situation on campus as shifts in administrative direction cause them to question their place and safety at Houghton University.

This campus has long been a place where people from all different backgrounds could come together, and despite their differences in opinions, gather and worship and learn as a community. This emphasis on community was Houghton's unofficial motto, under former president Shirley Mullen, the recognition that not everyone is the same, but everyone is loved and protected on this campus.

For some, this slogan of community has seemed to slip from the forefront of importance, particularly for queer students. Senior Tia Zubryn says that current attitudes from administration are not taking the exclusion of queer folks on campus seriously. She explains that the removal of the

rock is just one in a sequence of actions the administration is taking in "an effort to avoid hard conversations they don't want to have."

She continued to explain that queer students on campus are being disproportionately and directly affected by systemic policy issues and that there are no strides being made by the administration to address and improve these disproportionalities.

Coming up in just a week on Tuesday, Oct. 11, queer students are partnering with the Religious Exemption Accountability Project (REAP) and the Black Menaces for a nationwide college protest, which is being held off campus property, called "Strike out Queerphobia." This protest is calling for "intentionality, accountability and change" in an effort to "end the legalized discrimination of LGBTQIA+ students" at religious colleges and universities.

Zubryn commented on how important it is to be a part of this nationwide protest, saying partnering with these organizations

"gives us the support that we have lacked."

Through this protest there are three main demands: LGBTQIA+ equality at all schools that receive federal funding, access to affirming resources, support and education including full protection under Title IV, and guaranteed protection of the right for all faculty, staff, and students to be their truest selves. The queer students at Houghton also have a set of demands directly to the Houghton administration including the public denouncement and withdrawal from the CCCU exemption of the Equality Act and equitable and consistent enforcement of disciplinary action for queer students and allies, as it would be for any other student, meaning individuals would not experience disproportionality in disciplinary action.

"Queer folks don't deserve to be loved in a way that is convenient," Zubryn said. "Loving us in a way that is meaningful entails acknowledging

ways that we are systemically hurt, meeting the immediate needs of the queer community of Houghton, and continuing to advocate for those needs. If you have any qualms with that you are not loving queer student in the way they need to be loved."

Changes in administrative direction affect students in the long term, as expressed by Owen Hardiman, who graduated in the spring of 2022. For him, Houghton's policy on queer students does not reflect the professionalism of the outside world.

"Houghton's unloving, un-Christlike, and harmful behavior towards queer students, as well as other minority groups on campus, does not prepare students at all well for entering diverse workplaces," he said.

Hardiman also expressed his journey in his faith during his time on campus. "It was a difficult process to accept my identity at an institution that vehemently promoted

the idea that queerness was condemned by God," he said.

He then continued to explain that he entered Houghton as a Christian but left "with no faith" due to the firsthand experiences he had with the church "using scripture to beat down and abuse others."

He expressed how much he does cherish the positive experiences he had on campus, especially the relationships he was able to form with students and faculty, but echoes that the love he found there "was not reflected in how the administration treated me and my LGBTQ peers. Their archaic policies, antagonistic chapel programming, and apathetic messaging towards queer students is hurtful, damaging, and harmful," he said. "I implore the administration to change the way they interact with queer students. The malevolent actions of the school have real and harmful consequences. Practice loving your neighbor as Jesus did."★

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students in everything we do."

Schunemann also spoke on the purpose of these activities, expressing hope for the Houghton community. "Houghton University is ultimately our home. Our desire is to inspire students with that belief, even as they wrestle with unpleasant experiences contrasting with beautiful ones."

Schunemann's statement encapsulates how many view the tradition of Homecoming Weekend at Houghton as one of togetherness and communal growth.

Homecoming Weekend presents an opportunity for students to come together during the ebbs and flows of semester coursework to enjoy and celebrate the Houghton community for what it was, is, and continues to be.★

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that they look different than our old jumps, which presents new challenges for both us and the horses."★



RIA Photography Buffalo, NY

(Un)willing to Listen



Anna Zimmerman ('23)

The word "perfect" can mean a lot of different things to a lot of different people. A perfect Houghton could involve Perry's ice cream and the soft serve machine returning to the dining hall (a noble wish). It could mean that classes are shorter or that Houghton would magically have a town around it (one with a movie theater, mall, and more food options). Both are understandable and have my full support. On a deeper note, it could mean that it would be a comfortable and safe place for people to express the things that they're feeling and thinking.

While Houghton may say that conversations about tough issues are encouraged, I don't think it's fair or correct to say that everyone is welcome to 'come as they are.' I know of too many people who have come as they are and have been dismissed, harassed, or legitimately threat-

ened because they voiced their opinions with which other people didn't agree. If someone is willing to be open about something that is deeply personal to them, respect should be given. It can be so difficult to say something that you know will not entirely be understood by the people you're talking to. If you're being a listener and someone is telling you something personal, it's so important to understand and value the position that they're allowing you to be in. I'm absolutely not saying that you need to change your mind to agree with what someone's telling you. What I am saying is this: you need to respect and care for your fellow human beings and make it known that you value and want a relationship with them, no matter the differences between you.

In May of 2021, I took a course called Bridging the Gap. This course focused on 'bridging gaps' between peo-

"You need to respect and care for your fellow human beings and make it known that you value and want a relationship with them, no matter the differences between you."

dents who were born here. Everyone came to the class with different experiences and backgrounds, which is what I believe made the program so beautiful and impactful. Throughout the May term, we spent time learning how to talk to others about things that were important to us. Equally as important, we learned how to listen to others. In listening to others, we show respect and care. On the other hand, dismissing what someone says

or not their views change or stay completely the same.

I believe that there is something so dangerous about purposefully surrounding yourself only with people who have the exact same beliefs and ideas as you. I did this for too long and would base my opinions of others solely on what I knew about our differences. While I wouldn't completely cut off relationships with people who I knew had different beliefs than I did, I would hold back a bit and found myself developing expectations as to what I thought each person would (or wouldn't) contribute to my personal growth. I've experienced the most growth when I've been willing to be with people who are different from me. When I surrounded myself in an echo chamber of sameness, I missed out on relationships with people who could've added so much wisdom and goodness to my life.

Over this past summer, I spent five weeks studying at Au Sable Environmental Institute in Michigan. Going into the program, I had thick walls up and thought that I was 100% correct in the way that I saw the world. I thought I knew what was right and wrong and that anybody who didn't see things the same way was out of touch. Over that month of living in close proximity with one another (think: summer camp cabins with bunk beds and everyone eating dinner together at the same time every night), something in me changed. As more deep conversations were had in class, I became more willing to think about multiple points of view. After a week-

end of camping, a friend and I ended up being together for the three-hour drive back to campus. This was a three-hour drive with someone who I thought I was incompatible with and would never understand. Those three hours were filled with so many important conversations. I opened up about some things I hadn't even fully realized I was wrestling with. The response I was met with was both gentle and confident and truly made me examine myself and think deeply about things I hadn't been willing to consider mere weeks ago.

My time at school in Michigan encouraged even the tough conversations with one another. It truly felt like we could bring all of ourselves to the table. Coming back to Houghton made me realize that it doesn't feel like the same is possible here.

If we're all living together here, why can't we have as many open and honest conversations? Why can't we listen to each other? Why do we have to jump to conclusions about people, and why do these conclusions (which are often wrong) impact how we interact with each other? How do we forget the command to love and care for one another as we do for ourselves? How do we let the gaps get so wide that they seem too inconvenient to try to cross? Instead of focusing on what divides us, we should recognize what we have in common and let even our differences bring us closer together.

A lot of the time, a "perfect" Houghton feels out of reach to me. But, I'm hopeful that if we all start to make continued efforts to not only speak about the uncomfortable things, but to listen to the uncomfortable things, we will be closer to the "perfect" Houghton than we've ever been.★

Anna is a senior at Houghton majoring in Environmental Science.

Have an opinion
you want to share?

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SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor
should be less than 600 words

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The Houghton
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Creative and Comfortable: Deitrick's Approach to Fashion

MEGAN BROWN '22

While the first day of a new school year may mark a time for new classes and new friends, for senior theology and communications major Grace Deitrick, it marks a chance to express her truest self through her first-day-of-school outfit.

"Even from preschool," she said. "I loved picking out my first-day-of-school outfit."

As with many kids, Deitrick's mom chose and purchased most of her clothes, and as she grew up, Deitrick began to discover what her own style was. At the end of high school, she found what went on to make the biggest impact on what she wears today: a local vintage store.

"I started shopping there more regularly," she said. "And I was like, wow, look at how creative these [pieces] are. There's so much history in each piece of clothing. And that really inspired me to develop my style more in college."

While Deitrick spoke, she wore a creamy short-sleeve button-down with a muted floral pattern, jeans, and black slip-on shoes. These types of clothes are representative of what she currently loves to wear, a style which she describes as "grandma living on the French Riviera."

But what makes Deitrick's choices unique is how she mixes the posh clothing choices of an older woman with a college-aged woman's practicality. This grandma hasn't only lived on the iconic Mediterranean coastline.

"But also she lived on a farm before she moved to the French Riviera," Deitrick said, continuing her analogy. "So she's got a little bit of that salt-of-the-earth in her."

This parallels Deitrick's own life as she grew up in rural eastern Pennsylvania but traveled to London her freshman year for Houghton University's London Honors program.

"Living in London for a little while almost gave me permission to branch out because I saw the full extent of the creativity," she said. "Since I've been in college, I've spent more time in different cities. And I always get really excited to go to a city because I can wear whatever I want, and it won't be the weirdest thing there."

Deitrick prioritizes unique pieces that stand out, but she also

prioritizes comfort. This has been an essential aspect of her clothing choices since she was young because she has always been an active person.

"I've always been just throwing myself wholeheartedly into what I do," she said. "And so that usually results in some kind of stain or rip."

However, for women, fashion has not always been about practicality. In a recent book study, Deitrick explained how a section discussed how women's clothing has historically been decorative whereas men's was functional. She noticed this subconsciously but facing it plainly written in a book put words to cues she didn't know she had been observing.

"I don't think how you do fashion is limited by your gender," she said. "It shouldn't be weird for a guy to wear a bracelet or a necklace, and it shouldn't be weird for a girl to wear what makes her comfortable."

The clothing that makes Deitrick comfortable is "ratty old button-downs," blazers, dresses, and statement earrings. While some of these might seem in contrast with one another on paper, it all makes sense to Deitrick and helps her express what is to her the ultimate aspect of fashion: creativity.

"It's really exciting to have an area of my life where I can just release all the creative energy that I want to, and it doesn't take

that much time out of my day," she said.

College mars our schedules with homework, extracurriculars, and social events, and makes it difficult to find areas of pure joy. That's why, for Deitrick, the task of getting dressed in the morning feels so special.

"This is the theology major in me coming out, I think it's really cool that God puts these little glimpses of beauty that we can find every single day," she said. "And we can just find joy in the way that something looks."★

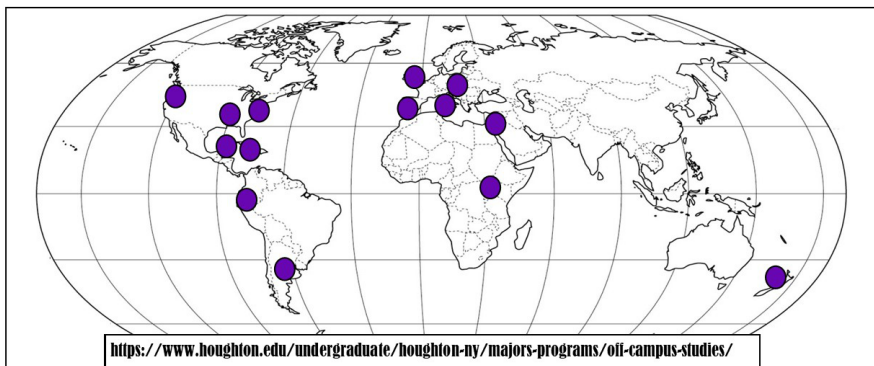
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